

**Florida Automated System for Transferring  
Educational Records  
(FASTER)**

**Instructions to Submit Transcripts  
to Bright Futures**

**2024-2025**



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## **2.0 Preparing Bright Futures Transcripts**

The Bright Futures Transcript Evaluation System (the System) receives student transcripts from Florida public and private high schools and evaluates them to determine if the student is eligible for any of the Bright Futures Scholarship awards offered by the Florida Department of Education. The online system allows high school representatives to review and update the students' transcripts as needed. This online system requires the use of a web browser compatible with Internet Explorer 6.3 or higher.

The system processes student transcripts in two evaluation cycles (Early or Final). Transcripts are evaluated the evening of the day they are submitted (or resubmitted) for seniors, and weekly for underclassmen.

- Final Evaluations are those performed for seniors and include all high school coursework. Transcripts are submitted to this cycle after the high school graduation.
- Early Evaluations are those performed for seniors at the middle of their senior year (or end of their 7<sup>th</sup> semester). These evaluations are in addition to the end-of-year evaluations (the Final or 8<sup>th</sup> semester evaluation, above). The Early Evaluation cycle permits students and postsecondary institutions to know the students scholarship eligibility at a much earlier stage in the college admissions process. Early evaluation is also where evaluations are performed on underclassmen.

The principle difference between Early and Final Evaluations is that the Early Evaluation makes use of the courses that the student has not yet completed. The same grade point average criteria are used in both evaluations. In the Early Evaluation, up to 1.0 credit in each subject area (English, Mathematics, Social Sciences, etc.) can come from courses in progress (except for evaluations of the International Baccalaureate and Advanced International Certificate in Education curricula, in which courses in progress are not used). Courses in progress can be annual courses that are still in progress **or** semester courses that are scheduled for the student's second term of the academic year. Courses in progress are only used when a student has no available required completed coursework in determining whether or not the student has sufficient credits to qualify for an award. Courses in progress play no part in the grade point average calculations.

The other major difference between Early and Final Evaluations is that the Early Evaluation uses test score results from the tests taken on or before January 31<sup>st</sup> of the student's year of graduation. The Final Evaluation uses test score results from the tests taken through June 30<sup>th</sup> of the student's year of the graduation. Students who improve their test scores between January 31<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup> may well benefit from a Final Evaluation of their transcripts.

Transcripts are evaluated the evening of the day they are first submitted to the Production System. They are editable in the Production System until the Bright Futures transcript locked date, giving the districts and high schools the opportunity to review and make additional modifications. Students will be notified of the evaluation results. Additional changes can be made only after the school requests that the record be "unlocked" by Bright Futures staff.

Students can be evaluated in either or both evaluation cycles. A student who is found ineligible in the Early Evaluation can enter the Final Evaluation and be found eligible for a scholarship. Or, a student found eligible for a lesser reward in the Early Evaluation can improve his standing in the last term and be evaluated again in the Final Evaluation cycle to qualify for a higher award. The results of the Final Evaluation can only improve a student's scholarship eligibility. If the student's Final Evaluation results qualify the student for a lesser award--or no award at all--the student would still retain the scholarship earned in the Early Evaluation unless the student fails to earn a standard Florida high school diploma.

## 2.1 FASTER Transcript Addresses - District 95 Processing

For both early and final evaluations, transcripts must be addressed to FASTER address 95. To identify the year and evaluation cycle, use the addressed high school field on the FASTER header record formatted YYSP.

**YYSP** - Bright Futures Practice or Production, Early or Final Evaluation

**S-7** = 7th semester

**-8** = 8th semester

**P-1** = Production

Directions for using the district 95 addressing scheme can be found at Web site <http://www.fl DOE.org/faster/> in the [FASTER User Manual](#), Chapter 2, Section F.

Note that you specify a graduation year in the addressed high school field. This allows you to submit early transcripts for freshmen, sophomores and juniors and have them evaluated according to the eligibility criteria that will be in effect in the student's year of graduation.

Also, Bright Futures no longer processes practice transcripts. Please submit to production '1'. If a transcript is sent with a '0', it will be considered production and '0' will be ignored.

Both the FASTER Interdistrict Formats (I00 through I08) and the FASTER Secondary-to-Postsecondary Formats (S00 through S08) can be used when preparing student transcripts. As long as all necessary evaluation information is provided, either set of formats can be used (though the two types of formats cannot be intermingled within a single transcript).

FASTER system edits keep transcripts lacking certain basic information from ever being posted to the Bright Futures mailbox. The edit report lets school districts know immediately if a transcript submitted to the Bright Futures Scholarship Award System does not contain enough information (or contains invalid information). The school district can then complete or correct the transcript and re-submit it via FASTER.

