



2013 - 14

Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program



Are **you** eligible?

3 Earned 3.0 GPA?



2 Took ACT or SAT?



1 Have community service hours?



Learn more at: <http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/>





2013 -14 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Fact Sheet

Florida Statutes 1009.53 - 1009.538

State Board of Education Rule 6A-20.028

Program Description

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program establishes three lottery-funded scholarships to reward Florida high school graduates for high academic achievement. The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program is comprised of the following three awards:

- **Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award including Academic Top Scholars (ATS) award**
- **Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award**
- **Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award**

Applying for an Award

For Initial Eligibility the student will:

- Submit a fully completed error free **Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application** during the last year in high school (after December 1 and prior to graduation) available online at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org (select **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications**, then **Apply Here**). The application gives the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) permission to evaluate the student's high school transcript and standardized test scores for eligibility for a Bright Futures Scholarship and other state scholarships and grants.
- Apply during the last year in high school, before graduation, or forfeit all future eligibility for a Bright Futures Scholarship.
- Mid-year graduates may submit a fully completed error free **Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application** by August 31 prior to high school graduation.
- Meet specific coursework and minimum grade point average (GPA) and test score requirements which are outlined on the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) website www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/acadrequire.htm.

Requirements to Receive Funding

The student will:

- Be a Florida resident and a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen. A student's residency and citizenship status are determined by the postsecondary institution. Questions regarding such status should be directed to the

financial aid office or admissions office of the institution the student plans to attend.

- Not owe a repayment or be in default under any state or federal grant, loan, or scholarship program unless satisfactory arrangements to repay have been made.
- Receive if awarded, as an Academic Top Scholar (ATS), an additional cost per credit hour award established by the Florida Legislature in the General Appropriations Act in addition to the Florida Academic Scholars award. The ATS awardee is announced by the Florida Department of Education before the end of the fall term after all term one disbursements are reported. The ATS is awarded to the Florida Academic Scholar with the highest academic ranking in each county (based on the product of multiplying the Bright Futures GPA and the highest qualifying SAT/ACT test score). For current year award amounts visit - www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm.
- **NEW** - Submission of a *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) is **NO LONGER** required; however, students are encouraged to submit the FAFSA to learn of potential eligibility for additional state and federal aid. Visit the website at www.fafsa.ed.gov for online processing.

Student Award Renewal

- A student who receives funding during the current academic year (fall through spring) is automatically evaluated for renewal at the end of the spring term. Renewal institutional cumulative grade point average (GPA) and earned hours requirements are outlined in the table below.
- A student who graduates from high school mid-year may now be evaluated for an award and receive his/her initial disbursement in the same academic year (spring term). Although the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) will require a grade and hours report at the end of the first spring term as is required for all students, the FDOE will automatically determine an initial mid-year student eligible for the next full year of funding. The student's first evaluation based on grade and hours for renewal will occur at the end of his/her second academic year of disbursement(s).
- The postsecondary institution where a student is enrolled as degree- or certificate-seeking is the home postsecondary institution. That postsec-

secondary institution determines the courses to be included in each student's renewal postsecondary institutional cumulative GPA.

- A student may request that a financial aid officer

at the home postsecondary institution use high school dual enrollment courses, if these courses are to the student's advantage, when calculating the renewal postsecondary institutional cumulative GPA.

Bright Futures Renewal Requirements

	Florida Academic Scholars Award	Florida Medallion Scholars Award	Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award
Minimum Cumulative GPA (unrounded & unweighted)	3.0*	2.75	2.75
Minimum Hours Required Per Term, if funded Full Time (12+ hours)	12 semester** (earned hours)	12 semester** (earned hours)	12 semester** (earned hours)
Minimum Hours Required Per Term, if funded Three-quarter Time (9-11 hours)	9 semester** (earned hours)	9 semester** (earned hours)	9 semester** (earned hours)
Minimum Hours Required Per Term, if funded Half Time (6-8 hours)	6 semester** (earned hours)	6 semester** (earned hours)	6 semester** (earned hours)

*Florida Academic Scholars with 2.75-2.99 will renew as Florida Medallion Scholars.

