

Tab 1	SB 564 by Yarborough ; Identical to H 00461 Student Volunteers at Polling Locations				
861108	A	S	ED, Yarborough	Delete L.31:	01/26 03:22 PM
Tab 2	SB 1062 by Brodeur (CO-INTRODUCERS) Burgess, Gaetz ; Similar to H 01059 Speech and Debate				
220472	D	S	ED, Brodeur	Delete everything after	01/26 01:05 PM
Tab 3	SB 1340 by Harrell ; Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring				
Tab 4	SB 1646 by Simon ; Compare to H 01321 Educational Facilities				
Tab 5	SB 1718 by Calatayud ; Similar to H 00561 Educator Preparation and Certification				

The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

EDUCATION PRE-K - 12

Senator Simon, Chair

Senator Calatayud, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Tuesday, January 27, 2026

TIME: 3:30—5:30 p.m.

PLACE: *Pat Thomas Committee Room, 412 Knott Building*

MEMBERS: Senator Simon, Chair; Senator Calatayud, Vice Chair; Senators Berman, Burgess, Davis, Gaetz, Osgood, and Yarborough

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	SB 564 Yarborough (Identical H 461)	<p>Student Volunteers at Polling Locations; Providing that specified high school students who volunteer to assist poll workers are not subject to provisions prohibiting certain agencies and state and local officials from soliciting, accepting, or otherwise using private funds or certain personal services for election-related expenses, etc.</p> <p>EE 01/13/2026 Favorable ED 01/27/2026 RC</p>	
2	SB 1062 Brodeur (Similar H 1059)	<p>Speech and Debate; Citing this act as the "Florida Speech and Debate Education Act"; creating the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame; designating Florida Speech and Debate Week each year in November; designating the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as the official statewide speech and debate organization; authorizing a certified teacher to earn an endorsement in speech and debate; requiring the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation, etc.</p> <p>ED 01/27/2026 AED FP</p>	
3	SB 1340 Harrell	<p>Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring; Specifying requirements for a school district if a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia; providing circumstances under which a student is required to undergo further screening for dyslexia or dyscalculia, etc.</p> <p>ED 01/27/2026 AHS RC</p>	

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

Education Pre-K - 12

Tuesday, January 27, 2026, 3:30—5:30 p.m.

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS		COMMITTEE ACTION		
		ED	01/27/2026			
4	SB 1646 Simon (Compare H 1321)	Educational Facilities; Revising the formula to calculate funds for remodeling, renovation, maintenance, repairs, and site improvement of existing facilities; requiring a board to prioritize a specified amount of funds to correct unsafe, unhealthy, or unsanitary conditions; requiring the Department of Education to participate in a design review process; authorizing a district school board to enter into a contingency construction contract, etc.	ED AED AP			
5	SB 1718 Calatayud (Similar H 561)	Educator Preparation and Certification; Authorizing an educator preparation institute to allow certain program participants to enroll in introductory coursework; revising the criteria for the award of a temporary educator certification to include certain persons with expired professional certificates; requiring that subject area coverages and endorsements for a certificateholder be reinstated with the certificateholder's professional certificate; requiring the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence to collaborate with the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching for specified purposes, etc.	ED AED RC			
TAB	OFFICE and APPOINTMENT (HOME CITY)	FOR TERM ENDING		COMMITTEE ACTION		
Senate Confirmation Hearing: A public hearing will be held for consideration of the below-named executive appointment to the office indicated.						
State Board of Education						
6	Collins, Layla ()	12/31/2028				
TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS		COMMITTEE ACTION		

Other Related Meeting Documents

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Ethics and Elections

BILL: SB 564

INTRODUCER: Senator Yarborough

SUBJECT: Student Volunteers at Polling Locations

DATE: January 26, 2026 REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Biehl	Roberts	EE	Favorable
2. Palazesi	Bouck	ED	Pre-meeting
3. _____	_____	RC	_____

I. Summary:

SB 564 revises an existing prohibition against use of private funds for election-related expenses by authorizing Florida high school students who are registered or preregistered to vote to volunteer to assist poll workers for the purpose of receiving community service hours.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Poll Workers

Poll workers are short-term employees of supervisors of elections who staff voting sites, assist voters, and work in the elections office. Before beginning service as a poll worker, a person must complete a training curriculum developed by the Department of State.¹

Use of Private Funds for Election-Related Expenses

Current law prohibits an agency or a state or local official responsible for conducting elections from soliciting, accepting, using, or disposing of any donation in the form of money, grants, property, or personal services from an individual or nongovernmental entity for the purpose of funding any type of expenses related to election administration. Such expenses include, but are not limited to, voter education, voter outreach, voter registration programs, or the cost of any litigation related to election administration.²

¹ Section 102.014(1), F.S.

² Section 97.0291, F.S.

The prohibition does not include the donation and acceptance of space to be used for a polling room or an early voting site.³

Qualifications to Register or Vote

A person may become a registered voter only if that person:

- Is at least 18 years of age;
- Is a citizen of the United States;
- Is a legal resident of the State of Florida;
- Is a legal resident of the county in which that person seeks to be registered; and
- Registers pursuant to the Florida Election Code.⁴

A person who is otherwise qualified may preregister on or after that person's 16th birthday and may vote in any election occurring on or after that person's 18th birthday.⁵ Because registration books must be closed on the 29th day before each election and remain closed until after that election,⁶ preregistration allows a person to ensure that he or she will be able to vote in an election that may occur soon after his or her 18th birthday.

Community Service Hours

High school students in Florida may use community service hours to satisfy certain requirements for various educational programs. Florida law encourages school districts to initiate service learning which is a student-centered, research-based teaching and learning strategy that engages students in meaningful service activities in their schools or communities.⁷ Service hours that high school students devote to course-based service-learning activities may be counted toward meeting community service requirements for high school graduation and community service requirements for participation in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program. School districts are also encouraged to include service learning as part of any course or activity required for high school graduation.⁸ Some school districts require community service or service learning hours as part of their high school graduation requirement. For example, Broward County Public Schools and the School District of Palm Beach County require students seeking a standard high school diploma to complete, 40 and 20 hours of community service hours, respectively.⁹

Another educational program with a community service component is the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program (BFSP). The Florida BFSP is a lottery-funded initiative that supports high school graduates pursuing degrees, certificates, or applied technology programs at eligible

³ Section 97.0291, F.S.

⁴ Section 97.041(1)(a), F.S.

⁵ Section 97.041(1)(b), F.S.

⁶ Section 97.055(1)(a), F.S.

⁷ Section 1003.497,(1), F.S.

⁸ *Id.* at (3)(b).

⁹ Broward County Public Schools, *Student Activities and Volunteer Service Learning Hours*, available at <https://www.browardschools.com/bcps-departments/student-activities/student-activities-and-volunteer-service-learning-hours> (last visited Jan 21, 2026). The School District of Palm Beach County, *Community Service*, available at <https://www.palmbeachschools.org/studentsparents/grades-and-graduation-requirements/graduation-requirements/community-service> (last visited Jan 21, 2026).

postsecondary institutes.¹⁰ The BFSP has four distinct scholarship awards that require volunteer service hours, paid work hours, or a combination of both:¹¹

- Florida Academic Scholarship: Requires an applicant to complete 100 volunteer hours; 100 paid work hours; or a combination of 100 total hours of volunteer and work hours.
- Florida Medallion Scholarship: Requires an applicant to complete 75 volunteer hours; 100 paid work hours; or a combination of 100 total hours of volunteer and work hours.
- Gold Seal Vocational Scholarship: Requires an applicant to complete 30 volunteer hours; 100 paid work hours; or a combination of 100 total hours of volunteer and work hours.
- Goal Seal Cape Scholarship: Requires an applicant to complete 30 volunteer hours; 100 paid work hours; or a combination of 100 total hours of volunteer and work hours.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 564 revises the prohibition against the use of private funds for election-related expenses. Specifically, the bill provides that the section does not prohibit high school students in this state who are registered or preregistered to vote from volunteering to assist poll workers for the purpose of receiving community service hours.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

¹⁰ Section 1009.53, F.S.