## 2.2 Transcript Submission Rules

In preparing transcripts for submission to the Bright Futures System, please bear in mind the following rules:

1. The Subject Area field (item 15 on the I04/S04 Student Course Information format) must contain a valid subject area if the student took the course in grades 9 - 12 or took the course (in grades 8 or below) for high school credit. This is a **reject edit**.
2. If the student took a course in grades 9 – 12 or took the course (in grades 8 or below) for high school credit, and the Course Number (item 13 on the I04/S04 Student Course Information format) is numeric, then the course number must be one of the courses on the FLDOE Course Code Directory. This is a **reject edit**.
3. If the student took a course in grades 9 – 12 or took the course (in grades 8 or below) for high school credit, and the Course Number (item 13 on the I04/S04 Student Course Information format) is numeric, then the course number must be one of the courses on the FLDOE Course Code Directory. This is a **reject edit**. Exceptions to this rule are explained in section 19.0, below.

4. A student's Social Security Number can be sent using either the Primary Student Identifier field, item 2 on the I00/S00 Header Record format, or the Student Number Identifier-Alias, Florida field, item 7 on the I01/S01 Student Information format. If a student chooses his or her identifier, both the old and new identifiers must be used. Include the student's updated identifier as the Primary Student Identifier.
5. The Bright Futures system retrieves transcripts that have the values "Q01" or "S01" in the Message Type field, item 5 on the I00/S00 Header Record format.
6. There are certain situations in which the Bright Futures system will retrieve a transcript from the FASTER system, but be unable to load it into the Bright Futures data base. When this happens, the Bright Futures system will use FASTER to send a request record to the district and school that originally posted the transcript. The Message Type field, item 5 on the I00/S00 Header Record format, will contain a code explaining the cause of the problem and how to go about correcting it. See [Appendix D](#) of this manual for a list of these codes, all of which begin with the letter B.
7. Diploma Date, item 45 on the I01/S01 Student Information format, is ignored for 7th Semester evaluation students (since these students have not yet graduated).
8. In the 8th Semester evaluation, the Bright Futures system will only count, as high school graduates, those students with values in the Diploma Type field, item 46 on the I01/S01 Student Information format. For 2018 graduates and prior, the diploma types can be W06, W10, WFW, WFT, W6A, WFA, W6B, WFB, WXL, WXT, WXW. For 2020 and 2021 graduates, the diploma types can be W06, W43, W52, W54, W55, W58, W59, WD1, WFT, WFW, WRW, WXL, WXT, WXW, WCO, W60. For all other graduate years, the diploma types can be W06, W43, W52, W54, W58, W59, WD1, WFT, WFW, WXL, WXT, WXW, WEL.
9. The way to show that a student has met the Bright Futures VOLUNTEER/PAID HOURS requirement is to show hours in the VOLUNTEER/PAID HOURS field, item 71 and or 72 on the I01/S01 Student Information format. For 2016 graduates and beyond, the required number of volunteer service hours are: FAS - 100; FMS - 75; GSV - 30; GSC - 30. Starting with the 2022 graduates, the required number of paid work hours are: FAS - 100; FMS - 75; GSV - 30.
10. To indicate that a student has been recognized as a National Merit Finalist or Scholar, store values of "F" and "S", respectively, in the National Merit Scholar field, item 19d on the I01/S01 Student Information format.
11. To indicate that a student has been recognized as a National Achievement Finalist or Scholar, store values of "F" and "S", respectively, in the National Achievement Scholar field, item 19e on the I01/S01 Student Information format.
12. If a student took a course in a Grade Level (item 11 on the I04/S04 Student Course Information format) other than 9, 10, 11, 12, or 30 (Adult, non-high school graduate), the Bright Futures load program will not consider the course unless it contains a "9" in one position of its Course Flag field (item 16 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format).
13. The Bright Futures load program will ignore any course that has a value of either "W" or "X" in one position of its Course Flag field (item 16 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format).
14. The Bright Futures evaluation program will honor valid course substitutions as specified in the Course Flag field, item 16 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format. To substitute one course for

another, put the appropriate course flag into the Course Flag field of every course record that you want to use as a substitute for some other course. For example, to use Electronics 1 (course number 8730010) in place of Pre Algebra (course number 1200300), store a value of "8" in the Course Flag field of every Electronics 1 course record you want to use as a Pre Algebra substitute. See the Florida Department of Education's Course Code Directory for rules concerning course substitutions, and item 16 on the FASTER I04/S04 Format for the appropriate codes.

