

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF FINAL BILL ANALYSIS

**BILL #:** HB 5101      PCB PKA 24-01      Education  
**SPONSOR(S):** PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee, Tomkow  
**TIED BILLS:**            **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

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**FINAL HOUSE FLOOR ACTION:** 108 Y's      1 N's      **GOVERNOR'S ACTION:** Pending

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### SUMMARY ANALYSIS

HB 5101 passed the House on March 8, 2024, as amended by the conference committee, and subsequently passed the Senate on March 8, 2024.

The bill conforms applicable statutes to appropriations provided for education in the conference report on the General Appropriations Act for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Specifically, the bill:

- Authorizes the Florida College System (FCS) institutions to participate in the State Group Health Insurance Program and requires the coverage period to begin in the 2025 plan year and to be for at least three years.
- Establishes a transportation stipend that a public school student enrolled in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade may receive from an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization for transportation to a Florida nonvirtual public school that is not the student's assigned public school or to a developmental research (lab) school.
  - Deletes transportation as an eligible use of the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Educational Options and the Florida Tax Credit scholarships and deletes the funding amount of the transportation scholarship.
  - Repeals the Driving Choice Grant Program.
- Clarifies the lab schools that are established in statute.
- Requires students enrolled at a FCS institution or state university-sponsored charter school to be funded in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP); and establishes the FEFP calculation methodology and the funding source and calculation methodology for capital outlay funds for such charter schools.
- Establishes the Bridge to Speech Program to fund auditory-oral education programs.
- Extends the timeline for calculating each Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program provider's performance metrics; establishes the VPK summer bridge program; and changes the VPK administrative fee from 4 percent to 5 percent.
- Revises what school readiness cost data the Department of Education (DOE) is required to annually collect; modifies the methodology for calculating each early learning coalition's (ELC) school readiness allocation; establishes the provider reimbursement rates by county, care level, and provider type; modifies the methodology for how ELCs distribute school readiness funds to eligible providers; and requires each ELC to implement a parent sliding fee scale that increases in relation to family income.
- Creates the Charity for Change program to implement the character education standards required by statute.
- Requires each school district to have a threat management coordinator.
- Requires the DOE to develop a system for compiling all school bond referenda and school district incurred debt resulting from a referendum for capital outlay or operational purposes; prescribes minimum system components.
- Modifies the Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program to require an annual appropriation in an amount necessary to maintain a projected minimum balance of \$250 million at the beginning of the upcoming fiscal year and to allow the balance of unexpended funds at the end of the fiscal year to be carried forward for up to 10 years after the effective date of the original appropriation.
- Clarifies that the Florida Virtual School's education foundation is eligible to participate in the matching grant program funded by the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund.
- Renames the Florida Law Enforcement Academy Scholarship Program to the Florida First Responder Scholarship Program; expands scholarship eligibility to also include emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and firefighters; and prescribes scholarship requirements.
- Removes certain requirements for the issuance of a temporary apprenticeship certificate.
- Clarifies Wakulla County School District's Fiscal Year 2023-2024 school taxable value for purposes of calculating its Fiscal Year 2023-2024 FEFP and Prior Period Funding Adjustment Millage calculation.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2024, except as expressly provided in the bill.

### I. SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION

#### A. EFFECT OF CHANGES:

**This document does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill sponsor or House of Representatives.**

**STORAGE NAME:** h5101z.DOCX

**DATE:** 3/11/2024

## State Group Health Insurance Program

### Present Situation

The Division of State Group Insurance within the Department of Management Services (DMS) administers the State Group Health Insurance Program (SGHIP). The SGHIP is an optional benefit for full- and part-time state employees and eligible former state employees, including state university employees. The SGHIP administers health, life, dental, vision, disability, and other supplemental insurance benefits.<sup>1</sup>

The SGHIP is open to state agencies which is statutorily-defined to mean “any branch, department, or agency of state government” and includes “any state university and the Division of Rehabilitation and Liquidation”.<sup>2</sup> The following individuals of a state agency are authorized to enroll in the program:

- All state officers.
- All state employees paid from “salaries and benefits” appropriation category, regardless of the number of hours worked.
- Retired state officers and state employees.
- Surviving spouses of deceased state officers and state employees.
- Certain terminated state officers and state employees.
- Certain state employees paid from “other-personal-services” (OPS) appropriation categories.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, small counties and municipalities and district school boards located in small counties are eligible to apply to the DMS for participation in the SGHIP.<sup>4</sup>

There are 28 member colleges in the Florida College System (FCS) and each college is governed by a district board of trustees and is under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Education (SBE).<sup>5</sup> The FCS requested inclusion into the SGHIP to strengthen faculty recruitment and retention.<sup>6</sup>

The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 General Appropriations Act (GAA) directed the DMS to contract for a comprehensive analysis to determine the fiscal impact of including FCS employees in the SGHIP. The analysis provided an estimated fiscal impact to both the FCS and the SGHIP based upon estimated enrollment numbers for employees and their dependents.<sup>7</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Change

The bill authorizes the FCS institutions to participate in the SGHIP and requires the coverage period to begin in the 2025 plan year, by July 31, 2025, and to be for at least three years.

## School Choice Scholarships for Transportation

### Present Situation

With the establishment of the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) scholarship program in 2001 and the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program for Educational Options (FES EO) in 2019, Florida has two

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Management Services, see [https://www.mybenefits.myflorida.com/myhealth/eligibility\\_and\\_enrollment](https://www.mybenefits.myflorida.com/myhealth/eligibility_and_enrollment) (Last visited March 3, 2024.)

<sup>2</sup> Section 110.123, F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Management Services, see [https://www.mybenefits.myflorida.com/myhealth/eligibility\\_and\\_enrollment](https://www.mybenefits.myflorida.com/myhealth/eligibility_and_enrollment) (Last visited March 3, 2024.)

<sup>4</sup> Section 110.1228, F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 1000.21, F.S.

<sup>6</sup> The Florida College System Council of Presidents. *Accelerate Florida's Future through the Florida College System*.

<sup>7</sup> Department of Management Services, *Comprehensive Fiscal Analysis of Adding Florida College System to State Group Insurance*, Dec. 1, 2023.

scholarship programs that allow parents to apply for and receive a scholarship for their student(s) to attend an eligible participating private school.