¹¹ Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, *Scholarship Awards*, available at <https://floridabrightfutures.gov/#Scholarship%20Awards> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 97.0291, Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.



LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

House

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The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 (Yarborough) recommended the following:

1 **Senate Amendment**

2

3 Delete line 31

4 and insert:

5 workers for the purpose of receiving community service hours to
6 meet community service requirements for high school graduation
7 or postsecondary financial aid.

By Senator Yarborough

4-00196A-26

2026564

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to student volunteers at polling locations; amending s. 97.0291, F.S.; providing that specified high school students who volunteer to assist poll workers are not subject to provisions prohibiting certain agencies and state and local officials from soliciting, accepting, or otherwise using private funds or certain personal services for election-related expenses; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 97.0291, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

97.0291 Prohibition on use of private funds for election-related expenses.—

(1) An ~~no~~ agency or a state or local official responsible for conducting elections, including, but not limited to, a supervisor of elections, may not solicit, accept, use, or dispose of any donation in the form of money, grants, property, or personal services from an individual or a nongovernmental entity for the purpose of funding any type of expenses related to election administration, including, but not limited to, voter education, voter outreach, voter registration programs, or the cost of any litigation related to election administration.

(2) This section does not prohibit:

(a) The donation and acceptance of space to be used for a polling room or an early voting site.

(b) High school students in this state who are registered

Page 1 of 2

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or preregistered to vote from volunteering to assist poll workers for the purpose of receiving community service hours.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Page 2 of 2

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K -12

BILL: SB 1062

INTRODUCER: Senator Brodeur and others

SUBJECT: Speech and Debate

DATE: January 26, 2026 REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. <u>Sabitsch</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Pre-meeting</u>
2. _____	_____	<u>AED</u>	_____
3. _____	_____	<u>FP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1062 creates the “Florida Speech and Debate Education Act” that includes the following provisions:

- Designates the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI), Inc. as the official statewide organization responsible for speech and debate programs and outlines requirements, authorized expenditures, and reporting requirements of the organization.
- Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to collaborate with the FDI to establish regional traveling debate teams and outlines requirements for teams and expenditures.
- Provides annual reporting requirements for district school boards regarding speech and debate competitions.
- Creates the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.
- Designates a week in November at the “Florida Speech and Debate Week” and describes the purposes of the week.
- Allows a certified teacher to earn an endorsement in speech and debate.
- Requires the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation and provides requirements for the institute.
- Requires the development of undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates and micro-credentials in speech and debate education.
- Requires the DOE to approve specific speech and debate courses for inclusion in dual enrollment programs.

The bill provides \$4.6 million to implement these provisions. See Section V. Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill takes effect on January 1, 2027.

II. Present Situation:

Debate and Public Speaking

History

Debate is an ancient form of argumentation. It was first used as a way to resolve quarrels, but it soon became apparent that it could also be used as a tool to teach people how to think critically and argue effectively. It originated in Greece, around 500 B.C. There, Socrates used it in his philosophy classes at the Academy in Athens.¹

The Roman orators Cicero and Quintilian were masters of debate. They taught their students how to argue both sides of an issue so well that their opponents didn't even know they were being argued into a corner until it was too late!²

Medieval scholars also used debate as a method of discussing important ideas with each other in order to come up with new ways of thinking, from science to religion.³

The development of public speaking as a specific skill is strongly linked to the development of democracy in Ancient Greece. Starting in 621 B.C. in Athens, laws began to convert from an oral tradition heavily controlled by nobility to a written form that could be applied equally and consistently. This codification (creating an organized system of laws) took power from the nobility and moved it into the courts. Assemblies were formed to review, revise, and create laws. Accordingly, there had to be substantive debate and persuasion to reach agreements on how to manage this evolution of legal doctrine, and those coming before the courts needed to engage in public speaking to advocate for their position.⁴

Democracy demands public speaking as a tool for self-governance. Since being proficient in public speaking was so valuable, the study of how it works likewise became important, emerging as the study of rhetoric.⁵

Movements in the United States and Florida

As a working democracy, speech and debate have had profound effects on the United States, highlighted by the selected examples below:

- Alexander Hamilton-Thomas Jefferson debates after the Constitution was ratified in 1788 in their clash over the Bank of the United States became a defining moment in shaping America's economic direction and in clarifying the meaning of the Constitution.⁶
- The Lincoln-Douglas debates were a series of seven debates during the 1858 Illinois senatorial campaign that largely centered on the issue of extending slavery into the new U.S.

¹ Learning Leaders, *The History of Debate*, <https://www.learningleaders.com/insights/the-history-of-debate-from-ancient-greece-to-remote-learning> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

⁴ Boise State University, *A Brief History of Public Speaking*, <https://boisestate.pressbooks.pub/soc122/chapter/10-1-a-brief-history-of-public-speaking/> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ The Federalist Society, *Hamilton V. Jefferson: The Central Bank Debate*, <https://fedsoc.org/commentary/videos/hamilton-v-jefferson-the-central-bank-debate-policybrief> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

territories following the Mexican War and would have a profound effect on the future of the United States.⁷

- The Kennedy-Nixon debates in 1960 when a debate for the presidency was presented for the first time on television and reached an estimated 70 million people.⁸

The National Speech and Debate Association provides recognition and support to high school students participating in speech and debate activities. Established in 1925, the Association held its first national tournament in 1931 with 49 schools from 17 states. Recent membership from 2023-2024 shows 141,132 students on school rosters with 3,152 high school members.⁹ The association reported 200 Florida high school members with 10,344 students participating.¹⁰

There are two organizations that facilitate and promote speech and debate in Florida, the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI) and the Florida Civics & Debate Initiative (FCDI).

The FDI is a Florida not-for-profit corporation. It began as the Central Florida Debate Initiative from 2014 to 2019 and later became the FDI. The FDI is dedicated to fostering a new generation of leaders by providing access to exceptional civics education resources, debate programs, and expertly trained teachers. Programs offered by the FDI include:¹¹

- The American Dream Debate (a bilingual debate tournament);
- Civic immersion experience in Washington, D.C.;
- DebateED 201(instruction for coaches);
- DebateED 101 (resources for educators);
- Speech and Debate Learning Retreat (for educators);
- Pro Camps FDI (student workshop);
- Salute to Service (leadership program);
- FDI Fellow Program (internship for college students);
- Florida Speech and Debate Summer Camp; and
- Turning Tides (a partnership program to empower youth in the juvenile justice system).¹²

The program is funded with a specific appropriation in the Florida budget of \$2.4 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year.¹³

The FCDI is a program under the Department of Education (DOE) and the Florida Education Foundation. The FCDI was created in response to an Executive Order by the Governor that called for a comprehensive review of academic standards that included opportunities to equip high school graduates with sufficient knowledge of American Civics.¹⁴ In 2020 the Governor

⁷ Britannica, *Lincoln-Douglas debates*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Lincoln-Douglas-debates> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

⁸ Britannica, The Kennedy-Nixon debates, <https://www.britannica.com/art/television-in-the-United-States/The-Kennedy-Nixon-debates> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

⁹ National Speech & Debate Association, *Membership at a Glance*, <https://www.speechanddebate.org/membership-database/> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

¹⁰ Email, National Speech & Debate Association (Jan. 21, 2026).

