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Operational Audit

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND FLORIDA STUDENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAMS

By Florida Public Educational Institutions

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ADMINISTRATION OF THE FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AND FLORIDA STUDENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAMS

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SUMMARY

This operational audit focused on the administration of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Public Program), and Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Career Ed Program) by selected Florida public educational institutions[1] for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025, and included a follow-up on applicable findings noted in our report No. 2024-194. Our operational audit disclosed the following:

Finding 1: Three institutions (Daytona State College, Polk State College, and Santa Fe College) did not always comply with Florida Department of Education (FDOE) guidelines and other requirements governing FSAG – Public Program disbursement reconciliations, student eligibility reporting, and refunds to the FDOE for unused Program funds.

Finding 2: Contrary to FDOE policies, Santa Fe College untimely performed and reported the Bright Futures Scholarship Program final disbursement reconciliation to the FDOE.

Finding 3: Four institutions (Daytona State College, Pasco-Hernando State College, Polk State College, and Santa Fe College) did not always comply with State law by timely submitting Disbursement Eligibility Reports (DERs) to the FDOE for FSAG – Public Program and Bright Futures Scholarship Program students. Additionally, Polk State College and Santa Fe College reported inaccurate credit hours on certain DERs and Santa Fe College also inaccurately calculated and disbursed certain Bright Futures Scholarship Program Funds.

Finding 4: Contrary to State Board of Education rules and FDOE policies, Polk State College and Santa Fe College sometimes submitted grade and hours reports untimely to the FDOE and the reports for FSAG – Public Program and Bright Futures Scholarship students at Santa Fe College and Miami-Dade District School Board occasionally contained inaccuracies.

BACKGROUND

FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Legislature established the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program[2] to provide lottery-funded scholarships to any Florida high school graduate who merits recognition of high academic achievement and enrolls in a degree, certificate, or applied technology program at an eligible Florida public or private educational institution. The Bright Futures Scholarship Program consists of four award types: the Florida

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[1] The selected public educational institutions are identified in ***EXHIBITS A**, **B**,* and ***C*** to this report.

[2] Section 1009.53, Florida Statutes.

Academic Scholarship, the Florida Medallion Scholarship, the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholarship, and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship.

Table 1 shows the number of students who received Bright Futures Scholarship Program awards and the award amounts disbursed by the 12 public universities and 28 public colleges for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years.

Table 1
Bright Futures Scholarship Program Awards
For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 Fiscal Years

	2023-24	**2024-25**
Number of Students Receiving Awards	111,014	114,441
Award Amounts Disbursed:		
By the Public Universities	$533,046,404	$551,743,154
By the Public Colleges	25,067,837	27,274,281
Total Award Amounts Disbursed	**$558,114,241**	**$579,017,435**

Source: FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2023-24 End-of-Year Report* and *2024-25 End-of-Year Report* and auditor-compiled disbursement amounts using university, college, and FDOE records.

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) determines the eligibility of students based on general criteria for Bright Futures Scholarship Program awards and specific criteria for each scholarship type. After a student qualifies for an award, they must continue to meet eligibility criteria for renewal awards. Renewal awards eligibility criteria include achieving and maintaining specified grade point averages and completing at least 24 semester credit hours in the last academic year in which the student earned a scholarship if enrolled full time, or a prorated number of credit hours as determined by the FDOE if the student was enrolled less than full time for any part of the academic year.

The FDOE is responsible for administering the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and the disbursement and reconciliation process. Each term, the FDOE provides the institutions a list of eligible students and advances scholarship award moneys for eligible students enrolled at each respective institution. The institutions are to verify that the students have enrolled in the required number of hours to receive the scholarship, calculate the disbursement amount based on the type of scholarship for which the student was eligible, and disburse the money for the student. Any moneys not disbursed for eligible students for the Fall and Spring Terms must be returned to the FDOE within 60 days after the end of the regular registration period. For the Summer Term, undisbursed moneys must be returned to the FDOE within 30 days after the term end. For courses dropped by a student and courses from which a student withdrew after the end of the drop and add period, institutions must return Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds to the FDOE within 30 days after the end of a term, unless the FDOE grants a student an exception. For certain award overpayments, such as overpayments that occur because scholarship recipients withdrew from courses after term end due to extenuating circumstances, the refund must be made within 60 days of the date the overpayment was discovered, unless an exception is granted by the FDOE. Institutions are also required to report disbursements, enrolled hours, earned hours, and grade point averages to the FDOE. ***EXHIBIT A*** to this report provides a summary of the Bright Futures Scholarship Program awards advances and disbursements reported by Florida public universities and colleges for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years.

Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program and Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program

The Legislature established the Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Public Program)[3] to provide financial assistance for degree-seeking, Florida resident, undergraduate students who attend a Florida public university or college. The Legislature also established the Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Career Ed Program)[4] to provide financial assistance for certificate-seeking, Florida resident, students at a Florida public college or career center operated by a district school board (DSB).

Pursuant to State law,[5] the FDOE must distribute FSAG – Public Program and FSAG – Career Ed Program funding in accordance with a State Board of Education (SBE) approved formula that establishes a minimum base allocation for each institution at 90 percent of its previous fiscal year disbursements, or a proportional amount when funds are insufficient to make such allocation. From remaining funds, each institution will receive a proportional amount based on the average number of full-time equivalent disbursed students and total number of unfunded eligible students reported by each institution for the prior 3 years. The allocation amounts each year are dependent upon the approved State budget. Table 2 shows, for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, the FSAG – Public Program award amounts disbursed by the 12 public universities and 28 public colleges and the FSAG – Career Ed Program award amounts disbursed by the 30 participating DSBs and the 28 public colleges.

Table 2
FSAG – Public Program and FSAG – Career Ed Program Awards
For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 Fiscal Years

	2023-24	2024-25
FSAG – Public Program:		
Number of Students Receiving Awards	138,638	133,712
Award Amounts Disbursed:		
By the Public Universities	$123,441,988	$123,889,795
By the Public Colleges	112,619,143	111,987,285
Total Award Amounts Disbursed	**$236,061,131**	**235,877,080**
FSAG – Career Ed Program:		
Number of Students Receiving Awards	4,193	4,276
Award Amounts Disbursed:		
By the Participating DSBs	$2,502,632	$2,519,479
By the Public Colleges	780,218	765,682
Total Award Amounts Disbursed	**$3,282,850**	**$3,285,161**

Source: FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance, *2023-24 End-of-Year Report* and *2024-25 End-of-Year Report* and auditor-compiled disbursement amounts using university, college, and FDOE records.

[3] Section 1009.50, Florida Statutes.
[4] Section 1009.505, Florida Statutes.
[5] Sections 1009.50(4)(a) and 1009.505(4)(a), Florida Statutes.

For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, FSAG – Public Program and FSAG – Career Ed Program award amounts ranged from $200 to the maximum award amount of $3,260 established by the General Appropriations Acts.[6] To be eligible, a student must demonstrate a substantial financial need by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year. Institutions determine student eligibility based on information from the FAFSA, cumulative grade point average, and earned credit information, considering the student aid index (SAI)[7] cut-off established by the FDOE. The institutions then estimate individual award amounts taking into consideration a standard cost of education budget and a student's SAI and other estimated grants and scholarship amounts including amounts awarded by the Federal Pell Grant.[8] The institutions are also to verify that the students have enrolled in the required number of hours each term to receive the awards. Renewal eligibility criteria to determine whether students continue to meet eligibility requirements include achieving and maintaining specified grade point averages and completing at least 12 semester credit hours per term in the last academic year if enrolled full time or, if the student was enrolled less than full time for any part of the academic year, a prorated number of credit hours determined by the FDOE.