In 2021, the Legislature expanded the eligible uses of the FTC and FES EO scholarship to include transportation to a Florida public school if the student chooses to attend a Florida public school that is not his or her assigned public school or to a developmental research (lab) school as defined in s. 1002.32, F.S. The amount of the transportation scholarship is \$750.<sup>8</sup>

The Student Transportation Allocation is a categorical in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) and provides funds to assist school districts with costs associated with providing transportation to kindergarten through grade 12 students for public school programs, including charter schools, and migrant and exceptional student programs below kindergarten.<sup>9</sup> This allocation is also the funding source for the transportation scholarship. For the 2021-2022 school year, no transportation scholarships were funded.<sup>10</sup>

In 2022, the Legislature amended the transportation scholarship amount to either \$750 or an amount equal to the school district expenditure per student riding a school bus, whichever is greater.<sup>11</sup> For the 2022-2023 school year, 696 transportation scholarships were funded totaling \$415,875; all were funded as either a full scholarship at \$750 or a half scholarship at \$375.<sup>12</sup>

For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, based on the 3<sup>rd</sup> calculation of the FEFP, a total of 4,504 transportation scholarships have been funded totaling \$5.9 million.<sup>13</sup> The amounts of the transportation scholarships range from \$750 to \$2,232.<sup>14</sup> With the removal of the income eligibility requirement for the FES EO scholarship beginning in Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the number of funded transportation scholarships increased by 547% compared to Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill establishes a transportation stipend, contingent upon a legislative appropriation and on a first-come, first-served basis, for kindergarten through grade 8 public school students who enroll in a Florida nonvirtual public school which is not the student's assigned public school or to a lab school. The amount of the stipend is established in the GAA and an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization will administer the stipend program.

With the establishment of the transportation stipend program, the bill also eliminates transportation as an eligible use of the FTC and FES EO scholarships.

### **Driving Choice Grant Program**

The Driving Choice Grant Program was established in 2022<sup>15</sup> within the DOE to improve access to reliable and safe transportation for students who participate in public school choice and to support innovative solutions that increase the efficiency of public school transportation. Grant proposals may include:

- Transportation resource planning and sharing among school districts and local governments.

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<sup>8</sup> Chapter 2021-27, Laws of Fla.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1011.68, F.S.

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.fldoe.org/core/filesparse.php/7507/urlt/2122FEFPFinalcalc.pdf>. (Last visited March 25, 2024.)

<sup>11</sup> Chapter 2022-154, Laws of Fla.

<sup>12</sup> See 2022-2023 FEFP 4<sup>th</sup> Calc.

<sup>13</sup> See 2023-224 FEFP Third Calc.

<sup>14</sup> See <https://go.stepupforstudents.org/hubfs/Scholarship%20Info/23-24%20Transportation%20Award%20Amounts.pdf>. (Last visited March 25, 2024.)

<sup>15</sup> Chapter 2022-154, Laws of Fla.

- Developing or contracting with rideshare programs or developing carpool strategies.
- Developing options to reduce costs and increase efficiencies while improving access to transportation options for families.
- Developing options to address personnel challenges.
- Expanding the use of transportation funds under the FTC and FES EO scholarship programs and the Student Transportation Allocation in the FEFP to help cover the cost of transporting students to and from school.<sup>16</sup>

The DOE is required to publish an interim report by December 31, 2023, and a final report by December 31, 2024, that includes:

- Best practices used by grant recipients to increase transportation options for students, including any transportation barriers addressed by grant recipients.
- The number of students served by grant recipients including the number of students transported to a school that is different from the school to which the student is assigned.

The DOE provided the following data on December 21, 2023:<sup>17</sup>

<b>District Usage by Category</b>	<b>Number of Districts</b>	<b>Number of Students Served</b>
Driver Incentive Programs	14	15,619
Contracted Transportation	6	1,790
Van (multi-purpose van) Purchase	16	1,111
School Bus Purchase(s)	6	898
Ridership Tracking or Routing Software	3	89,834
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>45*</b>	<b>249,252</b>

\*It is unclear if this is an unduplicated number.

For Fiscal Year 2022-23, \$15 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund was appropriated for the Driving Choice Grant Program.<sup>18</sup> Section 23 of the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 GAA reverted the unexpended balance of funds (\$9,655,319) for the Driving Choice Grant Program and appropriated these funds for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 to the DOE for the same purpose.<sup>19</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill repeals the Driving Choice Grant Program.

## **Developmental Research (Lab) Schools**

### Present Situation

There is a category of public schools legislatively-established as lab schools.<sup>20</sup> A non-charter lab school must be affiliated with the state university's college of education that is within closest geographic proximity. A charter lab school must be affiliated with the state university's college of education that issued the charter but is not subject to the requirement that it be the closest in geographic proximity. For purposes of receiving state funds, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Florida Atlantic

<sup>16</sup> Section 1006.27(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Email from the Department of Education on December 21, 2023.

<sup>18</sup> Chapter 2022-156, S.A. 101, Laws of Fla.

<sup>19</sup> Chapter 2023-239, s. 34, Laws of Fla.

<sup>20</sup> Section 1002.32(2), F.S.

University, Florida State University, the University of Florida, and other universities approved by the SBE and the Legislature are authorized to sponsor a lab school.<sup>21</sup>

For the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Public Schools PreK-12 Enrollments forecast, the DOE provided information to the principals of the Education Estimating Conference that documented beginning in Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Charter Lab K-12 in St. Lucie County would no longer be a charter lab school and the school's current year full-time equivalent (FTE) students would be transferred to St. Lucie School District. The Public Schools PreK-12 Enrollments forecast adopted at the January 10, 2024, Education Estimating Conference includes this transfer.<sup>22</sup>

### Effects of Proposed Changes

The bill deletes the FAU Charter Lab K-12 School in St. Lucie County as an authorized charter lab school and the students currently attending this school will be transferred to the St. Lucie School District.