¹¹ Florida Debate Initiative, *Programs*, <https://www.floridadebate.org/programs> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

¹² *Id.*

¹³ Specific Appropriation 106, s. 2, ch. 2025-198, Laws of Fla.

¹⁴ Executive Order 19-32 (2019)

announced the establishment of the FCDI along with funding from the Marcus foundation for elevating civic knowledge, civic skills and civic disposition for middle and high school students. The Marcus Foundation¹⁵ committed \$5 million over a three-year period towards the initiative with the following goals:¹⁶

- Promote the expansion of middle and high school debate and speech programs to all of Florida's public school districts;
- Increase middle school civics end of course state passage rates;
- Increase high school U.S. History end of course state passage rates;
- Implement a National Civics, Speech, and Debate competition for all students; and
- Make Florida a nationwide leader in training Florida high school teachers and train other states to continue or begin to successfully run competitive school speech and debate teams.¹⁷

The FDI contributes both financial resources and programmatic support to the FCDI to help advance FCDI's statewide goals of increasing civic literacy, amplifying student voice, and preparing the next generation of active, informed citizens. As FCDI's educational support organization, FDI focuses on:

- Educating and training coaches and students;
- Training judges and volunteers;
- Promoting educational competition opportunities;
- Leading training and leadership development experiences; and
- Establishing competition standards.¹⁸

Special Observances in Florida

The legislature has designated specific days, weeks or months to provide special appreciation, celebration, or remembrance for various purposes. For each designation the day, week or month is described and in some cases either allows or requires the Governor to issue a proclamation for the observance.¹⁹ Florida Law designates the following example observances:

- American Founders Month;²⁰
- Holocaust Remembrance Day;²¹
- Responsible Fatherhood Month;²²
- Foster Family Appreciation Week;²³ and
- Drowsy Driving Prevention Week (Ronshay Dugans Act).²⁴

¹⁵ The Marcus Foundation, *About the Marcus Foundation*, <https://marcusfoundation.org/about-the-marcus-foundation/> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

¹⁶ Office of the Governor Press Release (Jan. 27, 2020), available at: <https://www.flgov.com/eog/news/press/2020/governor-ron-desantis-announces-florida-civics-and-debate-initiative-marcus>.

¹⁷ Office of the Governor Press Release (Jan. 27, 2020), available at: <https://www.flgov.com/eog/news/press/2020/governor-ron-desantis-announces-florida-civics-and-debate-initiative-marcus>.

¹⁸ https://5400622c-3214-4001-887b-8a6328c71885.filesusr.com/ugd/ab06c2_3136dad194a64b39abff6fedbc941d5a2.pdf, at 5.

¹⁹ Chapter 683, F.S.

²⁰ Section 683.1455, F.S.

²¹ Section 683.196, F.S.

²² Section 683.3341, F.S.

²³ Section 683.333, F.S.

²⁴ Section 683.332, F.S.

Florida Educator Certificate Endorsements

Florida law allows the Department of Education (DOE) to adopt endorsements as add-ons to an existing educator certificate.²⁵ Endorsements demonstrate specialized expertise in a subject area, instructional strategy or specific student population. The following are current adopted endorsements:

- American sign language;
- Athletic coaching;
- Autism spectrum disorders;
- Driver education;
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL);
- Gifted;
- Orientation and mobility;
- Prekindergarten disabilities;
- Reading; and
- Severe or profound disabilities.²⁶

Florida Virtual School

The Florida Virtual School (FLVS) was established in 1997²⁷ as a pilot project to create Florida first internet -based public high school. Currently, as a fully accredited, statewide public school district, FLVS offers more than 190 online courses to kindergarten through grade 12 students and has enrolled more than 4.6 million students. The FLVS exists as a not-for-profit corporation.²⁸

Features of the FLVS include the following:²⁹

- The FLVS is included in Florida's accountability system and receives a school grade based on the same criteria as other public schools.
- Florida school districts may choose to enter an agreement with FLVS to operate a district franchise/district virtual school.
- FLVS Flex Offers more than 190 tuition-free courses to Kindergarten-Grade 12 public, private, charter, and homeschool Florida students with year-round enrollment and 24/7 course availability. Students take FLVS courses to get ahead or graduate early, to allow flexibility for extracurricular activities, or to take courses not offered by their district.
- FLVS Full Time offers a comprehensive, full-time curriculum to Kindergarten-Grade 12 students in the state and follows the traditional 180-day academic calendar. FLVS Full Time combines the structure of a traditional school with the flexibility of online learning.
- Students enrolled in FLVS Flex and FLVS Full Time are funded based on courses successfully completed.

²⁵ Section 1012.586, F.S.

²⁶ Florida Department of Education, *Educator Certification-Certificate Subjects*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/teaching/certification/certificate-subjects/> (last visited Jan. 22, 2026).

²⁷ Section 1002.37, F.S.

²⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Florida Virtual School*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/florida-virtual-school/> (last visited Jan. 22, 2026).

²⁹ Florida Department of Education, *General Information About Florida Virtual School*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/florida-virtual-school/general-info-flvs.shtml> (last visited Jan. 22, 2026).

- Students attending a private school can enroll in FLVS Flex courses when their school affiliates with FLVS.³⁰

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1062 creates the “Florida Speech and Debate Education Act,” and creates s. 1000.09, F.S., to provide legislative findings as follows:

- That speech and debate significantly improve literacy, critical thinking, research ability, civic knowledge, and leadership for students.
- That the state’s civics and debate expansion has become a national model, increasing access to this instruction in all regions and that sustaining and improving this success requires a permanent statewide organization with specialized expertise, program capacity, and year-round operational support.
- That the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI) has demonstrated statewide effectiveness and is uniquely positioned to ensure continuity, equitable access, quality programming, tournament infrastructure, and instructional rigor and that it is the intent of the Legislature to establish a comprehensive statewide infrastructure, under the FDI’s direction, that expands, supports, and elevates K–20 speech and debate education.

The section designates the FDI as the official statewide speech and debate organization and is given the following tasks:

- Manage the official Florida Speech and Debate League and its regional teams.
- Establish statewide competition rules, ballots, judging standards, and tournament calendars.
- Operate or supervise district, regional, and state tournaments.
- Train and certify coaches, judges, volunteers, and tournament staff.
- Provide statewide programmatic support, including student programs, educator training, and public service initiatives.
- Maintain statewide data reporting and annual accountability.
- Work constructively with nonstate-sanctioned leagues while upholding Florida’s civic and patriotic development goals.

Additionally, the FDI is required to implement and maintain a comprehensive suite of statewide programs, including all of the following:

- Student speech and debate programs.
- Student leadership and service programs.
- Competitive speech and debate training for students.
- Educator training.
- Postsecondary and workforce internships.
- Operation of speech and debate tournaments.

The section additionally authorizes the FDI to expend funds for the following:

- Administrative operations, including staffing, insurance, compliance, reporting, and statewide infrastructure.

³⁰ Florida Department of Education, *General Information About Florida Virtual School*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/florida-virtual-school/general-info-flvs.shtml> (last visited Jan. 22, 2026).