Within 30 days after the end of regular registration each term,[9] institutions are required to report to the FDOE each awarded student and award amount for FSAG – Public Program and FSAG – Career Ed Program funding and each student eligible but not awarded. Institutions are also required to report to the FDOE enrolled hours, earned hours, and grade point averages. Any moneys not disbursed for eligible students for the Fall and Spring Terms must be returned to the FDOE within 60 days after the end of regular registration each Spring Term. Institutions may use undisbursed FSAG – Public Program advances for the subsequent Summer Term if the institution submits to the FDOE documentation of plans to disburse awards to students. Any undisbursed funds for the Summer Term must be returned within 30 days after the end of that Term. ***EXHIBIT B*** to this report provides a summary of the FSAG – Public Program advances and disbursements reported by Florida public universities and colleges for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years. ***EXHIBIT C*** to this report provides a summary of the FSAG – Career Ed Program advances and disbursements reported by Florida's 30 participating DSBs and 28 public colleges for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finding 1: Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program Reporting

State law[10] requires participating institutions to administer the Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Public Program) in accordance with State Board of Education (SBE) rules. SBE rules[11] require an institution receiving FSAG – Public Program funds to report to the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) each Program student, the student's social security number (SSN), and amount of

[6] Sections 1009.50(3) and 1009.505(3), Florida Statutes; Chapter 2023-239, Laws of Florida, Specific Appropriation 67; and Chapter 2024-231, Laws of Florida, Specific Appropriation 71.

[7] FDOE Memorandum for 2024-25 FSAG Calculated Student Aid Index and Allocation Policy, dated April 10, 2024.

[8] SBE Rules 6A-20.031(6) and 20.0071(6), Florida Administrative Code.

[9] SBE Rules 6A-20.031(7) and 20.0071(7), Florida Administrative Code.

[10] Section 1009.50(5), Florida Statutes.

[11] SBE Rule 6A-20.031(7), Florida Administrative Code.

Program funds disbursed to the student. Each institution is also to report to the FDOE the SSN of each eligible but not awarded student. The FDOE calculates institutional annual and supplemental funding allocations based on previous fiscal year disbursements and the reported number of unfunded eligible students. Pursuant to State law,[12] the FDOE may suspend or revoke an institution's eligibility to receive future FSAG – Public Program funds if the FDOE finds that an institution has not complied with State law.

According to FDOE policies,[13] each institution must by June 1st perform the final reconciliation of funds received from Florida Scholarship and Grant Programs, such as the FSAG – Public Program, with the College funds disbursed to Program-eligible students. The reconciliation is to be reported and applicable amounts refunded to the FDOE.

For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, the FDOE advanced FSAG – Public Program funds totaling $236 million each year to the 40 public universities and colleges.[14] As part of our audit, we examined records at 14 selected institutions (5 universities and 9 colleges) that were advanced FSAG – Public Program funds totaling $136 million each of those years, and found that most of the selected institutions complied with SBE and FDOE requirements. However, we found that 3 institutions (Daytona State College, Polk State College, and Santa Fe College) did not timely perform the final reconciliation of Program funds received with College funds disbursed to students and report the reconciliation to FDOE by the June 1st required due date. Specifically:

- Daytona State College did not perform and report the final reconciliation to the FDOE until March 2026, 9 months after the June 1, 2025, due date. Consequently, the FDOE withheld the College's 2025-26 fiscal year Program funding allocation totaling $2.4 million until March 2026. According to College personnel, the delayed reconciliation and reporting occurred due to personnel turnover.
- Polk State College did not perform and report the final reconciliation or refund the unused Program funds totaling $273,233 to the FDOE until November 2025, 5 months after the June 1, 2025, due date. Consequently, the FDOE withheld the College's Fall 2025 Program funding allocation totaling $870,910 from the College until November 2025. According to College personnel, the delayed reconciliation and refund were primarily due to technical difficulties with the College student financial aid information technology (IT) system.
- Santa Fe College had not performed and reported the reconciliation to the FDOE as of May 2026, 12 months after the June 1, 2025, due date. As of May 2026, the FDOE continued to withhold the College's Spring 2026 Program funding allocation of $920,836, FDOE records[15] showed disbursements to students totaling $1.7 million and unused Program funds totaling $173,703, and College records indicated that disbursements were $20,000 less than FDOE-recorded disbursements. In response to our inquiry, College personnel indicated that the delayed reconciliation and reporting were caused by IT system difficulties.

Table 3 provides a summary of the FSAG – Public Program information reported to the FDOE by Daytona State College, Polk State College, and Sante Fe College.

[12] Section 1009.50(4)(e), Florida Statutes.

[13] The FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* – State Programs Annual Calendar and Institutional Responsibilities and Procedures.

[14] FSAG – Public Program funds advanced to the 12 universities and 28 colleges for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years are shown on ***Exhibit B*** to this report.

[15] The FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance payment summary report for Santa Fe College as of May 13, 2026.

Table 3
FSAG – Public Program Award Receipts, Disbursements, and Unfunded Eligible Students Reported for Daytona, Polk, and Santa Fe State Colleges

For the 2024-25 Fiscal Year

	Daytona	Polk	Santa Fe
Receipts	$2.4 million	$2.0 million	$1.8 million
Disbursements	$2.4 million	$1.7 million	$1.7 million
Unfunded Eligible Students	0 students	0 students	4 students

Source: FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance, Payment Summaries and *2024-25 End-of-Year Report*.

Additionally, from the population of FSAG – Public Program students[16] who attended the 40 public universities and colleges, we chose 5 public universities and 4 public colleges and selected records for 110 students at those institutions (including 30 Polk State College students and 10 Santa Fe College students) to evaluate College records supporting Program student eligibility and reporting. We found that 10 of the 30 Polk State College students and 3 of the 10 Santa Fe students were eligible for Program awards for Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Terms; however:

- 4 Polk State College students only received Program awards for the Spring 2025 Term and were not properly reported as eligible but not awarded students for the Fall 2024 Term. According to College personnel, the misreporting occurred due to student financial aid IT system difficulties. Additionally, due to misreported student SSNs, the College did not properly report 6 of the 26 other students as eligible but not awarded students.
- 3 Santa Fe College students only received Program awards for Fall 2024 and were not reported as eligible but not awarded students for the Spring 2025 Term. According to College personnel, the reporting errors occurred because of the technical difficulties with the student financial aid IT system.

Absent appropriate and timely reconciliation and reporting of Program funds and refunds to the FDOE, institutions cannot demonstrate compliance with established requirements and the FDOE may reduce future funding based on inaccurate information. In addition, timely refunds of unused Program funds allow the FDOE sufficient time to allocate those funds to other institutions with eligible but not awarded students. Moreover, since fiscal year funding is based on previous fiscal year disbursements, including consideration of the reported number of eligible but not awarded students, it is important that institutions promptly and properly identify and report all eligible students. We noted similar findings for two other colleges in our report No. 2024-194.

Recommendation: Applicable colleges should enhance procedures to ensure compliance with FSAG – Public Program reporting requirements. To ensure that Program disbursement reconciliations, unused funds, and eligible but not awarded students are properly reported to the FDOE, such enhancements should include effective implementation of IT system modifications to resolve technical difficulties and appropriate staff training.

[16] There were 138,638 FSAG – Public Program students during the 2023-24 fiscal year and 133,712 students during the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Finding 2: Bright Futures Scholarship Program Reporting

As similarly noted in Finding 1 for the FSAG – Public Program, FDOE policies[17] require each institution to perform the final reconciliation of funds received from the Bright Futures Scholarship Program with College funds disbursed to Program-eligible students and, by June 1st, report the reconciliation online and refund applicable amounts to the FDOE. Pursuant to State law,[18] if the receiving institution fails to report to the FDOE as required, the FDOE may withhold Program payments to the institution.

For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, the FDOE advanced Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds totaling $562 million and $584 million, respectively, to the 40 public universities and colleges.[19] As part of our audit, we requested for examination records at 4 selected universities and 7 selected colleges, which were advanced Program funds totaling $438 million and $453 million, respectively. Although our examination found that most of the selected institutions complied with Program requirements, we also found that controls at Santa Fe College for the 2024-25 fiscal year needed improvement to ensure compliance with Program disbursement reconciliation and reporting requirements.

For the 2024-25 fiscal year, Santa Fe College was advanced Program funds totaling $4 million and reported that the advanced funds were either disbursed or timely refunded to the FDOE. While College personnel reconciled FDOE disbursements to College disbursements, reported the reconciliation to the FDOE, and timely refunded applicable balances, the reconciliation was not done until February 2026, 8 months after the June 1, 2025, disbursement reconciliation due date. As similarly discussed for the FSAG – Public Program noncompliance cited in Finding 1, Santa Fe College personnel indicated that difficulties associated with implementation of the student financial aid IT system caused the delayed reconciliation.