15. To designate a course as a course in progress, store the value "P" in the course's Course Flag field, item 16 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format (note that only courses taken in the current school year can be considered courses in progress). Also, be sure to store the amount of credit the student will earn, upon completion of the course, in the Credit Attempted, Course field, item 18 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format. Then set the Credit Earned, Course field, item 19 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format to zero. Finally, leave blank the Course Grade field, item 20 of the I04/S04 Student Course Information format. **Remember, if you want a course in progress considered in a student's 7th Semester evaluation, you have to submit FASTER records for each such course in progress. Submit these records even if the student has not yet begun to take the course.**
16. It is possible to designate a course as partially complete and partially in progress. For example, if a student has completed one semester of an annual (that is, two semester) course and you want a grade recorded for that first semester, you **could** submit two records for the course (one for the completed semester and one for the course in progress). You **can also** accomplish the same result using a single course record. In the above example, you would set the record's Credit Attempted, Course field to 1.00 and set the Credit Earned, Course field to 0.50. Then you would include the value "P" in the Course Flag field, and put the grade the student earned in the first semester in the Course Grade field. The Bright Futures load program would then break the single record into two records for you. One would be a completed course record (with values in both the Credit Earned, Course and Course Grade fields). The other would be a course in progress record (with zero credits earned and no course grade). Either of these two ways of submitting this information is acceptable. Of course, if your district does not permit the awarding of any credit halfway through an annual course, you would have to show the entire course as a course in progress.
17. Only course numbers from either the Florida Department of Education's Course Code Directory or the Postsecondary Statewide Course Numbering System can be submitted in the Course Number field (item 13 on the I04/S04 Student Course Information format) for any course for which high school credit is to be awarded. One exception to this rule is the Foreign Language Waiver "course number," 0791920. Another exception is the generic course number that can be used for private or out-of-state postsecondary coursework: "ZZZ9999."
18. In general, the Bright Futures evaluation program does not make use of the Course, State Subject Area Requirements field, item 15 on the I04/S04 Student Course Information format. However, the evaluation program will honor any academic (that is, non-elective) subject area provided in this field for a student's dual enrollment (postsecondary) coursework. Where a postsecondary course number is given an elective subject area, the evaluation program will use the subject area (if any) specified for that course on the Bright Futures Valid Courses table (which is what it does for all standard secondary school courses).
19. The Bright Futures evaluation program does not recognize any "honors" course flags for purposes of course weighting. The evaluation program only uses the Bright Futures Valid Courses table to determine whether or not a course will receive any special weighting.

20. To indicate that a student has been recognized as a National Hispanic Scholar, **store** the value 'S' in the National Hispanic Scholar field, item **19h** on the I01/S01 Student Information Format.

## 9.0 Problems with Transcript Errors

School district MIS staff still, though, must monitor their FASTER processing closely to ensure that their data is arriving as intended. Check your error reports to determine whether any of the records need to be corrected and re-sent. Running the Outgoing Aging Report daily lets you know exactly when your records have been picked up. It also helps the FASTER system archive out old records that have been completely processed (improving system performance and freeing up disk space see section 6.0, above).

In addition to monitoring your edit error reports, be sure to pay attention to B type request records that Bright Futures sends back to you. These will occur after a transcript successfully posts to FASTER but is later rejected during the process of loading the transcript into the Bright Futures database. Your school district will receive its edit error reports immediately after posting or attempting to post transcripts to FASTER. The B type request records, though, are only generated during the next Bright Futures evaluation cycle (typically, the following evening). Therefore, be sure to check for incoming request records the day after you post records to Bright Futures, since that will usually be when you will receive notice of this type of rejection. As mentioned in section 2.0, above, see [Appendix D](#) of the FASTER User Manual for an explanation of these problem codes.

## 11.0 Contacting FASTER Support Staff

When submitting the Bright Futures transcripts to FASTER, should you experience delays, errors, unexpected results or have questions, please contact us at [FSTR@fldoe.org](mailto:FSTR@fldoe.org).

## 19.0 Edit Errors (Transcript Content Problems)

If the job runs to completion but, upon review of the edit report, you find that some of the transcripts were rejected and not transmitted to the Bright Futures System, you should use the edit report to identify the rejected transcripts, correct them, and resubmit them to the Bright Futures System. These transcripts were rejected because they contained errors or omissions critical to the Bright Futures transcript evaluation procedures.

You should share the fact that FASTER has rejected a transcript with the school that sent the transcript. We often get calls from guidance counselors who tell us that they have sent a transcript, but that it is not showing up on their evaluation reports. They ask us where the transcript is and in those cases where it was FASTER that rejected the transcript, we are unable to help them. In such a case, we only know that someone has **attempted** to send a transcript but has had it rejected. We are then forced to refer the school back to its district MIS staff to learn the reason for the rejection (which is only carried on the Edit Report). If you share the Edit Report with your schools when rejections occur, you can speed their error resolution process (by taking **us** out of the loop).

Finally: when in doubt, call one of the Applications Support numbers in section 11.0, above. The earlier in the processing period you call, the better (especially if you call **before** everyone else starts sending in their transcripts).