- Programmatic operations, including curriculum, training, summer programs, workshops, camps, and mentorship programs.
- Tournament operations, including logistics, staff, judge training, technology, awards, and regional team operations.
- Travel, lodging, training, and transportation for participants.
- Public-private partnership development, including sponsorship and philanthropic support.

The FDI is required to make publicly available and submit to the DOE a report by December 31 of each year that includes the following:

- Student participation in statewide programs, by district and demographics.
- The number of active student teams in statewide speech and debate programs.
- Competitive and educational outcomes of statewide programs.
- A categorized summary of all expenditures.

The section allows a certified teacher to earn an endorsement in speech and debate and requires the DOE to adopt the requirements for the endorsement that include the following:

- Completion of coursework approved by the State Board of Education (SBE) in argumentation, rhetoric, communication, or debate instruction;
- Completion of professional development offered by the FDI or equivalent professional development offered by a Florida College System institution or state university;
- Competency, as determined by the SBE, in the rules, events, and competitive standards of scholastic debate.

The section requires the DOE to collaborate with the FDI to establish regional traveling debate teams to represent Florida in national competitions. Teams must be accessible to students at Title I and rural schools. Teams are required to provide competitive training and coaching for speech and debate. The bill permits all travel costs to be covered through legislative appropriation, public-private partnerships, and sponsorships and permits school districts to use school buses to transport students to and from speech and debate competitions.

The bill creates s. 265.0042, F.S., establishing the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame on the Plaza Level of the Capitol Building in Tallahassee. The bill requires the Department of Management Services to coordinate with the Department of Education (DOE) and the Commissioner of Education on the design and requires the hall of fame to do the following:

- Honor distinguished students, coaches, educators, alumni, veterans, public servants, benefactors, and supporters who have elevated speech and debate in this state.
- Preserve the history, impact, and cultural significance of competitive debate.
- Inspire future generations of Florida students to pursue speech, debate, public leadership, and civic excellence.
- Convene a committee to establish procedures to nominate and select individuals to be featured.

The bill creates s. 683.221, F.S., to designate that the week that includes the first Tuesday of November be designated as “Florida Speech and Debate Week” with the following purposes:

- To recognize the academic, civic, and leadership value of competitive speech and debate.
- To honor educators, coaches, judges, and school districts that support debate programming.

- To inspire students statewide to participate in debate as a pathway to civic engagement.
- To promote Florida's role as the national leader in scholastic speech and debate.

The bill modifies s. 1001.42, F.S., to require district school boards to make publicly available online and submit to the DOE an annual report by a date set by the DOE that includes the following:

- The number of active speech and debate teams.
- Student participation rates.
- Competitive performance and public service engagement.
- Transportation, facilities, and administrative support provided.
- Resources needed to expand the program.

The bill modifies s. 1002.37, F.S., to require the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation (ISDI). The institute is required to:

- Develop online curriculum, micro-credentials, and instructional modules for speech and debate.
- Create artificial intelligence-based coaching tools, digital judging tutorials, and analytics dashboards.
- Produce virtual reality and augmented reality simulations for competitive practice.
- Ensure equitable access for districts lacking onsite coaching capacity.

The bill creates s. 1004.0983, F.S., to require the Board of Governors (BOG) and the State Board of Education (SBE) to develop undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-credentials in speech and debate education, coaching, and tournament operations. The BOG and the SBE are permitted to collaborate with the FDI to develop coursework which may include the following:

- Rhetoric, argumentation, and communication theory.
- Coaching methods and competitive event instruction.
- Tournament management and adjudication.
- Public speaking pedagogy.

The bill creates an undesignated section of law that requires the DOE to approve postsecondary courses developed by the BOG and SBE pursuant to s. 1004.0983, F.S., created in the bill, for inclusion in dual enrollment programs for an eligible secondary student or home education student as provided in Florida Law.³¹

The bill takes effect January 1, 2027.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

³¹ Section 1007.271(1), F.S.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill provides a total appropriation of \$4.6 million for the 2026-2027 fiscal year as follows:

- \$2.4 million in recurring funds to be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to support the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc.'s responsibilities including administrative, programmatic, and tournament operation duties.
- \$250,000 in recurring funds to be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to support FDI's responsibilities for regional traveling debate teams to support their training, coaching, lodging, and competition costs.
- \$700,000 in recurring funds to be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to school districts for travel costs to attend speech and debate competitions.
- \$500,000 in recurring funds to be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the State Board of Education to develop the teacher endorsement and to support the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.
- \$750,000 in recurring funds to be appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Virtual School to support the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends sections 1001.42 and 1002.37 of the Florida Statutes. This bill creates sections 265.0042, 683.221, 1000.09, and 1004.0983 of the Florida Statutes. The bill creates two undesignated sections of Florida Law.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.



LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

House

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•

The Committee on Education Pre-K - 12 (Brodeur) recommended the following:

1 **Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

2
3 Delete everything after the enacting clause
4 and insert:

5 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Florida Speech and
6 Debate Education Act."

7 Section 2. Section 265.0042, Florida Statutes, is created
8 to read:

9 265.0042 Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.—

10 (1) There is created the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of



11 Fame. The Department of Management Services shall set aside an
12 area on the plaza level of the Capitol Building and shall
13 consult with the Florida Education Foundation and the
14 Commissioner of Education regarding the design and theme of the
15 area.

16 (2) The hall of fame shall do all of the following:

17 (a) Honor distinguished students, coaches, educators,
18 alumni, veterans, public servants, benefactors, and supporters
19 who have elevated speech and debate in this state.

20 (b) Preserve the history, impact, and cultural significance
21 of competitive debate.

22 (c) Inspire future generations of Florida students to
23 pursue speech, debate, public leadership, and civic excellence.

24 (3) The hall of fame shall convene a committee to establish
25 procedures to nominate and select individuals to be featured.
26 The committee must include at least one member or his or her
27 designee from the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc.

28 Section 3. Section 683.221, Florida Statutes, is created to
29 read:

30 683.221 Florida Speech and Debate Week.—

31 (1) February 1 through February 7 shall be annually
32 designated as "Florida Speech and Debate Week."

33 (2) Florida Speech and Debate Week shall be observed for
34 all of the following purposes:

35 (a) To recognize the academic, civic, and leadership value
36 of competitive speech and debate.

37 (b) To honor educators, coaches, judges, and school
38 districts that support debate programming.

39 (c) To inspire students statewide to participate in debate



40 as a pathway to civic engagement.

41 (d) To promote Florida's role as the national leader in
42 scholastic speech and debate.

43 (3) Public and charter schools, state agencies, and other
44 entities may observe Florida Speech and Debate Week.

45 Section 4. Section 1000.09, Florida Statutes, is created to
46 read:

47 1000.09 Competitive speech and debate.—

48 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—

49 (a) The Legislature finds that speech and debate
50 significantly improve literacy, critical thinking, research
51 ability, civic knowledge, and leadership for students of this
52 state.

53 (b) The Legislature also finds that this state's civics and
54 debate expansion has become a national model, increasing access
55 to this instruction in all regions. Sustaining and improving
56 upon this success requires a permanent statewide organization
57 with specialized expertise, program capacity, and year-round
58 operational support.

59 (c) The Legislature further finds that the Florida Debate
60 Initiative, Inc., (FDI) has demonstrated statewide effectiveness
61 and is uniquely positioned to ensure continuity, equitable
62 access, quality programming, tournament infrastructure, and
63 instructional rigor. It is the intent of the Legislature to
64 establish a comprehensive statewide infrastructure, under FDI's
65 direction, that expands, supports, and elevates K-20 speech and
66 debate education.