**Or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours.

- **Dropped or Withdrawn Courses** - A student must reimburse the postsecondary institution for the cost of course(s) dropped or withdrawn after the initial drop/add period. The student will be ineligible to renew his/her Bright Futures award for any subsequent academic year until repayment or a satisfactory arrangement to reimburse the institution is made. Non-refunded hours will affect the student's renewal eligibility.
- **Summer grade and hours earned after spring evaluation may be used, if allowed, to meet the scholarship restoration requirements.** A student must ask a **financial aid officer at the home postsecondary institution** (that reported spring renewal grade and hours) to submit a grade and hours update to the Bright Futures office indicating the adjusted postsecondary institutional cumulative GPA and/or hours. A *Reinstatement/Restoration Application* **is not** required.
- A student who earns the Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) award or Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) award in high school may not renew to the Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) award because initial eligibility for the award was based on high school academic accomplishments.
- A Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholar (GSV) may not renew as a Florida Medallion Scholar as the 2009 Florida Legislature amended Section 1009.53(4), Florida Statutes, by removing the provision which allowed GSV recipients to renew as Florida Medallion Scholars.
- GSV students who graduated from high school in 2010-11 may receive funding for up to 90 semester hours.
- GSV students initially awarded for the 2012-13 academic year and thereafter, may be funded for up to 100% of their program of study in Career Education Programs. Technical Degree Education includes: Associate of Science degrees (AS), Associate of Applied Science degrees (AAS), and College Credit Certificates (CCC). Career Certificates or Diplomas (also referred to as Postsecondary Adult Vocational/PSAV) include Career Certificates and Applied Technology Diplomas (ATD).
 - » Students may be funded for up to 72 semester hours (or 2,160 clock hours) except in the Applied Technology Diploma (ATD) where they are limited to 60 semester hours (or 1,800 clock hours).
 - » Students may be funded in additional certificates, diplomas, and/or degrees up to the maximum hours of funding allowed.
 - » If students finish an ATD and then transfer into another eligible program, they are eligible to be funded up to 72 semester hours (or 2,160 clock hours).
 - » Students may receive funding in these career education programs up to their Bright Futures maximum hours of funding.

- Academic Top Scholars renewal eligibility is based on the FAS annual renewal requirement. Renewal of the FAS will also earn renewal of the ATS.

NEW - Submission of a *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA) is **NO LONGER** required; however, students are encouraged to submit the FAFSA to learn of potential eligibility for additional state and federal aid. Visit the website at www.fafsa.ed.gov for online processing.

Use of the scholarship for a Partial Academic Year

- A student may choose to enroll and receive Bright Futures funding for only one term during the academic year. Renewal criteria will include completion of a minimum of 12 semester hours (or the equivalent) per term funded for a full-time student or prorated for a part-time student and the minimum institutional cumulative GPA requirement.

Failure to Meet the Minimum Renewal GPA and/or Earned Hours –

2008-09 high school graduates and earlier - Restoration Requirements

2009-10 high school graduates and thereafter - Restoration Requirements

FAS Renewal as an FMS due to Receipt of a 2.75-2.99 cumulative GPA - For all Students

- A student has a one-time opportunity to restore the scholarship.
- Each subsequent renewal period, a renewing student will automatically be evaluated for restoration to the Florida Academic Scholars award if the student's cumulative GPA is reported by the home postsecondary institution at the minimum required 3.0 or above. No application is required.
- Funding will then be available to the student at the Florida Academic Scholars award level beginning in the fall of the upcoming academic year. This will be the one-time restoration opportunity.
- An FAS who loses the scholarship and then restores to an FMS and accepts funding as an FMS, may not be awarded a second restoration to his/her original Florida Academic Scholarship level.

Reinstatement: Eligible Student Did Not Receive Scholarship Funds During the Last Academic Year.

- If an eligible student did not receive scholarship funds for the last academic year (fall through

spring), a *Reinstatement/Restoration Application* must be completed and is available on the OSFA website at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org to reinstate the scholarship. Select the links **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications, Apply Here**, and then **Reinstatement/Restoration Application**. New applications are available in February each year.

- A student must receive funding within **two** years after high school graduation or apply for reinstatement within **two** years after high school graduation.
- **Students graduating from high school in the 2009-10 academic year and earlier** - once a student has received a minimum of one term of funding within 3 years of high school graduation the student is eligible to apply for reinstatement up to seven years from high school graduation.
- **Students graduating from high school in the 2010-11 and the 2011-12 academic year** - once a student has received a minimum of one term of funding within 3 years of high school graduation, the student is eligible to apply for reinstatement up to five years from high school graduation.
- **Students graduating from high school in the 2012-13 academic year and thereafter** - once a student has received a minimum of one term of funding within 2 years of high school graduation, the student is eligible to apply for reinstatement up to five years from high school graduation.
- OSFA **recommends** that reinstatement applications be *submitted* online by **July 1 for a timely fall disbursement** or by **December 15 for a timely spring disbursement**.
- If determined eligible for reinstatement, the student will receive the Bright Futures award (FAS, FMS, or GSV) for which the student was last eligible prior to reinstatement.

Eligible Student Enlists in the Military –

2009-10 high school graduates and earlier - Reinstatement Requirements

2010-11 high school graduates and thereafter - Reinstatement Requirements

Award Procedures

The FDOE will:

- Begin funding the scholarship the fall term following an eligible student's high school graduation.
- Begin funding an eligible student who graduates

mid-year the spring term following the student's graduation. (The FFAA must be submitted by August 31 of the student's graduation year prior to the spring term enrolled).

- Send scholarship funds to the postsecondary institution to be applied to the student's account after the last day of the drop/add period.
- Fund an eligible student who registers for at least six non-remedial semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) per term.
- Request reimbursement for the cost of any Bright Futures funded course(s) dropped or withdrawn after the last day of the drop/add period through the student's postsecondary institution.