## **Charter Schools**

### Present Situation

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools created through an agreement or “charter” that provides flexibility relative to the regulations created for traditional public schools.<sup>23</sup> During the 2022-2023 school year, over 382,367 students were enrolled in 726 charter schools in 46 Florida school districts.<sup>24</sup>

Prior to 2021, a district school board was authorized to sponsor a charter school in the county over which it has jurisdiction and a state university was authorized to sponsor a charter lab school.<sup>25</sup> A FCS institution was authorized to work with school districts in the FCS institution's designated service area to develop a charter school that offered secondary education, including an option for students to receive an associate degree upon high school graduation. If a FCS institution offered a teacher preparation program, it was authorized to operate one charter school for students in kindergarten through grade 12 and had to implement innovative blended learning instructional models for students in kindergarten through grade 8.<sup>26</sup>

In 2021, to address the needs of educational capacity, workforce qualifications, and career education opportunities that may extend beyond a school district's boundaries, the Legislature modified statute<sup>27</sup> to:

- Authorize FCS institutions and state universities to solicit applications and sponsor charter schools upon SBE approval. Additionally:
  - A state university-sponsored charter school may serve students from multiple school districts to meet regional education or workforce demands.
  - A FCS-sponsored charter school may exist in any county within its service area<sup>28</sup> to meet workforce demands. A FCS-sponsored charter school may offer postsecondary programs leading to industry certifications for eligible charter school students.
- Remove the requirements that a FCS institution that operates an approved teacher preparation program:
  - May operate only one charter school; and

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<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

<sup>22</sup> See, <http://www.edr.state.fl.us>. (Last visited March 7, 2024.)

<sup>23</sup> Florida Department of Education, Fact Sheet Office of School Choice, *Florida's Charter Schools* (October 2023), available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7778/urlt/Charter-Sept-2022.pdf>. (Last visited January 17, 2024.)

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> Section 1002.33(5)(a)1. and 2., F.S.

<sup>26</sup> Section 1002.33(5)(b)4., F.S.

<sup>27</sup> Chapter 2021-35, Laws of Fla.

<sup>28</sup> Florida College System institution service areas are defined in s. 1000.21(3), F.S.

- Must implement an innovative blended learning instructional model for students in kindergarten through grade 8 at a charter school it operates.
- Prohibit a FCS institution from reporting the FTE for any students participating its charter school who is funded through the FEFP.
- Clarify that a student enrolled in a FCS institution- or state university-sponsored charter school may not be included in the calculation of the school district's grade.

Additionally, the legislation established a methodology for determining the amount of funding students enrolled in a FCS institution- or state university-sponsored charter school would receive; this amount is the sum of the total FEFP operating funds for the school district in which the school is located including gross state and local funds; discretionary lottery funds; and funds from each school district's current operating discretionary millage, divided by the total funded weighted FTE, and multiplied by the FTE membership of the charter school.<sup>29</sup>

Capital outlay funding for a FCS institution- or state university-sponsored charter school is the same as a school district-sponsored charter school and consists of state funds when such funds are appropriated in the GAA and revenue resulting from the discretionary millage authorized in statute.<sup>30</sup>

### *Tallahassee Collegiate Academy*

In January 2023, the SBE approved Tallahassee Community College's application to sponsor a charter school;<sup>31</sup> and on August 10, 2023, the Tallahassee Collegiate Academy (TCA) opened its doors to welcome the school's first students.<sup>32</sup>

The TCA is a STEM charter public high school and allows students to earn an associate in science degree while in high school. The enrollment for the 2023-2024 school year is 142 students as follows<sup>33</sup>:

Grade Level	Number	Percentage
9 <sup>th</sup>	82	57%
10 <sup>th</sup>	49	35%
11 <sup>th</sup>	11	8%

For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, \$1.6 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund was appropriated to the TCA; this funding is not included in the FEFP.<sup>34</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires that funding for a FCS institution- or state university-sponsored charter school is included in the FEFP; this aligns with how school district-sponsored charter schools and charter lab schools are funded.

The bill establishes the methodology for calculating the amount of FEFP funds that a student enrolled at a FCS institution- or state university-sponsored charter school will receive. This methodology includes the sum of the basic amount for current operations established in s. 1011.62(1)(s), F.S., the discretionary millage compression supplement established in s. 1011.62(5), F.S., and the state-funded discretionary contribution established in s. 1011.62(6), F.S. Charter schools whose students or programs meet the eligibility criteria in law are entitled to their proportionate share of categorical program funds included in the total FEFP.

<sup>29</sup> Section 1002.33(17)(b)2.a., F.S.

<sup>30</sup> Section 1002.33(17)(b)2.b., F.S.

<sup>31</sup> State Board of Education, January 18, 2023, meeting.

<sup>32</sup> See, <https://www.tca.fl.edu>. (Last visited January 17, 2024.)

<sup>33</sup> See, *Charter Schools Program*, Presentation by Tallahassee Community College at the December 6, 2023, PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee meeting.

<sup>34</sup> Chapter 2023-239, S.A. 97A, Laws of Fla.

Additionally, the bill provides that:

- The nonvoted required local millage established pursuant to s. 1011.71(1), F.S., that would otherwise be required for the charter schools, will be allocated from state funds.
- An equivalent amount of funds for the operating discretionary millage authorized in s. 1011.71(1), F.S., will be allocated to each charter school through a state-funded discretionary contribution established pursuant to s. 1011.62(6), F.S.
- The comparable wage factor as provided in s. 1011.62(2), F.S., is established as 1.000.

The bill also specifies that capital outlay funding for a FCS institution- or state university-sponsored charter school is determined as follows: multiply the maximum allowable nonvoted discretionary millage under s. 1011.71(2), F.S., by 96 percent of the current year's taxable value for school purposes for the district in which the charter school is located; divide the result by the total FTE student membership; and multiply the result by the FTE student membership of the charter school. The amount obtained is the discretionary capital improvement funds, which will be provided from state funds as specified in the GAA.

## **Auditory Oral Education Programs**

### Present Situation

Between two and three per thousand children in the United States are born deaf or hard of hearing. It is recommended that all newborns are screened by the age of one month, receive a confirmation of hearing status by three months, and be enrolled in an early prevention program for deaf and hard of hearing babies by six months.<sup>35</sup>

Florida families have multiple options for educational choice such as home, private, and public education. Children who are blind or deaf may also attend the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind<sup>36</sup> or an auditory-education program.<sup>37</sup>

Auditory-oral education programs rely solely on listening skills and use implants or assistive hearing devices for the purpose of relying on speech and spoken language skills as a method of communication. Families of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing can enroll their children in an auditory-oral education program as one of the schools of choice options.