67 (2) CREATION, DESIGNATION, AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—FDI is
68 designated as the official statewide speech and debate



69 organization responsible for managing, developing, and expanding
70 K-20 speech and debate programs.

71 (a) 1. FDI shall do all of the following:

72 a. Manage the official Florida Speech and Debate League and
73 its regional teams.

74 b. Establish statewide competition rules, ballots, judging
75 standards, and tournament calendars.

76 c. Operate or supervise district, regional, and state
77 tournaments.

78 d. Train and certify coaches, judges, volunteers, and
79 tournament staff.

80 e. Provide statewide programmatic support, including
81 student programs, educator training, and public service
82 initiatives.

83 f. Maintain statewide data reporting and annual
84 accountability.

85 g. Work constructively with nonstate-sanctioned leagues
86 while upholding Florida's civic and patriotic development goals.

87 2. This paragraph may not be construed to prohibit schools,
88 districts, or students from participating in speech and debate
89 activities, leagues, or competitions not operated or supervised
90 by FDI.

91 (b) FDI may establish and maintain partnerships with school
92 districts, charter schools, state agencies, postsecondary
93 institutions, nonprofit organizations, private entities, and
94 national or international organizations to achieve the purposes
95 of this section.

96 (3) STATEWIDE PROGRAMS.—FDI shall implement and maintain a
97 comprehensive suite of statewide programs, including all of the



98 following:

- 99 (a) Student speech and debate programs.
- 100 (b) Student leadership and service programs.
- 101 (c) Competitive speech and debate training for students.
- 102 (d) Educator training.
- 103 (e) Postsecondary and workforce internships.
- 104 (f) Operation of speech and debate tournaments.
- 105 (4) AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS.—FDI may expend program funds

106 on all of the following:

- 107 (a) Administrative operations, including staffing, insurance, compliance, reporting, and statewide infrastructure.
- 108 (b) Programmatic operations, including curriculum, training, summer programs, workshops, camps, and mentorship programs.
- 109 (c) Tournament operations, including logistics, staff, judge training, technology, awards, and regional team operations.
- 110 (d) Travel, lodging, training, and transportation for participants.
- 111 (e) Public-private partnership development, including sponsorship and philanthropic support.
- 112 (f) Memberships, affiliations, and participation fees related to civics education, speech, debate, leadership, and academic competition programs, provided such memberships advance the purposes of this section.

- 113 (5) ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING.—FDI shall make publicly available online and submit, no later than December 31, an annual report to the Department of Education which includes all of the following:



220472

- 127 (a) Student participation in statewide programs, by
128 district and demographics.
- 129 (b) The number of active student teams in statewide speech
130 and debate programs.
- 131 (c) Competitive and educational outcomes of statewide
132 programs.
- 133 (d) A categorized summary of all expenditures.
- 134 (6) ENDORSEMENT IN SPEECH AND DEBATE.—Pursuant to s.
- 135 1012.56 and State Board of Education rule, a certified teacher
136 may earn an endorsement in speech and debate if he or she
137 demonstrates all of the following:
- 138 (a) Completion of coursework approved by the state board in
139 argumentation, rhetoric, communication, or debate instruction.
- 140 (b) Completion of professional development offered by the
141 FDI or equivalent professional development offered by a Florida
142 College System institution or state university.
- 143 (c) Competency, as determined by the board, in the rules,
144 events, and competitive standards of scholastic debate.
- 145 (7) REGIONAL TRAVELING DEBATE TEAMS.—The department shall
146 collaborate with FDI to establish regional traveling debate
147 teams to represent this state in national competitions. Teams
148 must be accessible to students at Title I and rural schools.
149 Teams must provide competitive training and coaching for speech
150 and debate.
- 151 (a) All travel costs may be covered through legislative
152 appropriation, public-private partnerships, and sponsorships.
- 153 (b) A school district may use school buses to transport
154 students to and from speech and debate competitions.
- 155 (8) DEBATE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM PILOT PROGRAM.—



220472

156 (a) The Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program is
157 created within the department, in collaboration with FDI. The
158 purpose of the pilot program is to develop and integrate
159 structured debate and argumentation into core academic subjects.
160 The pilot program must include curriculum development,
161 professional development, instructional materials, and program
162 evaluation.

163 (b) This subsection expires June 30, 2027.

164 (9) (a) FLORIDA SPEECH AND DEBATE ACADEMY.—FDI shall
165 establish and operate a charter school under s. 1002.33 named
166 the Florida Speech and Debate Academy.

167 (b) The charter school shall provide a rigorous academic
168 program emphasizing civics education, leadership development,
169 speech, debate, rhetoric, and public service.

170 Section 5. Present subsection (29) of section 1001.42,
171 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (30), and a new
172 subsection (29) is added to that section, to read:

173 1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The
174 district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all
175 powers and perform all duties listed below:

176 (29) SPEECH AND DEBATE COMPETITION REPORTING.—Each district
177 school board shall annually publish online and submit to the
178 Department of Education, by a date set by the department, a
179 report that includes all of the following information:

180 (a) The number of active speech and debate teams.

181 (b) Student participation rates.

182 (c) Competitive performance and public service engagement.

183 (d) Transportation, facilities, and administrative support
184 provided.



185 (e) Resources needed to expand the program.

186 Section 6. Present subsection (11) of section 1002.37,
187 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (12), and a new
188 subsection (11) is added to that section, to read:

189 1002.37 The Florida Virtual School.—

190 (11) The Florida Virtual School shall establish the
191 Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation. The institute shall
192 do all of the following:

193 (a) Develop an online curriculum, micro-credentials, and
194 instructional modules for speech and debate.

195 (b) Create artificial intelligence-based coaching tools,
196 digital judging tutorials, and analytics dashboards.

197 (c) Produce virtual reality and augmented reality
198 simulations for competitive practice.

199 (d) Ensure equitable access for districts lacking onsite
200 coaching capacity.

201 (e) Coordinate and operate with the Florida Debate
202 Initiative, Inc., and enter a formal partnership to coordinate
203 curriculum, instructional resources, competition preparation,
204 and statewide access to speech and debate programming.

205 Section 7. Paragraph (i) is added to subsection (3) of
206 section 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, to read:

207 1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

208 (3) STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; COURSE AND ASSESSMENT
209 REQUIREMENTS.—

210 (i) One-half credit in speech and debate.—Beginning with
211 students entering grade 9 in the 2028–2029 school year, a
212 student must successfully complete at least one-half credit in
213 speech, debate, argumentation, or rhetoric as a requirement for



214 high school graduation.

215 Section 8. Section 1004.0983, Florida Statutes, is created
216 to read:

217 1004.0983 Speech and debate training pathways.—The Board of
218 Governors and the State Board of Education shall develop
219 undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-
220 credentials in speech and debate education, coaching, and
221 tournament operations.

222 (1) Coursework may include all of the following:

- 223 (a) Rhetoric, argumentation, and communication theory.
224 (b) Coaching methods and competitive event instruction.
225 (c) Tournament management and adjudication.
226 (d) Public speaking pedagogy.

227 (2) The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education
228 may collaborate with the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., to
229 develop coursework.

230 Section 9. The Department of Education shall approve
231 courses developed pursuant to s. 1004.0983, Florida Statutes,
232 for inclusion in dual enrollment programs under s. 1007.271,
233 Florida Statutes.