If a student drops or withdraws from course(s) after the last day of the drop/add period, the student will be responsible for reimbursing the postsecondary institution for the cost of the course(s). A student may make a written appeal to the home postsecondary institution for hours dropped after the last day of the drop/add period due to verifiable illness or emergency. The postsecondary institution may then make recommendation to the Florida Department of Education. The department may accept or deny the postsecondary institution's recommendation for exception. **Non-refunded hours will affect the student's renewal eligibility.**

Students will receive the cost per credit hour award amounts listed below as specified in the 2013-14 General Appropriations Act.

2013 -14 Award Amounts per Credit Hour Florida Bright Futures Scholarships

	Semester Hour Award	Quarter Hour Award	Clock Hour Award
Florida Academic Scholars (FAS)			
4 Year	\$103	\$69	
2 Year	\$63	\$42	\$2.10
Florida Public Colleges/Baccalaureate Programs	\$71		
Career/Technical Centers	\$52	\$35	\$1.73
Academic Top Scholars (ATS)			
4 Year	\$44	\$29	
2 Year	\$44	\$29	\$1.47
Florida Public Colleges/Baccalaureate Programs	\$44		
Career/Technical Centers	\$44	\$29	\$1.47
Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS)			
4 Year	\$77	\$51	
2 Year	\$48	\$32	\$1.60
Florida Public Colleges/Associate Degree Programs	\$63		
Florida Public Colleges/Baccalaureate Programs	\$53		
Career/Technical Centers	\$39	\$26	\$1.30
Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) - 2010 -11 and earlier HS Graduates			
4 Year	\$77	\$51	
2 Year	\$48	\$32	\$1.60
Florida Public Colleges/ Baccalaureate Programs	\$53		
Gold Seal Vocational Scholars (GSV) - 2011-12 and thereafter HS Graduates*			
Career Certificate Program (PSAVs)	\$39	\$26	\$1.30
Applied Technology Diploma Program (ATDs)	\$39	\$26	\$1.30
Technical Degree Education Program (AS, AAS, CCC)	\$48	\$32	\$1.60

*GSV Initial students, as of the 2012-13, and Initials and Renewals thereafter, are ONLY eligible to receive funding in these vocational education categories.

Awards Disbursement

- Bright Futures awards are funded by the Florida Lottery and administered by the FDOE. These scholarship funds are sent to postsecondary institutions and then applied to a student's account after the last day of the drop/add period.
- An eligible student enrolled in the pilot program at the University of Florida may receive Bright Futures award funding for attendance during no more than two semesters or the equivalent in any fiscal year.
- Bright Futures funding is disbursed for fall through spring terms. Funds are not available for summer 2013 and 2014 awards.

Terms of Eligibility

2008-09 high school graduates and earlier - Scholarship Length

2009-10 high school graduates - Scholarship Length

2010-11 high school graduates and thereafter - Scholarship Length

Graduate Study for an FAS and FMS Recipient

- Bright Futures Scholarship recipients who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in the 2010-11 academic year or after, in seven semesters or fewer (or the equivalent in credit hours), and who wish to pursue graduate study, may apply the unused portion of their FAS or FMS award toward one semester of graduate study, not to exceed 15 semester hours paid at the undergraduate rate.

Appeal Process

An applicant who believes financial aid has been wrongly denied has certain rights to appeal.

- An applicant may appeal if he/she believes the FDOE erred in determining eligibility or in failing to transfer an award.
- If aid is denied for failure to meet state academic progress requirements, an applicant may appeal the denial to the home postsecondary institution by providing proof of illness or other emergency beyond the applicant's control.

An FDOE appeal is to be filed in writing within 30 days of the date of the notice of ineligibility. An institutional academic progress appeal is to be filed within 30 days of the date of the ineligibility notice sent to the student or by the date established by the institution's financial aid office, whichever is later.

Updating Information

An applicant must notify OSFA of any change in name, address, or institution attended. A student may update information the following ways:

- By accessing and updating the student record on the OSFA website at www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org, using the assigned User ID and PIN:
 - » Select **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications**,
 - » select **Application Status & Award History**, and then
 - » under **Initial Student Update**, select the appropriate option.
- By calling OSFA toll-free at 1-888-827-2004.

Students must keep their record current with accurate information. Failure to update changes in name, address, or institution attended may affect the timely disbursement of a student's award.

Transferring from one institution to another could affect an applicant's award.

Use of an Applicant's Social Security Number/Non-discrimination Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 requires state agencies to inform applicants of the reasons for requesting their Social Security numbers (SSN). The FDOE requests an SSN on all applications for financial assistance to correctly identify applicants.

An applicant will not be denied financial assistance for failure to disclose the SSN. Without an SSN, correct identification of an applicant's record cannot be assured and may result in an error in the award amount or a delay in the disbursement of an award.

Pursuant to Section 1000.05, Florida Statutes, state student financial assistance is provided to eligible applicants without discriminating on the basis of race, sex, national origin, marital status, or handicap. Minority status will be considered when required by law as a condition of eligibility or selection.

For further information contact the financial aid office at **eligible participating postsecondary institutions** or the Florida Department of Education, Office of Student Financial Assistance, State Scholarship and Grant Programs, 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1314, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400. Contact OSFA toll-free at 1-888-827-2004.