Absent accurate and promptly documented reconciliations to the FDOE, Santa Fe College cannot demonstrate compliance with State law and FDOE policies and the FDOE may withhold payment for Program awards. We noted a similar finding for one other college in our report No. 2024-194.

Recommendation: Santa Fe College should continue efforts to accurately reconcile funds received from the Bright Futures Scholarship Program with records of College funds disbursed to Program-eligible students and timely report the reconciliation to the FDOE. Such efforts should include effective implementation of IT system modifications to resolve technical difficulties.

Finding 3: Disbursement Eligibility Reports

State law[20] requires an institution to certify to the FDOE the eligibility status of each student who receives a Bright Futures Scholarship or FSAG Program award and the amount of funds disbursed to each student within 30 days after the end of regular registration each term. FDOE policies[21] require institutions to

[17] The FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* – State Programs Annual Calendar and Institutional Responsibilities and Procedures.

[18] Section 1009.53(5), Florida Statutes.

[19] Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds advanced for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years are shown on ***EXHIBIT A*** to this report.

[20] Sections 1009.50(4)(d), 1009.505(4)(d), and 1009.53(5)(a), Florida Statutes.

[21] The FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual*.

report that information, along with the number of hours each student enrolled in those programs, on a Disbursement Eligibility Report (DER).

As part of our audit, we examined the DERs and supporting documentation for the Fall 2023 through Summer 2025 Terms for each applicable award from the Bright Futures Scholarship Program and FSAG Programs at 17 selected institutions, including 5 public universities, 9 public colleges, and 3 district school boards (DSBs). We found that most of the selected institutions timely submitted a DER for each student; however, as shown in Table 4, 4 institutions (Daytona State College, Pasco-Hernando State College, Polk State College, and Santa Fe College) submitted DERs to the FDOE 9 to 433 days late.

Table 4
Untimely Disbursement Eligibility Reports
For the Fall 2024 Through Summer 2025 Terms

Institution	Program	Total Number of DERs [a]	Untimely DERs [a]			
			Total	Term(s)	Range of Days Late	Average Number of Days Late
Daytona State College	Bright Futures	618	334	Fall 2024	74	74
	FSAG – Public	2,526 [b]	2,047	Fall 2024 and Spring 2025	72 to 433	256
Pasco-Hernando State College	Bright Futures	572	485	Fall 2024 and Spring 2025	30 to 37	34
	FSAG – Public	614	614	Fall 2024 and Spring 2025	19 to 61	34
Polk State College	Bright Futures	464	296	Fall 2024 and Spring 2025	9 to 41	22
	FSAG – Public	1,828	1,808	Fall 2024 and Spring 2025	13 to 283	178
Santa Fe College	Bright Futures	2,756 [b]	2,745	Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Summer 2025	17 to 242	38
	FSAG – Public	1,706 [b]	1,706	Fall 2024 and Spring 2025	24 to 414	98

[a] Each DER contains a student's eligibility and disbursement information for each term and program. The number of DERs includes a unique DER for each student each term.

[b] Number reflects DER counts as of January 2026 for the Fall 2024 through Summer 2025 Terms although the College had not finalized the counts.

Source: Auditor-compiled information from FDOE records.

As of January 2026, Daytona State College and Santa Fe College had not finalized their 2024-25 fiscal year DERs for FSAG – Public Program funds and Santa Fe College had not finalized its 2024-25 fiscal year DERs for Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds. In response to our inquiries, Daytona State College personnel indicated that the remaining DERs were delayed due to staff turnover and, according to staff at Pasco-Hernando, Polk, and Santa Fe Colleges, technical difficulties in implementing student financial aid IT systems caused the untimely submittal of DERs.

Additionally, to evaluate DER compliance for the population of FSAG – Public Program and Bright Futures Scholarship Program students,[22] we chose:

- 5 public universities and 4 public colleges and selected records for 110 FSAG – Public Program students at those institutions.
- 4 public universities and 2 public colleges and selected records for 60 Bright Futures Scholarship Program students at those institutions.

As summarized in Table 5, we found that Polk State College and Santa Fe College did not always accurately report enrolled credit hours on student DERs.

Table 5
Student DERs with Misreported Credit Hours
2023-24 and 2024-25 Fiscal Years

			Number of					
Institution	Program	Fiscal Year(s)	Students	Enrolled Credit Hours	Students Selected	Hours Reported for Selected Students	Students With Misreported Hours	Net Over (Under) Reported Hours
Polk State College	FSAG – Public	2024-25	1,025	19,316	30	404	10	(120)
Santa Fe College	Bright Futures	2023-24 and 2024-25	2,332	63,363	10	384	3	23
	FSAG – Public	2024-25	1,193	17,782	10	163	3	(33)

Source: Auditor-compiled information from FDOE records and institution records.

While the 153 total net under-reported hours for the 13 students at Polk State College and Santa Fe College did not impact FSAG - Public Program funding, the 23 over-reported credit hours for the 3 Santa Fe College students caused Bright Futures Scholarship Program net overpayments totaling $2,340. According to Santa Fe College staff and supporting records, the 23 net over-reported credit hours were misreported on DERs because the student financial aid IT system miscalculated Fall 2024 Term awards totaling $6,717 instead of accurately awarding amounts totaling $4,377 based on the actual enrolled hours. Subsequent to our inquiries, in August 2025 the College resubmitted the students' DERs and reported the correct hours and award payments for the 3 students. Absent accurate and timely eligibility and disbursement reporting to the FDOE, institutions cannot demonstrate compliance with State law and FDOE's ability to compile timely State scholarship and grant program funding and related student eligibility information is limited.

Recommendation: Applicable colleges should enhance procedures to ensure that DERs contain accurate information and are timely submitted to the FDOE. Such enhancements should include effective implementation of IT system modifications to resolve technical issues and appropriate training to help staff understand program requirements and promote compliance with applicable DER requirements. Additionally, Santa Fe College should continue efforts to ensure that future Program disbursements are accurately calculated and paid to students.

[22] For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, the population at the 40 public universities and colleges included 138,638 and 133,712 FSAG – Public Program students and 111,014 and 114,441 Bright Futures Scholarship Program students.

Finding 4: Grade and Hours Reports

SBE rules[23] and FDOE policies[24] require institutions participating in Florida Scholarship and Grant Programs, such as the FSAG – Public, Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant (FSAG – Career Ed), or Bright Futures Scholarship Programs, to submit to the FDOE a grade and hours report (G&H report) for each award recipient no later than 30 days after the last day of classes for the Spring Term, or the equivalent. The G&H report includes the grade point averages (GPAs), credit or clock hours earned, and degree earned date information,[25] and the information in the report is used to establish a student's continued award eligibility.

From the 40 public universities and colleges and the 30 DSBs participating in the Florida Scholarship and Grant Programs for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic years, we requested for examination institution records supporting G&H reports required to be submitted by 17 selected institutions (5 public universities, 9 public colleges, and 3 DSBs). We examined records to evaluate the accuracy of the G&H reports for selected award recipients of the FSAG – Public,[26] FSAG – Career Ed,[27] and Bright Futures Scholarship[28] Programs and found that most of the selected institutions timely submitted accurate reports. However, as summarized in Table 6, Polk State College and Santa Fe College did not always submit or timely submit G&H and, as summarized in Table 7, certain G&H reports submitted by Santa Fe College and Miami-Dade DSB contained inaccuracies.

Table 6
Grade & Hours Reports Not Submitted and Not Timely Submitted
2024-25 Fiscal Year

Institution	Program	Fiscal Year	Total Required G&H Reports	G&H Reports Not Submitted		G&H Reports Not Timely Submitted	
				Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Polk State College	FSAG – Public	2024-25	1,025	334	33	393	57
Santa Fe College	FSAG – Public	2024-25	1,193	364	31	738	89

Source: Auditor-compiled information from FDOE records.

The 393 reports not timely submitted by Polk State College were submitted 8 to 158 days late and averaged 29 days late. The 738 reports not timely submitted by Santa Fe College were submitted 10 to

[23] SBE Rule 6A -20.002(1)(i), Florida Administrative Code.

[24] FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* – Institutional Responsibilities and Procedures.

[25] SBE Rules 6A-20.031(1)(a) and 6A-20.028(1)(a), Florida Administrative Code.