234 Section 10. (1) For the 2026–2027 fiscal year:

235 (a) The sum of \$2.4 million in recurring funds is
236 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to support the
237 Florida Debate Initiative, Inc.'s responsibilities assigned
238 under s. 1000.09(4), Florida Statutes, including administrative,
239 programmatic, and tournament operation duties.

240 (b) The sum of \$250,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
241 from the General Revenue Fund to support the Florida Debate
242 Initiative, Inc.'s responsibilities assigned under s.



1000.09(7), Florida Statutes, including for regional traveling debate teams to support their training, coaching, lodging, and competition costs.

(c) The sum of \$1 million in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education for the Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program under s. 1000.09(8), Florida Statutes.

(2) The sum of \$700,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to school districts for travel costs to attend speech and debate competitions pursuant to s. 1000.09, Florida Statutes.

(3) The sum of \$500,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the State Board of Education to develop the teacher endorsement under s. 1000.09(6), Florida Statutes, and to support the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame under s. 265.0042, Florida Statutes.

(4) The sum of \$750,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Virtual School to support the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation pursuant to s. 1002.37(11), Florida Statutes.

(5) For the 2027-2028 fiscal year:

(a) The sum of \$3.8 million in recurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for teachers and teacher assistants.

(b) The sum of \$1.5 million in recurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for other instructional personnel.



272 (c) The sum of \$708,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
273 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate
274 Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for the
275 administration.

276 (d) The sum of \$991,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
277 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate
278 Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for the operation
279 and maintenance of facilities.

280 (e) The sum of \$256,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
281 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate
282 Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for materials,
283 supplies, and capital outlay.

284 (f) The sum of \$485,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
285 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate
286 Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for food service.

287 Section 11. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

288
289 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====
290 And the title is amended as follows:

291 Delete everything before the enacting clause
292 and insert:

293 A bill to be entitled
294 An act relating to speech and debate education;
295 providing a short title; creating s. 265.0042, F.S.;
296 creating the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame;
297 requiring the Department of Management Services to set
298 aside an area on a specified level in the Capitol
299 Building; requiring the department to consult with the
300 Florida Education Foundation and the Commissioner of



301 Education for a certain purpose; providing the duties
302 of the hall of fame; requiring the hall of fame to
303 convene a committee for specified purposes; requiring
304 the committee to include at least one member or his or
305 her designee from the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc;
306 creating s. 683.221, F.S.; designating Florida Speech
307 and Debate Week annually in February; providing
308 purposes for the annual observance; authorizing
309 specified entities to observe Florida Speech and
310 Debate Week; creating s. 1000.09, F.S.; providing
311 legislative findings and intent; designating the
312 Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as the official
313 statewide speech and debate organization; providing
314 the duties of FDI; providing construction; authorizing
315 FDI to establish and maintain certain partnerships;
316 requiring FDI to implement and maintain specified
317 statewide programs; providing authorized uses of funds
318 for FDI; requiring FDI to publish online and submit
319 annually by a specified date to the Department of
320 Education a specified report; specifying requirements
321 for the report; authorizing a certified teacher to
322 earn an endorsement in speech and debate; specifying
323 requirements for the endorsement; requiring the
324 department to collaborate with FDI to establish
325 regional traveling debate teams; requiring that teams
326 be accessible to students at specified schools;
327 requiring teams to provide certain training and
328 coaching; providing for coverage of travel costs;
329 authorizing a school district to use school buses to



330 transport students to and from speech and debate
331 competitions; creating the Debate Across the
332 Curriculum Pilot Program within the department, in
333 collaboration with FDI; providing the purpose of the
334 pilot program; requiring the pilot program to include
335 certain elements; providing an appropriation;
336 providing for expiration of the pilot program;
337 requiring FDI to establish and operate a charter
338 school for a certain purpose; amending s. 1001.42,
339 F.S.; requiring each district school board to annually
340 publish online and submit to the department a report;
341 specifying requirements for the report; amending s.
342 1002.37, F.S.; requiring the Florida Virtual School to
343 establish the Institute for Speech and Debate
344 Innovation; providing duties of the institute;
345 requiring the institute to enter into a formal
346 partnership with FDI; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.;
347 requiring that students complete at least one-half
348 credit in speech and debate as a requirement for high
349 school graduation, beginning in a specified school
350 year; creating s. 1004.0983, F.S.; requiring the Board
351 of Governors of the State University System and the
352 State Board of Education to develop specified
353 undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates,
354 and micro-credentials; authorizing the Board of
355 Governors and the State Board of Education to
356 collaborate with FDI to develop coursework; requiring
357 the department to approve specified dual enrollment
358 courses; providing appropriations; providing an



359

effective date.

By Senator Brodeur

10-01359A-26

20261062

A bill to be entitled
 An act relating to speech and debate; providing a short title; creating s. 265.0042, F.S.; creating the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame; requiring the Department of Management Services to set aside an area in the Capitol Building; requiring the department to consult with the Florida Education Foundation and the Commissioner of Education; providing the duties for the hall of fame; requiring the hall of fame to convene a committee for specified purposes; creating s. 683.221, F.S.; designating Florida Speech and Debate Week each year in November; providing purposes for the annual observance; authorizing specified entities to observe Florida Speech and Debate Week; creating s. 1000.09, F.S.; providing legislative findings and intent; designating the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as the official statewide speech and debate organization; providing the duties of FDI; requiring FDI to implement and maintain specified statewide programs; providing authorized uses of funds for FDI; requiring FDI to publish online and submit annually to the Department of Education a specified report; authorizing a certified teacher to earn an endorsement in speech and debate; specifying requirements for the endorsement; requiring the department to collaborate with FDI to establish regional traveling debate teams; authorizing a school district to use school buses to transport students to speech and debate competitions; amending s. 1001.42,

Page 1 of 9

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10-01359A-26

20261062

30 F.S.; requiring each district school board annually to
 31 publish online and submit to the department a report;
 32 specifying requirements for the report; amending s.
 33 1002.37, F.S.; requiring the Florida Virtual School to
 34 establish the Institute for Speech and Debate
 35 Innovation; providing duties of the institute;
 36 creating s. 1004.0983, F.S.; requiring the Board of
 37 Governors of the State University System and the State
 38 Board of Education to develop specified undergraduate
 39 and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-
 40 credentials; authorizing the Board of Governors and
 41 the State Board of Education to collaborate with FDI
 42 to develop coursework; requiring the department to
 43 approve specified dual enrollment courses; providing
 44 appropriations; providing an effective date.

45
 46 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

47
 48 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Florida Speech and
49 Debate Education Act."

50 Section 2. Section 265.0042, Florida Statutes, is created
 51 to read:

52 265.0042 Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.—
 53 (1) There is created the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of
 54 Fame. The Department of Management Services shall set aside an
 55 area on the Plaza Level of the Capitol Building and shall
 56 consult with the Florida Education Foundation and the
 57 Commissioner of Education regarding the design and theme of the
 58 area.

Page 2 of 9

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10-01359A-26

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59 (2) The hall of fame shall do all of the following:
60 (a) Honor distinguished students, coaches, educators,
61 alumni, veterans, public servants, benefactors, and supporters
62 who have elevated speech and debate in this state.

63 (b) Preserve the history, impact, and cultural significance
64 of competitive debate.

65 (c) Inspire future generations of Florida students to
66 pursue speech, debate, public leadership, and civic excellence.

69 Section 3. Section 683.221, Florida Statutes, is created to
70 read:

71 683.221 Florida Speech and Debate Week.-

72 (1) The week that includes the first Tuesday of November
73 shall be designated as "Florida Speech and Debate Week."

