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OSFA-STATE HS: #20-21:03

MEMORANDUM

TO: Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program Contacts
Public and Private High School Counselors

FROM: Parker Campbell, Director
State Scholarship and Grant Programs

DATE: January 25, 2021

SUBJECT: **Bright Futures Evaluations for 2020-21 High School Seniors**

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) will begin evaluations of 2020-21 high school seniors in late March. In order for a student to qualify for Bright Futures, all five of the below requirements must be met:

- Submit a complete Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA), also known as the state application, no later than August 31, 2021, at <https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org>;
- Complete the required coursework (by high school graduation);
- Achieve the required grade point average in the required coursework;
- Complete the required number of service hours (by high school graduation); and
- Achieve the required college entrance exam score (no later than June 30, 2021).

All high school students should have the opportunity to receive both an Early and Final Evaluation. OSFA can only conduct an official evaluation if the student has submitted the state application and the school/district has provided an updated transcript.

Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA)

All high school seniors need to submit a complete FFAA, also known as the state application, even if they are not planning to attend a Florida postsecondary institution immediately after high school graduation. The state application opened October 1, 2020 where students are required to apply by high school graduation, no later than August 31 of their graduating year. In order for students to receive an official Early Evaluation and status notification, OSFA must receive their applications by May 31, 2021.

Students are required to create an account prior to submitting the state application. The application is submitted to OSFA once the “Results” tab appears. Attached is an FFAA guide for reference when assisting students as they complete the application.

Students who meet all academic requirements, but do not apply, will not be eligible for the scholarship. Please encourage all seniors to apply as soon as possible to avoid issues related to eligibility determinations.

Suzanne Pridgeon
Deputy Commissioner, Finance and Operations

Coursework and Service Hours

Submit transcripts for your high school students as soon as possible after 7th semester grades are reported. For Early Evaluation, transcripts must include 7th semester grades, as well as courses in progress for 8th semester and service hours earned during high school through January 31, 2021. All service hours, whether associated with a Volunteer Public Service Course or an International Baccalaureate diploma, must be reported on the transcript.

Please ensure that transcripts accurately include all courses, grades and service hours. Failure to report accurate transcript information may prevent or delay a student from qualifying for Bright Futures.

The FASTER 'Early Evaluation' address value for 2021 senior transcripts is **2171**.

College Entrance Exams

OSFA will evaluate students based on official ACT[®] and SAT[®] test scores obtained directly from the two national test companies through the state test repository. Continue to report PERT scores on the transcript for each student. For Early Evaluation, OSFA will use tests taken through January 31, 2021.

In order for the scores to be sent to the repository, students must request their official test scores be sent to one of Florida's 12 state public universities when registering for the ACT[®]/SAT[®]. The demographic information between a student transcript and ACT[®]/SAT[®] registration must match exactly or the scores will not properly load into the student's evaluation.

Although ACT[®] and SAT[®] may offer test dates for 2021 high school graduates after June 2021, final evaluations for 2021 seniors will only consider test dates through June 30, 2021, as required by rule 6A-20.028, Florida Administrative Code, for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

District/School Monitoring

Florida statutes require each district and school to monitor their students' progress throughout the evaluation process. Districts/schools are able to monitor transcript submissions, application submissions, official test scores, matches and pending evaluation results by accessing the Online Transcript Entry and Evaluation System (OTEES) database.

You can use the Student Transcript Report to track seniors with and without official test scores. This report is found in OTEES within the **Student Lists/Search** menu, **All Transcripts** tab. Note: only official test scores, as confirmed from the state test repository, are viewable on this report.

School district's responsibilities for Bright Futures are outlined in Florida Statutes (F.S.). Please review the responsibilities listed below.

Section 1009.531(4), F.S.

- Annually provide each high school student in grade 11 or 12 a complete and accurate Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Evaluation Report and Key.
- Disclose (on Student Report Card) that Bright Futures grade point average (GPA) may differ from the GPA on the report card.

To access the referenced resources in OTEES,

- Go to the OSFA home page at <https://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAidsg.org>,
- Click **Bright Futures Scholarship**, and
- Click OTEES in the blue menu bar to log into the OTEES database.
- To review an individual student's Bright Futures Scholarship Evaluation Report and Key, go to the **Student Lists/Search** menu, click **All Transcripts**, and choose the "R" action code for the specific student.
- To review the Bright Futures Scholarship Evaluation Report and Key for an entire high school or district, go to the **Reports** menu and select **Multiple Student Evaluation Reports**.

Bright Futures Academic Top Scholars (BFATS)

OSFA has completed the BFATS selection process for 2020 seniors. Please review the **Summary Statistics Report** within the **Reports** menu in OTEES for more information.

Security

Email OSFASecurity@fldoe.org with any security issues for your district/school personnel or for any students with issues accessing their account information. Please do not provide complete Social Security numbers on documents emailed to our office. We encourage Bright Futures district and school contacts to use their User ID and Password to review the Communications and Training Resources tab, as well as, other useful reports made available on the OTEES website.

Bright Futures Summer Funding

The Florida Legislature expanded the Florida Bright Futures program to provide Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) and Bright Futures Florida Medallion Scholars (FMS) funding during the summer term. Funding is only available if the postsecondary institution allows an FAS/FMS student to enroll as a degree-seeking student during the summer. OSFA will be notifying all 2021 high school graduates eligible for FAS/FMS about the availability of funding for the 2021 summer.

Bright Futures Contact Information

Please share information in this memo with the appropriate personnel. For assistance, call OSFA Customer Service at 888-827-2004 or Bright Futures directly and request to speak to a program specialist listed below.

Public High Schools/Districts

Timberly Johnson 850-410-5199 Timberly.Johnson@fldoe.org

LeRoyce Shelton 850-410-6832 LeRoyce.Shelton@fldoe.org

Private High Schools

Beverly Lahtinen 850-245-1898 Beverly.Lahtinen@fldoe.org

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Attachment