In order to enroll and attend an auditory-oral program, the child must:

- have received an implant or assistive hearing device;
- be between the ages of three and seven years, or between the ages of two and seven years when the school district elects to serve children with disabilities who are under the age of three years; and
- be a resident of the state.<sup>38</sup>

In Florida, there are Listening and Spoken Language Specialist providers who offer services at no charge to the families and serve students starting at birth.<sup>39</sup> These providers rely on grants from private entities or state funds from the Department of Health for children age birth to three. Children age three to seven may receive funds from state, to include the Family Empowerment Scholarship for Students with Unique Abilities, local, and private sources.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> National Association of Deaf, *Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers*, <https://www.nad.org/resources/early-intervention-for-infants-and-toddlers/> (Last visited February 27, 2024.)

<sup>36</sup> Section 1002.20(6), F.S.

<sup>37</sup> Section 1002.391, F.S.

<sup>38</sup> *Id.*

<sup>39</sup> Deaf Kids Can, *Direct Service Providers*, <https://www.deafkidscan.org/direct-service-providers> (Last visited February 27, 2024.)

<sup>40</sup> Clarke School, *How Students are Funded*, <https://www.clarkeschools.org/florida> (Last visited February 27, 2024.)



## Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill creates the Bridge to Speech Program to fund auditory-oral education programs offered by public or private schools. Awards must be provided at the level of the school's published tuition rates and the DOE is required to award funds to eligible recipients no later than September 1 of each year with subsequent payments made monthly thereafter.

## **Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring System**

### Present Situation

In 2021, the Legislature<sup>41</sup> required the DOE to implement a coordinated screening and progress monitoring system (system) to assess emergent literacy and mathematics skills for Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) through grade 3 students based on identified standards. The results obtained by the system are required to be reported to the DOE and maintained in the education data warehouse.<sup>42</sup>

The DOE procured the system that measures student progress in the VPK program and the public schools to identify the educational strengths and needs of the students.<sup>43</sup> Specifically, the system measures student progress in meeting the appropriate expectations in early literacy and mathematics skills and in English language arts and mathematics standards.

To facilitate timely interventions and supports, the system provides results from the first two administrations to a student's teacher within 1 week and to the student's parent within 2 weeks of its administration.<sup>44</sup>

### Effects of Proposed Changes

The bill establishes the VPK summer bridge program to provide early learning literacy skill instructional support to VPK students who exhibit a substantial deficiency and scored below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile on the final administration of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system. The summer bridge program must meet requirements adopted by the DOE and must consist of 4 hours of instruction per day for a minimum of 100 total hours.

## **Voluntary Prekindergarten Assessments**

### Present Situation

The 2023 Implementing Bill<sup>45</sup> amends s. 1002.68(4), (5), and (6), F.S., to extend the timelines for the development and implementation of the methodology relating to performance metrics for the VPK providers and removes the provision that disqualifies VPK providers based on a failure to meet minimum program assessment composite scores. As these changes were made in the 2023 Implementing Bill, they expire July 1, 2024.

### Effects of Proposed Changes

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<sup>41</sup> Chapter 2021-10, Laws of Fla

<sup>42</sup> *Id.*

<sup>43</sup> Section 1008.25(9)(a)1., F.S.

<sup>44</sup> Section 1008.25(9)(c), F.S.

<sup>45</sup> Chapter 2023-240, s. 4, Laws of Fla.



The bill permanently codifies the extensions to the timelines for the development and implementation of the methodology relating to performance metrics for the VPK providers.

## **Administrative Funding for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program**

Administrative expenditures for the VPK program are required to be kept at the minimum necessary for efficient and effective administration of the program.<sup>46</sup> Florida's early learning coalitions (ELC) are allowed to retain and expend no more than 4 percent of the funds paid by the ELC to VPK providers for the VPK program. The funds retained by an ELC can only be used for administering the VPK program and cannot be used for school readiness program or other programs.<sup>47</sup>

At the inception of the VPK program, ELCs were allowed to retain 5 percent in administrative expenses for the 2005-2006 program year.<sup>48</sup> In 2009, the percentage was dropped to 4.85 percent effective for the 2008-2009 program year.<sup>49</sup> For the 2020-2021 program year, the percentage was reduced again to 4.5 percent<sup>50</sup>; and finally, in 2011, the percentage was further reduced to 4 percent for the 2011-2012 program year where it has remained until present.<sup>51</sup>

### Effects of Proposed Change

The bill increases the administrative percentage factored into the calculation of the VPK program funds from 4 percent to 5 percent.

## **School Readiness Program**

### Present Situation

#### *Background*

Established in 1999<sup>52</sup>, the School Readiness (SR) program provides subsidies for child care services and early childhood education for children from low-income families; children in protective services who are at risk of abuse, neglect, abandonment, or homelessness; foster children; and children with disabilities.<sup>53</sup> The SR program is a state-federal partnership between the DOE and the Office of Child Care of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.<sup>54</sup> It is administered by the ELCs at the county or regional level<sup>55</sup> and the DOE's Division of Early Learning is the lead administrator of the program at the state level.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Section 1002.71(7), F.S.

<sup>47</sup> *Id.*

<sup>48</sup> Chapter 2004-484, s. 1, Laws of Fla.

<sup>49</sup> Chapter 2009-3, s. 7, Laws of Fla.

<sup>50</sup> Chapter 2010-154, s. 10, Laws of Fla.

<sup>51</sup> Chapter 2011-55, s. 13, Laws of Fla.

<sup>52</sup> Chapter 99-357, s. 1, Laws of Fla.

<sup>53</sup> Sections 1002.81 and 1002.87, F.S.

<sup>54</sup> Section 1002.82(1), F.S. *See also* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Care (OCC), *OCC Fact Sheet*, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/comms-fact-sheet/occ-fact-sheet> (Last visited March 3, 2024.)

<sup>55</sup> Section 1002.83(1), F.S.