78 (b) To honor educators, coaches, judges, and school
79 districts that support debate programming.

80 (c) To inspire students statewide to participate in debate
81 as a pathway to civic engagement.

(d) To promote Florida's role as the national leader in scholastic speech and debate.

entities may observe Florida Speech and Debate Week.

87 | read:

Page 3 of 9

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10-01359A-26

20261062

88 | 1000.09 Competitive speech and debate.—

89 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—

90 (a) The Legislature finds that speech and debate
91 significantly improve literacy, critical thinking, research
92 ability, civic knowledge, and leadership for students of this
93 state.

94 (b) The Legislature also finds that this state's civics and
95 debate expansion has become a national model, increasing access
96 to this instruction in all regions. Sustaining and improving
97 this success requires a permanent statewide organization with
98 specialized expertise, program capacity, and year-round
99 operational support.

100 (c) The Legislature further finds that the Florida Debate
101 Initiative has demonstrated statewide effectiveness and is
102 uniquely positioned to ensure continuity, equitable access,
103 quality programming, tournament infrastructure, and
104 instructional rigor. It is the intent of the Legislature to
105 establish a comprehensive statewide infrastructure, under the
106 Florida Debate Initiative's direction, that expands, supports,
107 and elevates K-20 speech and debate education.

113 (b) FDI shall do all of the following:

114 1. Manage the official Florida Speech and Debate League and

115 its regional teams.

116 2. Establish statewide competition rules, ballots, judging

Page 4 of 9

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10-01359A-26 20261062

117 standards, and tournament calendars.

118 3. Operate or supervise district, regional, and state tournaments.

119 4. Train and certify coaches, judges, volunteers, and tournament staff.

120 5. Provide statewide programmatic support, including student programs, educator training, and public service initiatives.

121 6. Maintain statewide data reporting and annual accountability.

122 7. Work constructively with nonstate-sanctioned leagues while upholding Florida's civic and patriotic development goals.

123 (3) STATEWIDE PROGRAMS.—FDI shall implement and maintain a comprehensive suite of statewide programs, including all of the following:

124 (a) Student speech and debate programs.

125 (b) Student leadership and service programs.

126 (c) Competitive speech and debate training for students.

127 (d) Educator training.

128 (e) Postsecondary and workforce internships.

129 (f) Operation of speech and debate tournaments.

130 (4) AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS.—FDI may expend program funds on all of the following:

131 (a) Administrative operations, including staffing, insurance, compliance, reporting, and statewide infrastructure.

132 (b) Programmatic operations, including curriculum, training, summer programs, workshops, camps, and mentorship programs.

133 (c) Tournament operations, including logistics, staff,

Page 5 of 9

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10-01359A-26 20261062

146 judge training, technology, awards, and regional team operations.

147 (d) Travel, lodging, training, and transportation for participants.

148 (e) Public-private partnership development, including sponsorship and philanthropic support.

149 (5) ACCOUNTABILITY AND REPORTING.—FDI shall make publicly available online and submit, no later than December 31, an annual report to the Department of Education which includes all of the following:

150 (a) Student participation in statewide programs, by district and demographics.

151 (b) The number of active student teams in statewide speech and debate programs.

152 (c) Competitive and educational outcomes of statewide programs.

153 (d) A categorized summary of all expenditures.

154 (6) ENDORSEMENT IN SPEECH AND DEBATE.—Pursuant to s. 1012.56 and State Board of Education rule, a certified teacher may earn an endorsement in speech and debate if he or she demonstrates all of the following:

155 (a) Completion of coursework approved by the state board in argumentation, rhetoric, communication, or debate instruction.

156 (b) Completion of professional development offered by the FDI or equivalent professional development offered by a Florida College System institution or state university.

157 (c) Competency, as determined by the board, in the rules, events, and competitive standards of scholastic debate.

158 (7) REGIONAL TRAVELING DEBATE TEAMS.—The department shall

Page 6 of 9

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10-01359A-26 20261062
 175 collaborate with FDI to establish regional traveling debate
 176 teams to represent Florida in national competitions. Teams must
 177 be accessible to students at Title I and rural schools. Teams
 178 must provide competitive training and coaching for speech and
 179 debate.

180 (a) All travel costs may be covered through legislative
 181 appropriation, public-private partnerships, and sponsorships.

182 (b) A school district may use school buses to transport
 183 students to and from speech and debate competitions.

184 Section 5. Present subsection (29) of section 1001.42,
 185 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (30), and a new
 186 subsection (29) is added to that section, to read:

187 1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The
 188 district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all
 189 powers and perform all duties listed below:

190 (29) SPEECH AND DEBATE COMPETITION REPORTING.—Each district
 191 school board shall annually make available online and submit to
 192 the Department of Education, by a date set by the department, a
 193 report that includes all of the following information:

194 (a) The number of active speech and debate teams.

195 (b) Student participation rates.

196 (c) Competitive performance and public service engagement.

197 (d) Transportation, facilities, and administrative support
 198 provided.

199 (e) Resources needed to expand the program.

200 Section 6. Present subsection (11) of section 1002.37,
 201 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (12), and a new
 202 subsection (11) is added to that section, to read:

203 1002.37 The Florida Virtual School.—

Page 7 of 9

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

10-01359A-26 20261062
 204 (11) The Florida Virtual School shall establish the
 205 Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation (ISDI). The ISDI
 206 shall do all of the following:

207 (1) Develop online curriculum, micro-credentials, and
 208 instructional modules for speech and debate.

209 (2) Create artificial intelligence-based coaching tools,
 210 digital judging tutorials, and analytics dashboards.

211 (3) Produce virtual reality and augmented reality
 212 simulations for competitive practice.

213 (4) Ensure equitable access for districts lacking onsite
 214 coaching capacity.

215 Section 7. Section 1004.0983, Florida Statutes, is created
 216 to read:

217 1004.0983 Speech and debate training pathways.—The Board of
 218 Governors and the State Board of Education shall develop
 219 undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-
 220 credentials in speech and debate education, coaching, and
 221 tournament operations.

222 (1) Coursework may include all of the following:

223 (a) Rhetoric, argumentation, and communication theory.

224 (b) Coaching methods and competitive event instruction.

225 (c) Tournament management and adjudication.

226 (d) Public speaking pedagogy.

227 (2) The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education
 228 may collaborate with the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., to
 229 develop coursework.

230 Section 8. The Department of Education shall approve
 231 courses developed pursuant to s. 1004.0983, Florida Statutes,
 232 for inclusion in dual enrollment programs under s. 1007.271,

Page 8 of 9

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

10-01359A-26

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233 Florida Statutes.

234 Section 9. (1) For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the sum of:
235 (a) \$2.4 million in recurring funds is appropriated from
236 the General Revenue Fund to support the Florida Debate
237 Initiative, Inc.'s responsibilities assigned under s.
238 1000.09(4), Florida Statutes, including administrative,
239 programmatic, and tournament operation duties.

240 (b) \$250,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the
241 General Revenue Fund to support FDI's responsibilities assigned
242 under s. 1000.09(7), Florida Statutes, including for regional
243 traveling debate teams to support their training, coaching,
244 lodging, and competition costs.

245 (2) \$700,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the
246 General Revenue Fund to school districts for travel costs to
247 attend speech and debate competitions pursuant to s. 1000.09,
248 Florida Statutes.

