

**FLORIDA
BRIGHT FUTURES
SCHOLARSHIP
PROGRAM**

and the

**HOME-EDUCATED
STUDENT**

Florida Department of Education (FDOE)
Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA)
Bright Futures Scholarship Program (BF)

2015-16

BRIGHT FUTURES and the HOME-EDUCATED STUDENT

All requirements are subject to change with each legislative session.

Students who are home-educated in Florida may apply for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (BF). The Bright Futures home education requirements differ from public and private high school requirements, so home educators should *plan ahead!*

In addition to the general scholarship requirements described on the BF website, a home-educated student must meet three (and possibly four) criteria to qualify for Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) or Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) awards:

1. Be registered as a home-educated student with the school district in the county where the student resides during grades 11 and 12. (s. 1002.41, F.S., defines home education registration.)
2. Document service hours (100 hours for FAS; 75 hours for FMS) completed any time during high school and before graduation.
3. Meet ACT® or SAT® minimum home education test score requirements.
4. Students may document a minimum 3.0 weighted GPA on required coursework which aligns with the State University System admission requirements found in regulation [6.002](#). This documentation must be on an official, Florida Department of Education (FDOE)-accepted transcript – (see Transcripts section below) to qualify with slightly lower ACT®/SAT® scores.

1. REGISTRATION

Florida statute requires home-educated students be registered with their local school district during 11th and 12th grades. The school district will certify registration to FDOE online after the *Florida Financial Aid Application* (FFAA) is submitted during the student's senior year. The FFAA opens each year on December 1.

A student enrolled in a private school registered with the FDOE School Choice Office is NOT a home-educated student. Contact the FDOE School Choice Office toll-free at 800-447-1636 or visit their website [School Choice](#) to confirm the school is registered. Bright Futures does not accept transcripts from a private school that is not registered in Florida.

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2. SERVICE HOURS

Service hours can be performed at any time during high school but the number of required hours must be completed by the date of high school graduation. At least 100 hours are required for the FAS award; at least 75 hours are required for the FMS award. The following guidelines are provided below for service hours:

- Service hours may not benefit the student financially or materially, or be service to family members (parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and spouses, including all step relations).
- The agencies where the service hours were earned must provide documentation on the agency's letterhead of the number of hours and dates of service.
- Service hours documentation must be submitted to the home education office at the local school district where you reside. The district will certify service hours to FDOE online after the FFAA is submitted during the student's senior year.

NOTE: The required number of service hours is subject to change each year by the Florida Legislature.

3. COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS (ACT® or SAT®)

Scores of ACT® or SAT® tests taken through June 30th of the student's senior year will be accepted for Bright Futures evaluation. When registering for the exam, test score reports sent to Florida's state universities, state colleges, or public high schools will also be sent to the FDOE test score repository and will be available for Bright Futures evaluations.

If the student takes the ACT® or SAT® multiple times, Bright Futures uses the best subscores to create a best overall composite score. ACT® and SAT® subscores are not mixed. There is no limit to the number of times a student may take the exams. ACT® composite scores ending in 0.50 will be rounded up to the next whole number; SAT® scores do not require rounding.

Minimum Required Test Scores:

Florida Academic Scholars award:

A best combined score of **1290** SAT® (excluding the writing section) or **29** ACT® (excluding the writing section).

Florida Medallion Scholars award – TWO WAYS to qualify:

A best combined score of **1220** SAT® (excluding the writing section) or **27** ACT® (excluding the writing section).

OR

A best combined score of **1170** SAT® (excluding the writing section) or **26** ACT® (excluding the writing section) and a weighted 3.0 GPA in the required coursework which aligns with the State University System admission requirements found in regulation [6.002](#), documented through OFFICIAL transcripts from the four sources listed below under TRANSCRIPTS.

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4. TRANSCRIPTS

Bright Futures does not accept parent-generated transcripts. Bright Futures accepts only official transcripts from the following sources:

- Florida Virtual School
- Dual-enrollment courses from a Florida state university or state college
- Florida public school districts
- FDOE-registered private high schools (see the [School Choice](#) page on FDOE website)

The student must achieve a minimum weighted 3.0 GPA in the required coursework which aligns with the State University System admission requirements found in regulation 6.002:

- 4 English (3 must include substantial writing)
- 4 Mathematics (at or above the Algebra I level)
- 3 Natural Science (two must have substantial laboratory)
- 3 Social Science
- 2 World Language (sequential, in the same language)

If needed to raise the GPA, the student may use up to two additional, optional credits from courses in the above academic areas or in AP, IB, or AICE fine arts courses.

The Comprehensive Course Table (CCT)

To confirm if a particular course is Bright Futures eligible, consult the [Comprehensive Course Table](#) on our website. Enter the state's seven-digit high school course number, or the dual enrollment course number, to look up the course. Refer to the **FAS/FMS** (Florida Academic Scholars/Florida Medallion Scholars) column. This column indicates whether a course is Core (accepted) or Not core (not accepted) for Bright Futures.

EVALUATIONS FOR INITIAL SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY

- Bright Futures evaluates home-educated students' eligibility for scholarship awards by August of each year.
- Students must have completed the FFAA in order to receive an evaluation.
- Online award notifications are available in August.

CHECKING AWARD STATUS

Keep the User ID and Password received after completing the FFAA. **WRITE IT DOWN AND KEEP IT SAFE!**

With this User ID, and following the instructions provided online, a student can edit the financial aid application, check eligibility status, read any notifications sent from FDOE, and monitor the use of scholarship funds throughout the postsecondary career.

YOUR USER ID: KNOW IT, USE IT, BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR STATE FINANCIAL AID!

For more information, please visit the [Bright Futures](#) website or contact us toll-free at 888-827-2004.