<sup>56</sup> Section 1002.82, F.S. *See also* Department of Education, Division of Early Learning, *What is School Readiness (SR)?* <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/early-learning/parents/school-readiness.shtml> (Last visited March 3, 2024.)

Federal regulations governing the Child Care and Development Block Grant Fund (CCDF),<sup>57</sup> the primary funding source for the SR program, authorize states to use grant funds for child care services if:

- the child is under 13 years of age or, at the state's option, under the age of 19 if the child is physically or mentally incapable of caring for himself or herself or under court supervision;
- the child's family income does not exceed 85 percent of the state median income (SMI) for a family of the same size; and
- the child resides with a parent or parents who work or attend job training or education programs; or receives, or needs to receive, protective services.<sup>58</sup>

Funding for the SR program is derived from four sources:

- The CCDF<sup>59</sup>
- The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant<sup>60</sup>
- The Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)<sup>61</sup>
- State General Revenue.<sup>62</sup>

The following chart shows the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 funding for the SR program:

Funding Source	Amount
CCDF	\$874.2 million
TANF	\$94.1 million
SSBG	\$500,000
General Revenue	\$144.6 million

The SR program funds are distributed to the ELCs based upon an allocation methodology established in statute;<sup>63</sup> and each ELC then distributes SR funds to eligible providers.<sup>64</sup> Each ELC determines its reimbursement rates and co-payment amounts which are subject to DOE approval. Any additional amount a parent must pay is based on the difference between the provider's tuition rate and the sum of the reimbursement rate and required parent co-payment. Reimbursement amounts vary based on provider type and care level, and co-payments are determined using a sliding fee scale.

#### *Parent Sliding Fee (Co-payment)*

Each ELC must assess a co-payment for each child that participates in the SR program which is determined by using a sliding fee to ensure that participating families have equitable access to child care.<sup>65</sup> The DOE must approve each ELC's co-payment scale to determine whether it reflects annually released income limits, has an effective date no later than July 1 of that year, and does not exceed 10

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<sup>57</sup> 45 C.F.R. parts 98 and 99.

<sup>58</sup> 45 C.F.R. s.98.20(a). Florida does not provide School Readiness funding for children 13-18 years of age who are physically or mentally incapable of self-care or under court supervision. See *Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan for Florida FFY 2022-2024*, at page 83, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/20628/urlt/2022-2024-CCDF-State-Plan.pdf>.

<sup>59</sup> A major purpose of the CCDF is to allow states to develop child care programs and policies that best suit the needs of children and parents. 45 C.F.R. s. 98.1.

<sup>60</sup> Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act, as codified in 42 U.S.C. ss. 601, et seq. The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program provides states and territories with flexibility in operating programs designed to help low-income families with children to achieve economic self-sufficiency. USHHS, *Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)*.

<sup>61</sup> Through the SSBG states provide essential social services that help achieve a myriad of goals to reduce dependency and promote self-sufficiency; protect children and adults from neglect, abuse and exploitation; and help individuals who are unable to take care of themselves to stay in their homes or to find the best institutional arrangements. USHHS, Social Services Block Grant Program, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/programs/ssbg> (last visited January 12, 2024).

<sup>62</sup> The Florida Department of Education, *School Readiness Funding Allocation Methodology: Report and Recommendations* (Oct. 1, 2019).

<sup>63</sup> Section 1002.89(1), F.S.

<sup>64</sup> See Rule 6M-4.500(1), F.A.C.

<sup>65</sup> Rule 6M-4.400(1), F.A.C.

percent<sup>66</sup> of a family's income, regardless of the number of children in care. If the co-payment does exceed 10 percent, the ELC must justify that the co-payment is affordable in order for the scale to be approved by the DOE.<sup>67</sup> The co-payment may not be equal to or greater than the provider's private pay rate.<sup>68</sup> Co-payments may also be waived on a case-by-case basis for an at-risk child or temporarily waived for a child whose family's income is at or below the federal poverty level or whose family experiences a natural disaster or other event specified in law.<sup>69</sup>

### *School Readiness Allocation Methodology to Early Learning Coalitions*

For purposes of allocating the SR program funds to the ELCs, if the annual allocation is not determined in the GAA or substantive bill implementing the GAA, statute prescribes the allocation methodology to include:

- For each county in the ELC, the total SR eligible population is multiplied by the county's comparable wage factor.
- If a county passed a local ordinance before January 1, 2022, that establishes the county's staff to children ratio for licensed child care facilities below the ratio established in law, multiply the product calculated by the adjustment factor specified in the GAA.
- Each county's SR allocation shall be based on the county's proportionate share of the total adjusted eligible school readiness population.<sup>70</sup>

### *Distribution Methodology to Eligible School Readiness Providers*

For purposes of distributing the SR program funds to the eligible providers, each ELC is required to adopt a payment schedule that encompasses all eligible programs and that takes into consideration the prevailing market rates or an alternative model that has been approved by the Administration for Children and Families pursuant to 45 C.F.R. s. 98.45(c), to include the projected number of children to be served.<sup>71</sup>

In 2022, the Legislature established a new distribution methodology for the ELCs to allocate SR program funds to eligible providers; this methodology requires the utilization of the cost-of-care information.<sup>72</sup> The distribution methodology is as follows:

- For each county in the ELC, the cost-of-care by care level is multiplied by the county's comparable wage factor provided in s. 1011.62(2), F.S. For counties with an ordinance enacted prior to January 1, 2022, that establishes a staff-to-children ratio for licensed child care facilities below the ratio established by rules of the Department of Children and Families, the provider reimbursement rate is adjusted as specified in the General Appropriations Act.
- The minimum provider reimbursement rate by care level for each provider type is then adjusted by the weight established by the Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference.
- The weighted provider reimbursement rate is then multiplied by 22 percent to calculate the amount an ELC is eligible to retain for any combination of administrative costs, quality activities, and nondirect services.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> The 2024 CCDF Final Rule, *Improving Child Care Access, Affordability, and Stability in the Child Care and Development Fund*, will require that the co-payment cannot exceed 7 percent. See <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/fact-sheet/2024-ccdf-final-rule-fact-sheet>. (Last visited March 3, 2024.)

<sup>67</sup> *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> Rule 6M-4.400(2)(d), F.A.C.