[26] From the population of 138,638 and 133,712 FSAG – Public Program students for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, we chose 5 public universities and 4 colleges and selected records for 110 students at those institutions to evaluate compliance.

[27] From the population of 4,193 and 4,276 FSAG – Career Ed Program students for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, we chose 3 participating DSBs and 1 public college and selected records for 60 students at those institutions to evaluate compliance.

[28] From the population of 111,014 and 114,441 Bright Futures Scholarship Program students for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, we chose 4 public universities and 2 colleges and selected records for 60 students at those institutions to evaluate compliance.

162 days late and averaged 76 days late. Polk State College and Santa Fe College personnel indicated that the unsubmitted and delayed reports were caused by difficulties in implementing student financial aid IT systems.

Table 7
Grade & Hours Reports Submitted With Inaccuracies
2023-2024 and 2024-25 Fiscal Year

Institution	Program	Fiscal Year	Total Required G&H Reports	Auditor-Selected G&H Reports	G&H Reports with Inaccuracies	
					Total	Percent
Santa Fe College	Bright Futures	2023-24 and 2024-25	2,332	10	6	60
Miami-Dade District School Board – Miami Lakes Educational and Technical College	FSAG – Career Ed	2023-24 and 2024-25	360	30	11	37

Source: Auditor-compiled information from FDOE and institution records.

The 6 Santa Fe College Bright Futures Program G&H reports that contained inaccuracies were for the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Terms. Specifically, a total of 35 credit hours earned were reported on the 6 reports but, according to applicable student transcripts, the hours were under reported by 11 to 33 hours, an average of 22 under-reported hours. In response to our inquiry, Santa Fe College personnel indicated that the misreported information was caused by difficulties in implementing the College student financial aid IT system.

For 2 of the 30 selected G&H reports at Miami Lakes Educational and Technical College (Technical College), credit hours earned were misreported by 250 and 372 clock hours and, for 9 of the other 28 G&H reports, GPAs were misreported by 1 to 3 of the total 4 available points. In response to our inquiries, Technical College personnel indicated that the misreported credit hours and GPAs were caused by human errors and, subsequently, Technical College personnel resubmitted corrected G&H reports to the FDOE.

Absent accurate and timely grade and hours reporting, institutions cannot demonstrate compliance with SBE rules and FDOE policies, FDOE's ability to compile timely State scholarship and grant program funding and related student eligibility information may be limited, and student eligibility determinations may be inappropriate.

Recommendation: Polk State and Santa Fe Colleges and Miami-Dade District School Board should enhance procedures to ensure that G&H reports are accurately and timely submitted for all program award recipients. To help staff understand program requirements and promote compliance with G&H report requirements, such enhancements should include effective implementation of IT system modifications to resolve technical issues and appropriate training.

PRIOR AUDIT FOLLOW-UP

Applicable institutions[29] had taken corrective actions for findings in our report No. 2024-194.

[29] The applicable institutions include Eastern Florida State College, Pensacola State College, and University of South Florida.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

The Auditor General conducts operational audits of governmental entities to provide the Legislature, Florida's citizens, public entity management, and other stakeholders unbiased, timely, and relevant information for use in promoting government accountability and stewardship and improving government operations. Pursuant to Sections 1009.53(5)(c), 1009.50(4)(e), and 1009.505(4)(e), Florida Statutes, we conducted an operational audit of the administration of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Public Program), and the Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG – Career Ed Program) by selected Florida public educational institutions for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

The 12 public universities and 28 public colleges participated in the Bright Futures Scholarship and FSAG – Public Programs. For audit of the Bright Futures Scholarship Program, we selected the 11 public universities and colleges[30] that disbursed, in total, 78 percent of the Program's disbursements for each of the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years and examined Program records. For audit of the FSAG – Public Program, we selected the 14 public universities and colleges[31] that disbursed, in total, 58 percent and 57 percent of the Program's disbursements for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, and examined Program records. The 28 public colleges and 30 district school boards (DSBs) participated in the FSAG – Career Ed Program and, for audit testing, we selected the 3 DSBs and 1 public college[32] that disbursed, in total, 27 percent and 28 percent of the Program's disbursements for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, and examined Program records. To evaluate any corrective actions taken, the applicable institutions[33] with audit findings in our report No. 2024-194, were included in the institutions selected for testing.

We conducted this operational audit from April 2025 through May 2026 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

The objectives of this operational audit were to:

- Determine the extent to which educational institutions administered Bright Futures Scholarship Program, FSAG – Public Program, and FSAG – Career Ed Program funds in accordance with applicable laws, rules, and other guidelines relating to the programs; properly accounted for funds received and distributed through the programs; maintained and prepared reliable financial records and reports; and safeguarded program assets.
- Determine whether management had taken corrective actions for applicable findings included in our report No. 2024-194.

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[30] The 11 selected institutions are identified in ***Exhibit A*** to this report.

[31] The 14 selected institutions are identified in ***Exhibit B*** to this report.

[32] The 4 selected institutions are identified in ***Exhibit C*** to this report

[33] Report No. 2024-194 included findings at the University of South Florida, Pensacola State College, and Eastern Florida State College.

- Identify statutory and fiscal changes that may be recommended to the Legislature pursuant to Section 11.45(7)(h), Florida Statutes.

This audit was designed to identify, for the activities or functions of the Bright Futures Scholarship, FSAG – Public, and FSAG – Career Ed Programs included within the scope of our audit, weaknesses in management's internal controls; instances of noncompliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, and other guidelines; and instances of inefficient or ineffective operational policies, procedures, or practices. The focus of this audit was to identify problems so that they may be corrected in such a way as to improve government accountability and efficiency and the stewardship of management. Professional judgment has been used in determining significance and audit risk and in selecting the particular transactions, legal compliance matters, records, and controls considered.

As described in more detail below, for the activities and functions of the programs included within the scope of our audit, our audit work included, but was not limited to, communicating to management and those charged with governance the scope, objectives, timing, overall methodology, and reporting of our audit; obtaining an understanding of the programs, activity, or function; identifying and evaluating internal controls significant to our audit objectives; exercising professional judgment in considering significance and audit risk in the design and execution of the research, interviews, tests, analyses, and other procedures included in the audit methodology; obtaining reasonable assurance of the overall sufficiency and appropriateness of the evidence gathered in support of our audit findings and conclusions; and reporting on the results of the audit as required by governing laws and auditing standards.

Our audit included the selection and examination of transactions and records, as well as events and conditions, occurring during the audit period of July 2023 through June 2025, and selected institution actions taken subsequent thereto. Unless otherwise indicated in this report, these records and transactions were not selected with the intent of statistically projecting the results, although we have presented for perspective, where practicable, information concerning relevant population value or size and quantifications relative to the items selected for examination.

An audit by its nature does not include a review of all records and actions of agency management, staff, and vendors and, as a consequence, cannot be relied upon to identify all instances of noncompliance, fraud, waste, abuse, or inefficiency.

In conducting our audit, we:

- From the population of 111,014 and 114,441 students for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, who attended the 40 public universities and colleges and received $1.1 billion in Bright Futures Scholarship Program awards, chose 6 institutions[34] and examined documentation supporting Program awards made to 60 selected students at those institutions to evaluate institution compliance. Specifically, we evaluated whether applicable institutions complied with Sections 1009.53 through 1009.536, Florida Statutes; State Board of Education (SBE) Rule 6A-20.028, Florida Administrative Code; and the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* by:
  - Properly classifying students by residency, who had earned high school diplomas and were registered for a minimum of 6 credit hours per term.

[34] The 6 institutions included 4 public universities and 2 public colleges.

- Awarding the proper amount for the scholarship type earned.
- Accurately and properly supporting enrolled credit hours shown on the Disbursement Eligibility Reports (DERs) submitted to the FDOE.
- Accurately and properly supporting credit hours earned and the cumulative grade point averages shown on the grade and hours reports submitted to the FDOE.

