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## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: District Superintendents  
Florida College System Presidents

FROM: Henry Mack  
Kathryn S. Hebda

DATE: April 25, 2022

SUBJECT: Update to the Open Door Grant Program and Funding Sources

The 2022 Florida Legislature passed legislation that will have an impact on the operation of the Open Door Grant Program established last year in section (s.) 1009.895, Florida Statutes (F.S.). [Senate Bill 2524](#) included the following changes to the statutory provisions for the grant:

- Update to the definition of “institution” to include school districts without a career center that offer eligible integrated and education training programs.
- Removal of the requirement for students to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to be eligible to receive the grant.
- Additional authority for institutions to cover the student’s one-third of the cost of the program based upon student need as determined by the institution (applies to the student investment program of S.1009.895, F.S. only).

In addition to the programmatic changes, the General Appropriations Act ([HB 5001](#)) updates the funding source for the grant from federal to state general revenue. Specific appropriation 115 provides \$15 million for school districts and specific appropriation 126 provides \$20 million for Florida College System (FCS) institutions. These revisions, both budgetary and programmatic, become effective July 1, 2022.

Implementation of these changes will require a series of actions by the Florida Department of Education (Department) to include the following:

- For existing awards, update the funding source from federal to state on July 1, 2022. All currently awarded projects will be carried over to a new state funded grant number. This will require the release of a Request for Application (RFA), limited to current awardees initially, with a project award period of July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.

- Initiate rule development and rulemaking to update [Rule 6A-20.045](#), Florida Administrative Code.
- Upon conclusion of rulemaking, update the RFA to allow for additional funding requests from newly eligible agencies or for current agencies to request additional funds.

**Information for Agencies with Current Open Door Grant Awards:**

For the school districts and FCS institutions with current Open Door Grant awards, the following actions are required to facilitate the transition of your project to a new grant number:

**Step 1:** Complete a survey on projected expenditures through June 30, 2022, and funds requested for the 2022-23 fiscal year. Agencies may request the amount of these initial awards less their projected expenditures through June 30, 2022. Use the following link to respond to this request for information: <https://www.research.net/r/opendoorgrant>. Your response to this survey is required by Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Requested information includes whether your agency elects to continue participation in this grant program, projected actual expenditures through June 30, 2022, and amount of funds requested for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

**Step 2:** Submit a response to the new RFA upon its release. Allocations will be provided based upon the agency responses received in Step 1. Agencies with fully approved program applications will be required to submit the following in the new RFA:

- DOE100A
- DOE101S Budget

Agencies' approved program applications will be carried over from the initial application.

**Step 3:** Complete closeout of the existing federal grant award by July 10, 2022, with the submission of the DOE 399 document.

**Step 4:** After completion of the new awards to the initial institutions, agencies will be offered the opportunity to request any of the additional funds available. Agencies may submit a request for additional funds. This process will be provided in an update to the RFA and in the rule language update.

Effective Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022, program and budget amendments will not be accepted for the current awards.

**Information for Agencies that Do Not have an Open Door Grant Award:**

For school districts and FCS institutions without an award, your requested actions are to monitor the upcoming rule development process and consider whether you would like to submit an application when the RFA is opened for new agency awards. All eligible agencies will be notified when the RFA is open for additional funding requests.

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The following webinar will be hosted to review the changes to the program and provide an opportunity for questions. The webinar will cover content applicable to agencies with a current Open Door Grant award and agencies that do not have an Open Door Grant award but are interested in learning more about this student scholarship program.

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday, May 4, 2022
<b>Time</b>	3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)
<b>Registration Link</b>	<a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7945343024090140941">https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7945343024090140941</a>

A frequently asked questions document is forthcoming to address initial questions that agencies may have regarding this project. Please review and plan to participate in the webinar to ask additional questions. Should you have questions, please submit them to [opendoor@fldoe.org](mailto:opendoor@fldoe.org).

Cc: Open Door Grant Contacts  
Florida College System Workforce Administrators  
District Technical College Directors  
District Adult General Education Directors  
Suzanne Pridgeon, CFO, Department of Education