<sup>69</sup> Section 1002.84(9), F.S.; Rule 6M-4.400(6), F.A.C.

<sup>70</sup> Section 1002.89(1), F.S.

<sup>71</sup> Section 1002.84(17), F.S.

<sup>72</sup> Chapter 2022-154, Laws of Fla.

<sup>73</sup> Section 1002.89(4), F.S.

- Each eligible provider must receive the minimum provider reimbursement rate, by provider type and care level, regardless of the provider's private pay rate.<sup>74</sup>

### *Cost-of-Care Information*

Current law establishes the Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference (conference) to develop estimates and forecasts of the unduplicated count of children eligible for the SR program in accordance with the standards of eligibility established in s. 1002.87, F.S., and of children eligible for the VPK program in accordance with s. 1002.53(2), F.S.<sup>75</sup>

In 2022, the Legislature required the principals of the conference to develop official cost-of-care information based on actual SR direct services program expenditures and information provided pursuant to s. 1002.895, F.S. Conference principals are required to agree on the cost-of-child care by care level and provider type, the provider type weights, and the methods of computation. The DOE must provide the conference principals with all requested and necessary data to develop such information. The conference must provide the official cost-of-care information to the Legislature at least 90 days before the scheduled annual legislative session.<sup>76</sup>

The last conference for the SR program was held on November 8, 2004.<sup>77</sup>

### *Data Collection and Reporting*

The DOE is required to collect and report data on ELC delivery of the early learning programs. Elements must include, but are not limited to:

- measures related to progress towards reducing the number of children on the SR wait list;
- percentage of children served by the SR program as compared to the number of administrative staff and overhead;
- percentage of SR children served compared to total number of children under the age of 5 years below 150 percent of the Federal poverty level;
- provider payment processes;
- fraud intervention;
- child attendance and stability;
- use of child care resource and referral; and
- kindergarten readiness outcomes for children in the VPK Program or the SR program upon entry into kindergarten.

The DOE must request input from the ELCs and SR providers before finalizing the format and data to be used. The results of the report must be included in the annual report under s. 1002.82, F.S.<sup>78</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill revises the methodology for allocating the SR program funds to the ELCs and requires that each ELC's allocation amount be based on its proportionate share of the total adjusted weighted FTE SR children.

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<sup>74</sup> Sections 1002.84(17) and 1002.89(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>75</sup> Section 216.136(8), F.S.

<sup>76</sup> Section 1002.90, F.S. See ch. 2022-154, Laws of Fla.

<sup>77</sup> See Office of Economic & Demographic Research, *Consensus Estimating Conferences*, <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/index.cfm> (Last visited January 11, 2024.)

<sup>78</sup> Section 1002.85(5), F.S.

The bill requires each ELC to implement a co-payment scale, as established by SBE rule, that must increase in relation to the family income, and that must be calculated at the time of eligibility determination and redetermination.

The bill requires each ELC to distribute the SR program funds based upon the reimbursement rate by county, by provider type, and by care level as established by the Legislature. The DOE shall provide all instructions to ELCs for distributing the funds in accordance with the policies established by the Legislature.

Each ELC with prior year reimbursement rates for the infant to age 5 care levels that are higher than the provider reimbursement rates established by the Legislature may continue to implement its prior year rates until the rates established by the Legislature exceed its prior year rates.

The bill repeals requirements that the principals of the Early Learning Programs Estimating Conference annually develop cost-of-care information based on actual SR direct services program expenditures and information provided pursuant to s. 1002.895, F.S., and provide this information to the Legislature at least 90 days before the annual legislative session.

And finally, the bill requires the DOE to establish procedures to annually collect cost data including, but not limited to:

- data from the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research on the average salary for child care personnel to include, at a minimum, child care instructors and child care directors; and
- data from child care providers including, at a minimum, the average annual cost of materials and curriculum, the average annual cost of food and maintenance, the average annual cost of any regulatory fees, the average annual cost of salaries and benefits, and the average annual cost of all other operational costs per child.

By November 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, the DOE must submit the following data to the Legislature:

- current fiscal year reimbursement rates, by county, by provider type, and by care level;
- the required cost data;
- the market rate survey data pursuant to s. 1002.895, F.S.; and
- the narrow costs analysis data required by 45 C.F.R. s. 98.45.

## **Threat Management**

The Office of Safe Schools (OSS) within the DOE serves as a central repository for best practices, training standards and compliance oversight in all matters regarding public school safety and security, including prevention efforts, intervention efforts and emergency preparedness planning.<sup>79</sup>

District school boards and superintendents each have responsibilities related to school safety and security to include designating a school safety specialist who is responsible for the supervision and oversight for all school safety and security personnel, policies, and procedures in the school district.<sup>80</sup> District school boards must adopt policies that guide many aspects of school safety including the establishment of threat assessment teams (TAT) and emergency procedures and emergency preparation drills. The TATs assess and provide intervention recommendations for individuals whose behavior may pose a threat to the safety of school staff or students.<sup>81</sup> The TAT members must include individuals with expertise in counseling, instruction, school administration, and law enforcement.<sup>82</sup> To

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<sup>79</sup> Section 1001.212, F.S.

<sup>80</sup> *Id.*

<sup>81</sup> Section 1006.07(7), F.S. The Office of Safe Schools is required to develop model policies for the operation of threat assessment teams.

<sup>82</sup> *Id.*

conduct its work, a TAT must use the standardized, statewide behavioral threat assessment instrument developed by the OSS.<sup>83</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Change

The bill requires each district school board to establish a threat management coordinator to serve as the primary point of contact regarding the district's coordination, communication, and implementation of the threat management program.