- From the population of 138,638 students and 133,712 students for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, who attended the 40 public universities and colleges and received $471.9 million in FSAG – Public Program awards, chose 9 selected institutions[35] and examined documentation supporting Program awards made to 110 selected students at those institutions to evaluate institution compliance. Specifically, we evaluated whether applicable institutions complied with Section 1009.50, Florida Statutes; SBE Rule 6A-20.031, Florida Administrative Code; and FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* by:
  - Properly classifying the students by residency, who were enrolled in a degree program, registered in a minimum of 6 credit hours per term, and had not earned more than 110 percent of the credit hours required to complete the degree program.
  - Verifying that students demonstrated financial needs by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
  - Properly awarding amounts, ranging from $200 to the maximum amount established by the respective General Appropriations Act, to students based on their unmet financial needs.
  - Accurately and properly supporting enrolled credit hours shown on the DERs submitted to the FDOE.
  - Accurately and properly supporting credit hours earned and the cumulative grade point averages shown on the grade and hours reports submitted to the FDOE.
  - Accurately reporting unfunded eligible students.
- From the population of 4,193 students and 4,276 students for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 fiscal years, respectively, who attended the 30 participating DSBs and 28 public colleges and received $6.6 million in FSAG – Career Ed Program funds, chose 3 DSBs and 1 public college and examined documentation supporting Program awards to 60 selected students to evaluate institution compliance. Specifically, we evaluated whether applicable institutions complied with Section 1009.505, Florida Statutes; SBE Rule 6A-20.0071, Florida Administrative Code; and FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* by:
  - Properly classifying students by residency, who were enrolled in a certificate program, were registered in a minimum of 180 clock hours or 6 credits per term, and had not earned more than 110 percent of clock or credit hours required to complete the certificate program.
  - Verifying that the students demonstrated financial needs by completing the FAFSA.
  - Properly awarding amounts, ranging from $200 to the maximum amount established by the respective General Appropriations Act, to students based on their unmet financial needs.
  - Accurately and properly supporting enrolled credit hours shown on the DERs submitted to the FDOE.

[35] The 9 institutions included 5 public universities and 4 public colleges. Four of the 5 public universities and 2 of the 4 public colleges were also selected for Bright Futures Scholarship Program testing.

  - Accurately and properly supporting credit hours earned and the cumulative grade point averages shown on the grade and hours reports submitted to the FDOE.

- Examined records for 5 public universities, 9 public colleges, and 3 DSBs selected from the 40 public universities and colleges and 30 participating DSBs to determine whether the applicable institutions complied with Sections 1009.50(4)(d), 1009.505(4)(d), and 1009.53(5)(a), Florida Statutes, by submitting DERs to the FDOE within 30 days after the end of regular registration each term.
- Examined records for 5 public universities, 9 colleges, and 3 DSBs selected from the 40 public universities and colleges and the 30 participating DSBs to determine whether the institutions complied with the FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual* by filing grade and hours reports with the FDOE within 30 days of the last day of classes for the Spring Term or the equivalent.
- Examined records for 4 public universities and 7 colleges selected from the 40 public universities and colleges to determine whether the institutions complied with Section 1009.53(5)(b), Florida Statutes, by refunding undisbursed Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds to the FDOE within 60 days of the last day of regular registration for the Fall and Spring Terms, and within 30 days after the end of the Summer Term.
- Examined records for 4 public universities and 7 colleges selected from the 40 public universities and colleges to determine whether the institutions complied with Section 1009.53(5)(a), Florida Statutes, by refunding to the FDOE within 30 days after the end of each term Bright Futures Scholarship Program funds received for courses dropped by students or courses from which students withdrew after the end of the drop and add period.
- Examined records for 5 public universities and 9 public colleges selected from the 40 public universities and public colleges to determine whether the institutions complied with Section 1009.50(4)(d), Florida Statutes, by refunding undisbursed FSAG – Public Program funds to the FDOE within 60 days of the last day of regular registration for the Spring Term or, if applicable, within 30 days after the end of the Summer Term.
- Examined records for 3 DSBs and 1 public college selected from the 30 participating DSBs and 28 public colleges to determine whether the institutions complied with Section 1009.505(4)(d), Florida Statutes, by refunding undisbursed FSAG – Career Ed Program funds to the FDOE within 60 days of the last day of regular registration for the Spring Term or, if applicable, within 30 days after the end of the Summer Term.
- Examined records for 5 public universities, 10 public colleges, and 3 DSBs selected from the 40 public universities and colleges and 30 participating DSBs to determine whether the institutions, after determining an award overpayment, refunded the overpayment to the FDOE within 60 days in accordance with SBE Rule 6A-20.002(1)(k), Florida Administrative Code, and FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance *State Scholarship and Grant Programs Policy Manual*.
- Communicated on an interim basis with applicable officials to ensure the timely resolution of issues involving controls and noncompliance.
- Performed various other auditing procedures, including analytical procedures, as necessary, to accomplish the objectives of the audit.
- Prepared and submitted for management response the findings and recommendations that are included in this report and which describe the matters requiring corrective actions. Management's response is included in this report under the heading ***MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE****.*

AUTHORITY

Sections 1009.50(4)(e), 1009.505(4)(e), and 1009.53(5)(c), Florida Statutes, require a periodic audit of the administration of, and accounting of the moneys for, the Florida Public Student Assistance Grant, the Florida Public Postsecondary Career Education Student Assistance Grant, and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Programs by Florida's public universities, colleges, and district school boards. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 11.45, Florida Statutes, I have directed that this operational audit report be prepared to present the results of that audit.

Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General

EXHIBIT A

SUMMARY OF FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ADVANCES AND DISBURSEMENTS BY PUBLIC UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

Institution	Advances [a] From the FDOE	Disbursements [a] Awards to Students	Refunds to the FDOE	Total Disbursements	Disbursements Under/(Over) Advances
Florida State University	$100,732,980	$100,299,473	$ 387,114	$100,686,587	$ 46,393 [c]
University of Central Florida	116,491,050	116,485,955	1,911	116,487,866	3,184 [c]
University of Florida	151,653,062	149,832,595	1,717,216	151,549,811	103,251 [c]
University of South Florida	61,092,001	60,910,663	181,338	61,092,001	-
Subtotals for 4 Public Universities Audited	**429,969,093**	**427,528,686**	**2,287,579**	**429,816,265**	**152,828**
Other 8 Public Universities [b]	106,262,821	105,517,718	731,119	106,248,837	13,984
Totals for the 12 Public Universities	**536,231,914**	**533,046,404**	**3,018,698**	**536,065,102**	**166,812**
Daytona State College	637,023	630,346	6,370	636,716	307 [c]
Miami Dade College	2,737,129	2,717,795	19,334	2,737,129	-
Pasco-Hernando State College	625,339	608,300	17,039	625,339	-
Pensacola State College	300,265	297,902	2,363	300,265	-
Polk State College	450,411	443,645	6,766	450,411	-
Santa Fe College	3,253,727	3,234,492	19,235	3,253,727	-
South Florida State College	131,518	128,898	2,620	131,518	-
Subtotals for 7 Public Colleges Audited	**8,135,412**	**8,061,378**	**73,727**	**8,135,105**	**307**
Other 21 Public Colleges [b]	17,572,393	17,006,459	562,168	17,568,627	3,766
Totals for the 28 Public Colleges	**25,707,805**	**25,067,837**	**635,895**	**25,703,732**	**4,073**
Totals for the 11 Institutions Audited	**438,104,505**	**435,590,064**	**2,361,306**	**437,951,370**	**153,135**
Totals for Other 29 Institutions	**123,835,214**	**122,524,177**	**1,293,287**	**123,817,464**	**17,750**
Totals for all 40 Institutions	**$561,939,719**	**$558,114,241**	**$3,654,593**	**$561,768,834**	**$170,885**

[a] Amounts reported by institutions for the funding year.

[b] Auditor-compiled information from FDOE end-of-year records.

[c] Amount subsequently refunded to the FDOE for student withdrawals.

