



PRESS RELEASE
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National Expert Concludes Bright Futures Program Failed To Meet Intended Goals

Tampa, FL- A report released today and commissioned by ENLACE Florida concludes that the Bright Futures Scholarship Program has not significantly improved the college readiness of Florida's high school students. According to Dr. Edward St. John from the Center for the Study of Higher Education and Postsecondary Education at the University of Michigan, Florida has seen a decline in both the Florida SAT math scores and high school graduation rates since the program's implementation, a period when SAT scores improved and grad rates remained steady nationally. The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, funded by state lottery, was implemented in 1997. "When created, legislators aligned the program with advanced high school courses and rationalized it, based at least in part, on the grounds that it would improve academic achievement and prepare more students for college," said Dr. and the author of the report. The study also highlights unintended positive effects of the Bright Futures program on college enrollment rates. For example, the report states that since the implementation of Bright Futures, Florida has seen an improvement in overall college continuation rates along with increases in the number and percentages of Latino students entering public four-year colleges over public two-year colleges. However, the report recommends that "given the Bright Futures Scholarship Program did not produce all of the intended results, it is an opportune time to consider a wide range of reforms to the program," said. Dr. St. John. The study was prepared for ENLACE Florida with financial support from ENLACE Florida and the Ford Foundation. The interpretations are the authors' and do not represent official policies or positions of funding organizations.

ENLACE FLORIDA is a statewide network promoting college readiness, access, and success for Latinos, African-Americans, and other underrepresented students through non-partisan research, communication, advocacy, and support.

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