## **Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program**

### Present Situation

The Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program (program) was established in 2023<sup>84</sup> to provide supplemental state funds, as needed, to maintain the stability of the operations of public schools in each school district and to protect districts, including charter schools, from financial instability as a result of changes in FTE enrollment throughout the school year. The program is implemented to the extent funds are available.<sup>85</sup>

The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 GAA provided \$350 million for the program<sup>86</sup> and the DOE is authorized to use these funds to ensure that based on each recalculation of the FEFP, a school district's funds per unweighted FTE is not less than the greater of either the school district's funds per unweighted FTE as appropriated in the GAA or the school district's funds per unweighted FTE as recalculated based upon receipt of the certified taxable value for school purposes pursuant to s. 1011.62(4), F.S.<sup>87</sup>

Based on the 3<sup>rd</sup> calculation of the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 FEFP, a total of \$23,512,811 of the \$350 million was used as follows<sup>88</sup>:

School District	Amount
Bradford	\$7,656
Dixie	\$136,689
Flagler	\$14,359
Liberty	\$95,690
Marion	\$235,624
Miami Dade	\$21,473,693
Osceola	\$344,118
Suwannee	\$69,665
Taylor	\$21,328
Union	\$91,048
Florida Virtual School	\$1,022,941
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$23,512,811</b>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies the program to require an annual appropriation in an amount necessary to maintain a projected minimum balance of \$250 million at the beginning of the upcoming fiscal year. Additionally, the bill authorizes that any unexpended balance of funds at the end of the fiscal year be carried forward for up to 10 years after the effective date of the original appropriation.

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<sup>83</sup> *Id.*

<sup>84</sup> Chapter 2023-245, s. 41, Laws of Fla.

<sup>85</sup> Section 1011.62(18), F.S.

<sup>86</sup> Chapter 2023-239, s. 54, Laws of Fla.

<sup>87</sup> Section 1011.62(18), F.S.

<sup>88</sup> Fiscal Year 2023-2024 FEFP, 3<sup>rd</sup> calculation.

## Florida Law Enforcement Academy Scholarship Program

### Present Situation

Prior to being certified as a Florida law enforcement officer, a person must complete a basic recruit training program unless he or she can claim an exemption.<sup>89</sup> A trainee may either pay the cost of tuition out-of-pocket, or an employing agency<sup>90</sup> may sponsor a trainee and pay the costs of his or her tuition.<sup>91</sup> A trainee who is sponsored by an employing agency is required to maintain employment with that agency for at least two years after graduation from the basic recruit training program.<sup>92</sup> In most cases, if a trainee fails to maintain employment for the two-year period, he or she is required to reimburse the employing agency for the full cost of tuition and other course expenses.<sup>93</sup>

In 2022,<sup>94</sup> and beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year, the Florida Law Enforcement Academy Scholarship Program (scholarship program) was established to assist in the recruitment of law enforcement officers within the state by providing financial assistance to trainees who enroll in a Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission (commission) approved basic recruit training program.<sup>95</sup> The DOE, in consultation with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, administers the scholarship program according to SBE adopted rules.<sup>96</sup>

Scholarships are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis based on the date the DOE receives each completed application. To be eligible for a scholarship, a trainee must:

- be enrolled at a commission-approved basic recruit training program at a FCS institution or school district career center.
- not be sponsored by an employing agency to cover the costs of training.<sup>97</sup>

The scholarship award is in an amount equal to the tuition and fees which are necessary to complete the basic recruit training program, less any state financial aid received by a trainee. A nonresident may apply for a scholarship, but the award amount does not include the additional out-of-state student fee. In addition to the scholarship award amount, a trainee is also eligible for up to \$1,000 for educational expenses, including the officer certification examination fee, textbooks, uniforms, ammunition, required insurance, and any other costs or fees for consumable materials required to complete the basic recruit training program.<sup>98</sup>

For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, \$5 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated for the scholarship program.<sup>99</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

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<sup>89</sup> Sections 943.13(9) and 943.31(20), F.S. Exemptions include completion of a comparable state or federal program and at least one year of employment as a sworn officer, service in special operations forces for a minimum of five years, or previous certification as a law enforcement officer.

<sup>90</sup> Section 943.10(4), F.S. “Employing agency” means any agency or unit of government or any municipality or the state or any political subdivision thereof, or any agent thereof, which has constitutional or statutory authority to employ or appoint persons as officers. The term also includes any private entity which has contracted with the state or county for the operation and maintenance of a nonjuvenile detention facility.

<sup>91</sup> Section 943.16(1), F.S.

<sup>92</sup> Section 943.16(2), F.S.

<sup>93</sup> Section 943.16(6) and (7), F.S.

<sup>94</sup> Chapter 2022-23, s. 12, Laws of Fla.

<sup>95</sup> Section 1009.896(2), F.S.

<sup>96</sup> Section 1009.896(3), F.S.

<sup>97</sup> Section 1009.896(4) and (5), F.S.

<sup>98</sup> Section 1009.896(6), F.S.

<sup>99</sup> Chapter 2023-239, S.A. 68, Laws of Fla.



The bill renames the scholarship program to the Florida First Responder Scholarship Program and expands scholarship eligibility to also include emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and firefighters.

The bill establishes the scholarship eligibility requirements for emergency medical technicians, paramedics, and firefighters and prescribes that the scholarship amount is equal to the tuition and fees necessary to complete the respective training programs, less any state financial aid received and does not include an out-of-state fee. In addition to scholarship award amount, the bill also provides up to \$1,000 for other specified educational expenses.

## **District School Bonds**

### Present Situation

If the residents of a county desire their school district to issue a bond for the purpose of acquiring, building, enlarging, furnishing, or otherwise improving buildings or school grounds, or for any other exclusive use of the district's public schools, they may present to the district school board a petition signed by not less than 25 percent of the duly qualified electors residing within the county. The petition must set forth the amount of the bond and its purpose and clearly state that the proceeds derived from the sale of the bond will be used for the purpose stated in the petition.<sup>100</sup>

District school boards are required to plan the school district's financial program so that needed capital outlay expenditures can be made without the necessity of issuing bonds. However, when the district school board proposes the issuance of a bond or has received a petition proposing the issuance of a bond, the district school board must determine whether the project for which the bond is being proposed is essential for the school program of the school district.<sup>101</sup>

If the district school board determines that any portion of the project cannot be carried out within existing school district resources, the board must determine the amount of the bond necessary to complete the proposed project and adopt and submit to the DOE for its approval the resolution setting forth the proposed bond that references the project and financing plan.<sup>102</sup>

An election is required to be held to determine whether or not the bond may be issued.<sup>103</sup>

Each district school board is required to maintain a complete record of all bonds issued, which must include the:

- authority for issuing the bond;
- amount and purposes of the bond;
- persons to whom the bond will be issued;
- rate of interest to be paid and the time and place of payment of each installment of principal and interest.<sup>104</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires the DOE to implement a system to track all school bond referenda and debt incurred by a school district via a referendum for capital outlay or operational purposes. The bill prescribes the minimum components of the system to include bonds not yet retired, present bonds in effect as well as any future referendum being considered by a school district, ballot language from bond referenda, and

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<sup>100</sup> Section 1010.40, F.S.