SUMMARY OF FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM ADVANCES AND DISBURSEMENTS BY PUBLIC UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

Institution	Advances [a] From the FDOE	Disbursements [a] Awards to Students	Refunds to the FDOE	Total Disbursements	Disbursements Under/(Over) Advances	
Florida State University	$102,601,604	$101,990,108	$ 611,336	$102,601,444	$ 160	c
University of Central Florida	122,323,305	122,299,245	2,726	122,301,971	21,334	c
University of Florida	154,763,660	153,348,038	1,440,639	154,788,677	(25,017)	d
University of South Florida	63,933,109	63,756,193	173,264	63,929,457	3,652	c
Subtotal for 4 Public Universities Audited	**443,621,678**	**441,393,584**	**2,227,965**	**443,621,549**	**129**	
Other 8 Public Universities [b]	111,237,348	110,349,570	915,307	111,264,877	(27,529)	
Total for the 12 Public Universities	**554,859,026**	**551,743,154**	**3,143,272**	**554,886,426**	**(27,400)**	
Daytona State College	691,963	682,680	9,283	691,963	-	
Miami Dade College	3,041,411	3,037,048	4,363	3,041,411	-	
Pasco-Hernando State College	681,445	672,347	9,098	681,445	-	
Pensacola State College	321,903	316,955	4,948	321,903	-	
Polk State College	509,365	503,074	6,015	509,089	276	c
Santa Fe College	4,003,895	3,173,015	830,880	4,003,895	-	
South Florida State College	120,588	119,304	1,284	120,588	-	
Subtotal for 7 Public Colleges Audited	**9,370,570**	**8,504,423**	**865,871**	**9,370,294**	**276**	
Other 21 Public Colleges [b]	19,830,338	18,769,858	1,083,247	19,853,105	(22,767)	
Total for the 28 Public Colleges	**29,200,908**	**27,274,281**	**1,949,118**	**29,223,399**	**(22,491)**	
Total for the 11 Institutions Audited	**452,992,248**	**449,898,007**	**3,093,836**	**452,991,843**	**405**	
Total for the Other 29 Institutions	**131,067,686**	**129,119,428**	**1,998,554**	**131,117,982**	**(50,296)**	
Total for all 40 Institutions	**$584,059,934**	**$579,017,435**	**$5,092,390**	**$584,109,825**	**$(49,891)**	

[a] Amounts reported by institutions for the funding year.
[b] Auditor-compiled information from FDOE end-of-year records.
[c] Amount subsequently refunded to the FDOE for student withdrawals.
[d] Amount represents what the FDOE owed the University due to additional disbursements.
[e] Amount will subsequently be disbursed to students.

EXHIBIT B

SUMMARY OF FLORIDA PUBLIC STUDENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM ADVANCES AND DISBURSEMENTS BY PUBLIC UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

Institution	Advances [a] From the FDOE	Disbursements [a] Awards to Students	Refunds to the FDOE	Total Disbursements	Disbursements Under/(Over) Advances
Florida International University	$ 24,310,594	$ 24,310,594	$ -	$ 24,310,594	$ -
Florida State University	13,463,646	13,463,646	-	13,463,646	-
University of Central Florida	22,221,647	22,221,647	-	22,221,647	-
University of Florida	15,110,242	15,110,242	-	15,110,242	-
University of South Florida	17,948,365	17,948,365	-	17,948,365	-
Subtotal for 5 Public Universities Audited	**93,054,494**	**93,054,494**	**-**	**93,054,494**	**-**
Other 7 Public Universities [b]	30,387,494	30,387,494	-	30,387,494	-
Total for the 12 Public Universities	**123,441,988**	**123,441,988**	**-**	**123,441,988**	**-**
Broward College	14,616,500	14,616,500	-	14,616,500	-
Daytona State College	2,387,170	2,387,170	-	2,387,170	-
Eastern Florida State College	3,101,023	3,101,023	-	3,101,023	-
Miami Dade College	14,203,944	14,203,944	-	14,203,944	-
Pasco-Hernando State College	1,425,441	1,425,441	-	1,425,441	-
Pensacola State College	3,202,022	3,202,022	-	3,202,022	-
Polk State College	1,980,012	1,980,012	-	1,980,012	-
Santa Fe College	1,835,318	1,834,665	653	1,835,318	-
South Florida State College	324,022	323,959	63	324,022	-
Subtotal for 9 Public Colleges Audited	**43,075,452**	**43,074,736**	**716**	**43,075,452**	**-**
Other 19 Public Colleges [b]	69,630,290	69,544,407	83,800	69,628,207	2,083
Total for the 28 Public Colleges	**112,705,742**	**112,619,143**	**84,516**	**112,703,659**	**2,083**
Total for the 14 Institutions Audited	**136,129,946**	**136,129,230**	**716**	**136,129,946**	**-**
Total for the Other 26 Institutions	**100,017,784**	**99,931,901**	**83,800**	**100,015,701**	**2,083**
Total for all 40 Institutions	**$236,147,730**	**$236,061,131**	**$84,516**	**$236,145,647**	**$2,083**

[a] Amounts reported by institutions for the funding year.

[b] Auditor-compiled information from FDOE end-of-year records.

SUMMARY OF FLORIDA PUBLIC STUDENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM ADVANCES AND DISBURSEMENTS BY PUBLIC UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE

For The Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025

Institution	Advances [a] From the FDOE	Disbursements [a] Awards to Students	Refunds to the FDOE	Total Disbursements	Disbursements Under/(Over) Advances
Florida International University	$ 24,403,388	$ 24,398,933	$ -	$ 24,398,933	$ 4,455 [c]
Florida State University	13,504,899	13,504,899	-	13,504,899	-
University of Central Florida	22,319,876	22,319,876	-	22,319,876	-
University of Florida	15,153,969	15,153,969	-	15,153,969	-
University of South Florida	18,007,336	18,007,336	-	18,007,336	-
Subtotal for 5 Public Universities Audited	**93,389,468**	**93,385,013**	**-**	**93,385,013**	**4,455**
Other 7 Public Universities [b]	30,504,782	30,504,782	-	30,504,782	-
Total for the 12 Public Universities	**123,894,250**	**123,889,795**	**-**	**123,889,795**	**4,455**
Broward College	14,663,954	14,663,954	-	14,663,954	-
Daytona State College	2,395,808	2,395,763	-	2,395,763	45 [c]
Eastern Florida State College	3,112,027	3,112,027	-	3,112,027	-
Miami Dade College	13,649,904	13,649,904	-	13,649,904	-
Pasco-Hernando State College	1,440,586	1,440,586	-	1,440,586	-
Pensacola State College	3,214,369	3,214,369	-	3,214,369	-
Polk State College	1,987,465	1,714,232	273,233	1,987,465	-
Santa Fe College	1,840,068	1,666,365	-	1,666,365	173,703 [c]
South Florida State College	325,847	323,154	2,693	325,847	-
Subtotal for 9 Public Colleges Audited	**42,630,028**	**42,180,354**	**275,926**	**42,456,280**	**173,748**
Other 19 Public Colleges [b]	69,809,223	69,806,931	662	69,807,593	1,630
Total for the 28 Public Colleges	**112,439,251**	**111,987,285**	**276,588**	**112,263,873**	**175,378**
Total for the 14 Institutions Audited	**136,019,496**	**135,565,367**	**275,926**	**135,841,293**	**178,203**
Total for the Other 26 Institutions	**100,314,005**	**100,311,713**	**662**	**100,312,375**	**1,630**
Total for all 40 Institutions	**$236,333,501**	**$235,877,080**	**$276,588**	**$236,153,668**	**$179,833**

[a] Amounts reported by institutions for the funding year.
[b] Auditor-compiled information from FDOE end-of-year records.
[c] Amount will subsequently be disbursed to students.

EXHIBIT C

SUMMARY OF FLORIDA PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY CAREER EDUCATION STUDENT ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM ADVANCES AND DISBURSEMENTS BY EDUCATIONAL ENTITY

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2024

Institution	Advances [a] From the FDOE	Disbursements [a] Awards to Students	Refunds to the FDOE	Total Disbursements	Disbursements Under/(Over) Advances
Broward County District School Board	$ 171,623	$ 171,623	$ -	$ 171,623	$ -
Miami-Dade County District School Board	287,023	287,023	-	287,023	-
Orange County District School Board	268,269	268,269	-	268,269	-
Florida Gateway College	174,828	174,828	-	174,828	-
Subtotal for 4 Institutions Audited	**901,743**	**901,743**	-	**901,743**	**-**
Other 54 District School Boards and Public Colleges [b]	**2,398,542**	**2,381,107**	**14,764**	**2,395,871**	**2,671**
Total for the 58 Institutions	**$3,300,285**	**$3,282,850**	**$14,764**	**$3,297,614**	**$2,671**

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

Institution	Advances [a] From the FDOE	Disbursements [a] Awards to Students	Refunds to the FDOE	Total Disbursements	Disbursements Under/(Over) Advances
Broward County District School Board	$ 172,071	$ 172,071	$ -	$ 172,071	$ -
Miami-Dade County District School Board	288,673	288,673	-	288,673	-
Orange County District School Board	270,258	270,258	-	270,258	-
Florida Gateway College	175,618	175,618	-	175,618	-
Subtotal for 4 Institutions Audited	**906,620**	**906,620**	**-**	**906,620**	**-**
Other 54 District School Boards and Public Colleges [b]	**2,402,449**	**2,378,541**	**20,952**	**2,399,493**	**2,956**
Total for the 58 Institutions	**$3,309,069**	**$3,285,161**	**$20,952**	**$3,306,113**	**$2,956**

[a] Amounts reported by institutions for the funding year.
[b] Auditor-compiled information from FDOE end-of-year records.

