Here are some highlights of this bill which passed both the Senate and House unanimously:

- Creates the “SAIL to 60” program (Strengthening Alignment between Industry and Learning) to increase to 60 percent the percentage of working-age adults who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate, degree, or training experience by the year 2030.

- Reconstitutes and renames the Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC) to the Florida Talent Development Council. The new makeup of the council will be heavier in business representation with fewer educators. It also moves the administrative support for the council from the Dept. of Education to the Department of Economic Opportunity (further underlining the focus on workforce).

- Strengthens Florida’s apprenticeship program by creating the “Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Program”, which will enable high schools, career centers and colleges to partner with business and industry and offer high-quality preapprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities to students. Ten million dollars were allocated in the budget for this program.

- Establishes the “Last Mile Scholarship Program” to annually award the cost of in-state tuition and required fees for Florida resident students who are within 12 or fewer credit hours of completing their first associate or baccalaureate degree.

- Creates a Career and Technical Education (CTE) graduation pathway as an alternative pathway option for students to earn a standard high school diploma.

- Specifies that all school districts must offer a financial literacy course consisting of at least 0.5 credit as an elective, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

- Allows students the option to count computer science courses as either a required math or science credit in high school and appropriates ten million dollars to fund teacher professional development in computer science and reward those teachers for earning credentials to teach high quality computer science courses.

- Provides options to ensure that postsecondary students don’t leave college without a degree or credential such as a requirement that students be able to “reverse transfer” their credits to earn an associate in arts degree and that universities notify students of the opportunity to receive their associate in arts upon completion of the necessary credits.

Shortly after his inauguration Gov. DeSantis issued executive order 19-31, “Charting a Course for Florida to Become Number 1 in the Nation in Workforce Education by 2030 and Ensuring Florida Students are Prepared for the Jobs of the Future”. This provided the blueprint for the legislature which resulted in many of the items included in this omnibus workforce education bill.

This bill, which also passed the Senate and House unanimously addresses a number of issues around higher education. Some areas of note include:

**Florida Bright Futures:**

- Changes from 2 years to 5 years after graduation the timeframe for eligibility to receive a scholarship.
- Eliminates the 45-credit hour annual limit for scholarship awards.
- Specifies that beginning with the 2020-2021 academic year eligibility requirements will be adjusted to allow for the College Board’s changes in the SAT scoring system (from 2,400 to 1,600 points max.) with adjustments mandated for the ACT as well.

**2+2 Targeted Pathway Articulation Agreements**

- Strengthens an already strong articulation system between Florida colleges and universities.
- Creates the “2+2” targeted pathway program and requires each Florida college and university to execute at least one “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement.
- Specifies that the “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement must provide students who graduate with an associate in arts degree guaranteed access to the state university and degree program at that university.

**Excess Hours Surcharge**

- Currently students are required to pay a surcharge on credit hours 110% over their degree requirement. This bill increases that threshold to 120% of required credits before a surcharge is levied. This will save students money who have changed their majors or taken additional credits.