<sup>101</sup> Section 1010.41, F.S.

<sup>102</sup> *Id.*

<sup>103</sup> Section 1010.43, F.S.

<sup>104</sup> Section 1010.51, F.S.

project lists. The system must be updated in near real-time, provide support services, data reporting and customizable alerts to the DOE on all school bonds issued debt.

## **Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund Matching Grants**

### Present Situation

The Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund is utilized to provide matching grants to the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind Endowment Fund and to any public school district education foundation that is recognized by the school district as its designated K-12 education foundation.<sup>105</sup> For every year in which there is a legislative appropriation to the trust fund, an equal amount of the annual appropriation must be reserved for each public school district education foundation and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind Endowment Fund to provide each foundation with an opportunity to receive and match the appropriated funds.<sup>106</sup> Matching grants are proportionately allocated from the trust fund on the basis of matching each \$4 of state funds with \$6 of private funds.<sup>107</sup>

In the Fiscal Year 2023-2024, \$6 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund is appropriated for the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund matching grant program.<sup>108</sup>

The Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is a component of the delivery of public education within Florida's Early Learning-20 Education System<sup>109</sup>. The FLVS is a public school, is authorized to serve any student in the state who meets the profile for success in this educational delivery context,<sup>110</sup> and is funded in the FEFP.<sup>111</sup> Additionally the FLVS has an established education foundation.<sup>112</sup>

### Effects of Proposed Changes

The bill clarifies that for purposes of the matching grants funded by the Florida Academic Improvement Trust Fund, an education foundation includes the education foundation established by the FLVS.

## **Educator Certification**

### Present Situation

While there are several certification pathways, any individual seeking certification must meet specific eligibility requirements:<sup>113</sup>

- be at least 18 years of age;
- sign an affidavit attesting that the applicant will uphold the United States and State Constitutions;
- earn a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning,<sup>114</sup> or from a nonaccredited institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's or higher degree;<sup>115</sup>
- submit to fingerprinting and background screening and not have a criminal history that requires the applicant's disqualification from certification or employment;
- be of good moral character; and

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<sup>105</sup> Section 1011.765(1), F.S.

<sup>106</sup> Section 1011.765(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>107</sup> Section 1011.765(1)(b), F.S.

<sup>108</sup> Chapter 2023-239, S.A. 89, Laws of Fla.

<sup>109</sup> Section 1000.04(4), F.S.

<sup>110</sup> Section 1002.37(1)(b), F.S.

<sup>111</sup> Section 1002.37(3), F.S.

<sup>112</sup> See, <https://www.flvsfoundation.org/> (Last visited January 19, 2024.)

<sup>113</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

<sup>114</sup> Section 1012.56(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(1), F.A.C.

<sup>115</sup> Section 1012.56(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C.

- be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher.

After meeting eligibility requirements, an individual may choose a certification route. The DOE issues two general types of educator certificates:

- Professional Certificate: Florida's highest type of full-time educator certification;<sup>116</sup>
- Temporary Certificate: covers employment in full-time positions for which educator certification is required;<sup>117</sup>

To qualify for a temporary certificate, an applicant must meet subject area specialization requirements in at least one subject. Each subject area has specific degree or course requirements set in the SBE rule,<sup>118</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Change

The bill removes the requirement that an applicant for a temporary apprenticeship certificate must complete the subject area content requirements.

### **Other**

#### Charity for Change Program

The bill creates the Charity for Change program to implement the character education standards required pursuant to s. 1003.42(2)(t), F.S. The program may use third-party providers to deliver after-school and summer services that empower students with an evidence-based curriculum that integrates character education, service learning, charitable and community engagement, and academics.

#### AMlkids, Inc.

The bill creates the AMlkids, Inc., program to provide alternatives to institutionalization or commitment for young men and women, by providing services including, but not limited to, education, behavior modification, skills development, mental health, workforce development, family functioning, and advocacy.

#### Taxable Value for Wakulla County School District

The bill requires that the taxable value for the Wakulla County School District that was provided by the Department of Revenue to the DOE by January 1, 2024, must be used for the remaining calculations of the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 FEFP and for use in the Prior Period Funding Adjustment Millage calculation. This section become effective upon becoming law and expires on July 1, 2025.

## **II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

### **A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:**

#### **1. Revenues:**

None.

#### **2. Expenditures:**

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<sup>116</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(3), F.A.C.

<sup>117</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.

<sup>118</sup> Section 1012.56(7)(b), F.A.C. The degree and content requirements are established in ch. 6A-4, F.A.C.

None.

**B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:**

**1. Revenues:**

None.

**2. Expenditures:**

None.

**C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:**

None.

**D. FISCAL COMMENTS:**

The bill conforms applicable statutes to the appropriations provided for education in the General Appropriations (GAA) Act for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

For the Early Learning system, the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 GAA provides the following appropriations to implement the applicable provisions of HB 5101:

- \$46.4 million for the increase in School Readiness reimbursement rates based on changes to the allocation methodology.
- \$60.0 million for transitioning School Readiness providers to the legislatively-established reimbursement rates.
- \$4.1 million for the VPK summer bridge program.
- \$4.1 million for increasing the VPK administrative fee from 4 percent to 5 percent.

For the PreK-12 system, the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 GAA provides the following appropriations to implement the applicable provisions of HB 5101:

- \$50.0 million for the Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program.
- \$14.0 million for the transportation stipend program.
- \$5.0 million for school district threat management coordinators.
- \$4.7 million for the Charity for Change program.
- \$2.6 million for the Tallahassee Collegiate Academy.
- \$1.8 million for the Bridge to Speech program.

For the Higher Education system, the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 GAA provides the following appropriations to implement the applicable provisions of HB 5101:

- \$80.0 million for participating Florida College System institutions in the State Group Health Insurance Program.
- \$5.0 million for the Florida First Responder Scholarship Program.