MANAGEMENT'S RESPONSE

Daytona State College — Scientia Potentia Est — Founded 1957

Office of the President

July 24, 2026

Ms. Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
State of Florida Auditor General
Claude Denson Pepper Building, Suite G74
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1450

RE: Daytona State College Operational Audit of Administration of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Student Assistance Grant Programs
For the Fiscal Years Ended June 30, 2024 and June 30, 2025

Dear Ms. Norman,

Attached please find the response for Daytona State College to the preliminary and tentative findings in the above referenced audit. The College concurs with the findings and has immediately implemented the correction actions as set forth in the response to comply with the recommendations rendered.

On behalf of Daytona State College, I want to thank Keith Wolfe and his staff for their assistance and the professional manner in which the onsite review was conducted.

Sincerely,

Thomas LoBasso, Ed.D.
President
Daytona State College

Attachment

cc: District Board of Trustees

Daytona State College
1200 W. International Speedway Boulevard / Daytona Beach, Florida 32114
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Finding 1: Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program Reporting

Finding 1 Summary: Three institutions (Daytona State College, Polk State College, and Santa Fe College) did not always comply with Florida Department of Education (FDOE) guidelines and other requirements governing FSAG – Public Program disbursement reconciliations, student eligibility reporting, and refunds to the FDOE for unused Program funds.

Management's Response: Daytona State College concurs with the audit finding and has corrected the issue. There was significant turnover in key positions within the Financial Aid Services office and a lack of understanding of the state processes and deadlines. However, when the issue was discovered, consultants were contracted to correct Daytona State College's customized process in our student information system. In addition, several other measures were implemented, including hiring a new Executive Director of Financial Aid Services in April 2025, an official State Grant Coordinator in July 2025, and training other Financial Aid team members, on all state programs. The training included reporting and deadline requirements. This will ensure the timeliness of reporting. At the same time, additional reports were created to ensure all information submitted is accurate and reviewed prior to submission. The Executive Director and State Grant Coordinator have worked closely with OSFA to ensure this situation has been rectified. As of the 2025-2026 academic year, Daytona State College is back in compliance with both FDOE guidelines and FSAG rules and regulations.

Finding 3: Disbursement Eligibility Reports

Finding 3 Summary: Four institutions (Daytona State College, Pasco-Hernando State College, Polk State College, and Santa Fe College) did not always comply with State law by timely submitting Disbursement Eligibility Reports (DERs) to the FDOE for FSAG – Public Program and Bright Futures Scholarship Program students. Additionally, Polk State College and Santa Fe College reported inaccurate credit hours on certain DERs and Santa Fe College also inaccurately calculated and disbursed certain Bright Futures Scholarship Program Funds.

Management's Response: Daytona State College concurs with this finding and has corrected the issue. As mentioned in Finding #1, Daytona State College experienced significant turnover of key positions and with it the knowledge transfer did not occur. As soon as the issue was identified, Daytona State College immediately worked with consultants to help update the Disbursement Eligibility Report (DER) custom screen in our student information system. The college hired a new Executive Director of Financial Aid Services in April 2025. In addition, we hired a full-time State Grant Coordinator in July 2025 who has worked diligently to ensure all DER batches have been reported in a timely manner and are accurate. As of the 2025-2026 academic year, Daytona State College is back into compliance with DER reporting.

Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Jose L. Dotres

July 21, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL
flaudgen_audrpt_cc_univ@aud.state.fl.us

Ms. Sherril F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General
Claude Denson Pepper Building, Suite G74
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1450

Dear Ms. Norman,

Your preliminary and tentative report outlining the audit findings and recommendations for the operational audit of the Administration of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Student Assistance Grant Programs by Florida Public Educational Institutions for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025 has been carefully reviewed by district staff.

As stated in the management's response, the District generally agrees with this finding. To address the recommendation, management has taken corrective measures and ensured their implementation. The following section presents a breakdown of the finding along with the corresponding response and plan for corrective action.

The suggestions for enhancing our effectiveness and efficiency provided by your team and highlighted in this report are well-received and greatly appreciated. We would like to express our gratitude for the proficient and competent way the audit was carried out.

Should you require additional details please contact Mr. Jose Bueno, Chief of Staff, Office of the Superintendent, at 305 995-1450.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jose L. Dotres
Superintendent of Schools

JLD:keh
L0108

Attachment

cc: General Counsel
Chief Auditor
Superintendent's Cabinet
Mr. Rene Mantilla

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Preliminary Tentative Report List of Findings/Management Responses

Finding 4: Contrary to State Board of Education rules and FDOE policies, Polk State College and Santa Fe College sometimes submitted grade and hours reports untimely to the FDOE and the reports for FSAG – Public Program and Bright Futures Scholarship students at Santa Fe College and Miami-Dade District School Board occasionally contained inaccuracies.

Recommendation: Polk State and Santa Fe Colleges and Miami-Dade District School Board should enhance procedures to ensure that G&H reports are accurately and timely submitted for all program award recipients. To help staff understand program requirements and promote compliance with G&H report requirements, such enhancements should include effective implementation of IT system modifications to resolve technical issues and appropriate training.

Management's Response: Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has enhanced Focus, the District's postsecondary student information system, to ensure accurate reporting of clock hours and grade point averages for all program award recipients for both the Florida Student Assistance Grant Programs and Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. Financial Aid Officers (FAOs) now have access to the newly developed report, *Financial Aid Attended Hours Report by Term with GPA*, in Focus. The report is programmatically updated to ensure that data is current and accurate. District management has conducted professional learning for all its FAOs and impacted school-site administrators on how to utilize and interpret the report.

July 22, 2026

Ms. Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General
State of Florida
Claude Denson Pepper Building, Suite G74
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1450

Dear Ms. Norman:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the preliminary and tentative findings contained in the operational audit of the Administration of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Student Assistance Grant Programs for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

The following is Pasco-Hernando State College's response to Finding 3 regarding the timely submission of Disbursement Eligibility Reports (DERs).

Finding 3 – Disbursement Eligibility Reports

Pasco-Hernando State College acknowledges the finding regarding the untimely submission of Disbursement Eligibility Reports for certain Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG) – Public Program recipients during the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 terms.

Beginning with the Fall 2024 term (2024-2025 Academic Year), Pasco-Hernando State College implemented Ellucian Banner SaaS as its new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. At the time of implementation, the functionality and State reporting processes necessary to generate and submit the required DERs were not yet available within the new system. As a result, the College experienced delays while the required reports and processes were developed, tested, and implemented.

The College's Financial Aid and Information Technology Offices worked collaboratively with the system to develop the necessary reporting functionality and establish a reliable process for generating and submitting DERs in accordance with Florida Department of Education requirements. The delayed submissions were administrative in nature and did not impact students' eligibility for awards or result in inaccurate award calculations or disbursements.

Since the development and implementation of the required reports and reporting process, Pasco-Hernando State College has successfully submitted all Disbursement Eligibility Reports for the 2025-2026 Academic Year within the required timeframes. Additionally, the College has enhanced its internal monitoring procedures and staff training to help ensure continued compliance with State reporting requirements.

Pasco-Hernando State College appreciates the Auditor General's recommendation and remains committed to maintaining accurate, timely reporting and full compliance with all applicable statutory and Florida Department of Education requirements.

