



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

April 22, 2013

Secretary Ken Detzner
Secretary of State
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 S. Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

2013 APR 22 AM 11:26
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

FILED

Dear Secretary Detzner:

By the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Florida, and Article III, Section 8, of the State Constitution, I do hereby sign and transmit Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 1076, enacted during the 115th Session of the Legislature of Florida, since statehood in 1845, during the Regular Session of 2013 and entitled:

An act relating to K-20 Education

The fundamental goal of Florida's K-12 education system is to prepare our students for future success in college and careers. This goal continues in Florida's higher education system as many students progress through state colleges and universities on their way to a career. Prioritizing investments in education and achieving measurable results for students and teachers are both critical to the future of Florida. It is equally important to update our K-20 educational programs and create funding incentives to increase the likelihood that educational programs in Florida's public schools, colleges, and universities will better prepare students for future occupations and careers.

Families expect their investment in higher education to provide greater job opportunities for their children after graduation. Florida must prioritize spending on higher education by focusing state investments on programs that have the best return. Performance-based funding and the adoption of meaningful measures will make certain our higher education institutions are meeting the needs of students, parents, and employers while ensuring a positive return on investment for all Florida families. Performance-based funding will also ensure that graduates are employable in fields where jobs are available. Every institution will have a standard way to measure the criteria, and the funding will be allocated to the institutions that do the best in achieving these criteria. The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education will be directed to operationalize these three critical metrics so Floridians know how well our universities and colleges are doing:

1. Percentage of graduates employed or enrolled in further education;
2. Average wages of employed graduates; and
3. Average cost per graduate.

Creating a nationally recognized top university benefits all of Florida's universities and colleges by making the higher education system more competitive; while promoting economic development by producing a competitive workforce that attracts new and expanding companies. Establishing preeminence criteria and making targeted investments will help Florida's two highest performing universities, the University of Florida and Florida State University, become nationally recognized for excellence. This additional investment in the University of Florida and Florida State University sets an ambitious goal of achieving world-class research universities to drive Florida job growth without shifting costs to parents and students. Having top ranked universities in the state will help attract business, advance our innovation economy, heighten visibility and prestige for Florida's entire university system, and keep Florida's best and brightest students in the state.

Having world-class higher education institutions in Florida benefits our state only if our students have access to these institutions. The rising cost of a four-year degree at Florida colleges and universities makes it difficult for our children to afford a degree and makes planning for college difficult for Florida families. Florida's students and families should not have to go into great debt in order to obtain a college degree. Giving Florida's 23 bachelor's degree granting institutions the ability to charge a lower rate for tuition will provide greater access to these schools for our students. Additionally, establishing a postsecondary institute of online learning with a reduced tuition structure will open up higher education opportunities to more Floridians.

While enhancing Florida's higher education system is important, equally important is ensuring students in our K-12 public schools are learning the skills necessary to succeed in college or career. Florida is a leader in education accountability. As part of our continued efforts to better prepare students for the future, Florida is undergoing a transition to Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and assessments that will measure a student's mastery of those standards. This transition is an important step to ensure the future success of Florida's students. A student's performance on these standards will be a practical, tangible measure of how they will perform in both higher education and the workforce.

The creation of multiple pathways for demonstrating the skills required for high school graduation, including earning national industry certifications in over 200 different professions, occupations, and careers recognizes the diverse interests and needs of our students. These pathways will allow students to graduate high school with the skills needed for the jobs of the 21st century and enable them to compete in the global marketplace.

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It is essential that Florida has the workforce that modern business and the economy demands. Requiring Florida's adult education students to complete a planning exercise called "Action Steps to Employment" will help emphasize the important link between the adult education program and employability upon completion of the program. These steps will accelerate employment and increase the number of adult education students prepared for postsecondary education and employment.

For the reasons stated above, I hereby sign into law Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 1076.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", with a large, stylized initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Rick Scott
Governor