Sincerely,

Eric Hall, Ed.D.
President

cc: Dennis Feltwell, Ph.D., Vice President of Student Services
Arnold Head, Executive Director of Financial Aid

POLK STATE
Office of
the President

July 21, 2026

Ms. Sherrill F. Norman, CPA
Auditor General
State of Florida
Claude Denson Pepper Building, Suite G74
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1450

Dear Ms. Norman:

This letter responds to your Office's June 24, 2026, transmittal of preliminary and tentative findings on the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Florida Student Assistance Grant Programs for fiscal years 2023-24 and 2024-25. Pursuant to Section 11.45(4)(d), Florida Statutes, Polk State College submits this response to Findings 1, 3, and 4, which pertain to the College.

Polk State College concurs with Findings 1, 3, and 4. Our response to each follows:

Finding 1: FSAG – Public Program Reporting (Reconciliation)

College Response:

- Polk State College concurs with this finding.

Explanation:

- At the initial Banner implementation, Student Financial Services lacked the functionality in Banner to identify State aid-eligible students or reconcile FDOE-advanced funds against college disbursements. This gap went unaddressed for a period of time, delaying the awarding and reporting of State aid.

Corrective Action:

- The 2024-25 FSAG – Public Program funds have been fully reconciled with the State, including refund of $273,233 in unused Program funds.
- The 4 students not reported as eligible-but-not-awarded, and the 6 students misreported due to SSN errors, have been corrected in FDOE records.
- Student Financial Services rebuilt certain components of the financial aid module of Banner and worked to build a financial aid dashboard which went live November 27, 2025, fully integrating with Banner. The dashboard includes a dedicated eligible-but-not-awarded report, directly resolving this finding's reporting gap.

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We are Polk.

Finding 3: Disbursement Eligibility Reports (DERs)

College Response:

- Polk State College concurs with this finding.

Explanation:

- The same Banner gap required DERs to be compiled manually, driving delays. The initial set up in Banner recorded the first date of drop within a term rather than the true last date of drop, resulting in a misstatement of enrolled credit hours on affected DERs.

Corrective Action:

- The 10 students with misreported credit hours have been corrected in FDOE records.
- The financial aid dashboard, live since November 27, 2025, resolved the timeliness gap. The spring 2026 DER was submitted and accepted by OSFA on January 29, 2026, on time and within the 30-day requirement measured from the last date to drop of the term.
- The College has aligned its last date of drop per term with OSFA to reflect the true last date of drop, correcting the prior practice and improving credit-hour accuracy on future DERs.

Finding 4: Grade and Hours (G&H) Reports

College Response:

- Polk State College concurs with this finding.

Explanation:

- The same Banner gap extended to G&H reporting, leaving Student Financial Services without a reliable method to compile GPA, credit hours, and degree data within the required timeframe.

Corrective Action:

- The financial aid dashboard also addresses G&H reporting. The 2025-26 G&H report was submitted on time with zero edits.

Polk State College appreciates the opportunity to respond and remains committed to full compliance with Florida Bright Futures. Please contact Cindy Baker, Vice President of Finance or me directly with any questions.

Sincerely,

Anastasios "Stasi" Kamoutsas
President, Polk State College

SANTA FE COLLEGE

Paul Broadie II, Ph.D.

July 24, 2026

Sherrill F. Norman
Auditor General of the State of Florida
Claude Denson Pepper Building, Suite G74
111 West Madison Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1450

Re: Santa Fe College Audit Response

Dear Ms. Norman,

On behalf of Santa Fe College, please see the below response to the preliminary and tentative operational audit findings for the Administration of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program and Student Assistance Grant Programs by Florida Public Educational Institutions for the Fiscal Years Ended June 30, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

The College concurs with the recommendations that pertain to Santa Fe College and appreciates the acknowledgment within the findings that the conditions were primarily caused by technical difficulties associated with the implementation of a new financial aid management software system.

The College implemented the new software system beginning with the 2024-25 award year. Defects and missing functionality in the system's Florida state program processing delayed final disbursement reconciliations, Disbursement Eligibility Reports (DERs), and grade and hours (G&H) reports, and caused the reporting errors described in the findings. Throughout that period, College personnel used manual workarounds to award and disburse state program funds to eligible students. The College has since completed the outstanding reconciliations, corrected the reporting errors identified, and put corrective actions in place with the software system vendor and within College operations, as described in the response to each finding. Additionally, Financial Aid team members receive training on Florida scholarship and grant program reporting requirements. Finally, the Senior Director of Financial Aid monitors state program reconciliation and reporting to ensure the conditions described in this finding do not recur.

Response to Finding 1: Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program Reporting

The College concurs with the recommendations. Technical difficulties with the new financial aid management software system prevented timely completion and reporting of the 2024-25 final disbursement reconciliation.

The College completed the 2024-25 FSAG Public Program final disbursement reconciliation and reported it to the FDOE on May 29, 2026, reflecting Program disbursements totaling $1,668,975,

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and refunded unused Program funds of $171,093 to the FDOE on June 1, 2026. The difference of approximately $20,000 between College-recorded and FDOE-recorded disbursements was caused by a system error that required manual record corrections at the FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance, completed in May 2026, and was resolved through the final reconciliation. The FDOE has released the Spring 2026 Program funding allocation of $920,836, and FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance payment summary records as of July 2026 show Spring 2026 Term disbursements of $1,011,478 to 1,031 funded Program students.

The reporting of eligible but not awarded students for the Spring 2025 Term was affected by the same system difficulties. The College has enhanced its end-of-year reporting procedures to validate the eligible but not awarded population before reporting is submitted to the FDOE.

Various corrective actions were taken and have been implemented, including contract updates with the vendor requiring improvements, the software vendor's correction of a data alignment issue affecting FSAG DER data exchanged with the FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance, standing meetings among relevant College officials, and adoption of a state programs reconciliation calendar with internal milestone dates. Validation of the system's state file output against the current FDOE file specification is underway.

Response to Finding 2: Bright Futures Scholarship Program Reporting

The College concurs with the recommendations. The delayed reconciliation was caused by the same software system implementation difficulties described in the response to Finding 1. On July 8, 2026, the FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance confirmed that payment summaries for each 2024-25 term show no outstanding refunds due for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

Various corrective actions have been taken and have been implemented, including creation of the state programs reconciliation calendar and standing meetings as described in the response to Finding 1. The College continues to work with the vendor on updates and improvements.

Response to Finding 3: Disbursement Eligibility Reports

The College concurs with the recommendations. Technical difficulties with the financial aid management software system caused the untimely DER submissions.

With respect to award accuracy, a defect in the system's award calculation produced the miscalculated Fall 2024 Term awards identified in the finding. The vendor has corrected the award calculation. As the finding notes, the College resubmitted the DERs for the three students in August 2025 with the correct hours and award payments, and all Bright Futures overpayments and unused funds, including the net overpayment identified in the finding, were returned to the FDOE through the term reconciliations completed in October 2025 and February 2026.

The College has finalized its 2024-25 DER submissions for the Bright Futures and FSAG Public Programs. On July 8, 2026, the FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance confirmed that Bright Futures DERs are clear for each 2024-25 term.

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Various corrective actions were taken and have been implemented, including implementation of a state programs file validation tool, manual quality review, and vendor validation of state file output against the current FDOE file specification to reduce the risk of future submission errors.

Response to Finding 4: Grade and Hours Reports

The College concurs with the recommendations. The same software system implementation difficulties caused the identified problems with the G&H reports. The College has completed the outstanding 2024-25 G&H reporting, including corrected reporting for the six students identified in the finding. On July 8, 2026, the FDOE Office of Student Financial Assistance verified that all Bright Futures grade and hours for the 2024-25 academic year were reported.

The College also timely transmitted the 2025-26 annual G&H report to the FDOE in June 2026, within the state reporting window. Completeness was verified through supplemental data files and manual review to capture award recipients omitted from system-generated output.

Various corrective actions were taken and have been implemented. System corrections remain in development with the vendor to ensure that all eligible students appear on G&H report output and that prior summer hours are handled correctly so report output is complete and free of duplicates. Until these corrections are completed and validated, the College manually verifies G&H report output against student transcript records before submission to the FDOE.

In closing, the College appreciates the review of our processes. We particularly want to extend our appreciation for the professionalism and cooperation of your staff throughout the process and acknowledge their efforts in working with us to complete the audit engagement.

Sincerely,

Paul Broadie II
President

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