249 (3) \$500,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the
250 General Revenue Fund to the State Board of Education to develop
251 the teacher endorsement under s. 1000.09(6), Florida Statutes,
252 and to support the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame under
253 s. 265.0042, Florida Statutes.

254 (4) \$750,000 in recurring funds is appropriated from the
255 General Revenue Fund to the Florida Virtual School to support
256 the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation pursuant to s.
257 1002.37(11), Florida Statutes.

258 Section 10. This act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K -12

BILL: SB 1340

INTRODUCER: Senator Harrell

SUBJECT: Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring

DATE: January 26, 2026 REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. <u>Brick</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Pre-meeting</u>
2. _____	_____	<u>AHS</u>	_____
3. _____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1340 revises district responsibilities when screening indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia. The bill:

- Requires specified district action when screening indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.
- Requires the district to promptly pursue parental consent for an initial evaluation for exceptional student education when a screening provides reasonable suspicion that the student may be a student with a disability.
- Revises further screening requirements within the statewide coordinated screening and progress monitoring framework and requires State Board of Education rulemaking.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Specific Learning Disabilities – Dyslexia and Dyscalculia

A child with a disability includes a child with a specific learning disability, defined as a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes that may manifest as difficulty listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, or doing mathematical calculations, including dyslexia.¹ An “exceptional student” includes a student with a disability determined eligible for a special program in accordance with State Board of Education (SBE) rules, including a student with a specific learning disability.²

¹ 34 C.F.R. s. 300.8(c)(10)(i).

² Section 1003.01(9)(a), F.S.

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability in basic reading skills that ranges in severity and is characterized by difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities, typically resulting from a deficit in the phonological component of language.³ Dyscalculia is an associated condition of a specific learning disability and generally refers to difficulty learning and comprehending mathematics, including number sense and computation.⁴

Statewide Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring System

A statewide coordinated screening and progress monitoring (CSPM) system is required for use in public school Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) and public schools.⁵ The system must:⁶

- Measure student progress in early literacy skills, early mathematics skills, and the English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics standards to inform instruction.
- Provide screening and diagnostic capabilities.
- Identify students with substantial deficiencies in reading or mathematics.
- Identify students with characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.

Results must be provided to teachers within one week after completion of the assessment period and to parents within two weeks after administration of the progress monitoring assessment.⁷ A student identified by the CSPM system as having characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia must undergo further screening.⁸

The statewide CSPM program is implemented as the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), administered in three progress monitoring windows each school year, using Renaissance Star assessments in kindergarten through grade 2 and Cambium testing and reporting systems for grades 3 through 10 ELA Reading and grades 3 through 8 Mathematics.⁹

Student Progression and Monitoring Plans

Each district school board adopts and implements a comprehensive program for student progression that addresses promotion, retention, remediation, and the use of assessment results to identify and assist students who are not meeting performance expectations.¹⁰

³ Rule 6A-6.053(7), F.A.C.

⁴ American Psychiatric Association, “*What Is Specific Learning Disorder?*,” Psychiatry.org (Mar. 2024), <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/specific-learning-disorder/what-is-specific-learning-disorder> (last visited Jan. 20, 2026).

⁵ Section 1008.25(9)(a), F.S.

⁶ Section 1008.25(9)(a)1.-4., F.S.

⁷ Section 1008.25(9)(b)-(c), F.S.

⁸ Section 1008.25(9)(a)3., F.S.

⁹ Florida Department of Education, *Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), 2025–26 Statewide Assessment Administration Schedule (Progress Monitoring)*, available at <https://www.fl DOE.org/file/5663/2526StatewideAssessmentSched.pdf>; Florida Department of Education, *Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST), 2025–26 Grades K–2 Fact Sheet*, available at <https://www.fl DOE.org/file/20102/2526FASTK2FS.pdf>; and Florida Department of Education, *Coordinated Screening & Progress Monitoring System Overview* (Mar. 21, 2022), available at <https://www.fl DOE.org/file/7506/FOILStatewideAssessment.pdf>, at 6, 9, 19.

¹⁰ Section 1008.25(2), F.S.

A student who is not meeting district or state requirements for satisfactory performance in ELA or mathematics must be covered by at least one of the following:¹¹

- A federally required student plan (for example, an individual education plan (IEP)).
- A schoolwide system of progress monitoring for all students, subject to specified exemptions.
- An individualized progress monitoring plan.

A student with a substantial deficiency in reading or a substantial deficiency in mathematics must be covered by a federally required student plan, an individualized progress monitoring plan, or both, as necessary.¹² An individualized progress monitoring plan must be developed within 45 days after the CSPM results become available.¹³

At a minimum, an individualized progress monitoring plan must include:¹⁴

- The student's identified reading or mathematics skill deficiency.
- Goals and benchmarks for growth in reading or mathematics.
- The measures used to evaluate and monitor progress.
- For a substantial reading deficiency, the evidence-based literacy instruction grounded in the science of reading that will be provided.
- Strategies, resources, and materials to be provided to the parent to support the student's progress.
- Any additional services that the teacher deems available and appropriate to accelerate the student's skill development.

Reading and Mathematics Deficiencies

Reading and mathematics deficiencies, and characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia, may be identified using screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, or assessment data; statewide assessments; or teacher observations.¹⁵ Once a student is identified as having a substantial deficiency in early literacy skills, reading, or mathematics, the applicable interventions must begin immediately.¹⁶

For a student who exhibits characteristics of dyslexia, as defined in SBE rule, dyslexia-specific interventions must be provided.¹⁷ Appropriate, evidence-based interventions must be initiated upon receipt of documentation from a licensed psychologist demonstrating that the student has been diagnosed with dyslexia or dyscalculia, and initiation may not wait for completion of an exceptional student education eligibility evaluation.¹⁸

Written parent notification is required when a student has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading or mathematics and must include specified information about the deficiency, current services, proposed interventions, and home-based supports and resources as

¹¹ Section 1008.25(4)(b)1.-3., F.S.

¹² Section 1008.25(4)(c), F.S.

¹³ Section 1008.25(4)(c), F.S.

¹⁴ Section 1008.25(4)(c)1.-6., F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1008.25(5)(a) and (6)(a), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1008.25(5)(a) and (6)(a)1., F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1008.25(5)(a)1., F.S.; Rule 6A-6.053(7), F.A.C.

¹⁸ Section 1008.25(5)(a)2. and (6)(a)4., F.S.

applicable.¹⁹ After the initial notification, written progress updates must be provided at least monthly and must include an explanation of any additional interventions implemented when progress is insufficient, with additional meetings and supports provided upon request.²⁰

The reading intervention and parent notification requirements apply to students in public school VPK through grade 3.²¹ The mathematics intervention and parent notification requirements apply to students in public school VPK through grade 4.²²

Evaluation and IEP Timelines

Each district school board must provide exceptional student education and include professional services for diagnosis and evaluation.²³ The initial evaluation process is triggered when the school district has reasonable suspicion that a student may have a disability and need special education and related services.²⁴ Response-to-intervention strategies may not be used to delay or deny an evaluation for a child suspected of having a disability.²⁵

A full and individual initial evaluation must be conducted before the initial provision of exceptional student education, and either a parent or the school district may initiate a request for an initial evaluation.²⁶

When a parent requests, or when the school district suspects that a student may have a disability, parental consent for an evaluation must be requested within 30 days, unless the parent and school agree otherwise in writing, or the district rejects the parent's request.²⁷

Before a school district requests an initial evaluation for a K-12 student suspected of having a disability, school personnel must document one of the following determinations in the student's educational record:²⁸

- General education intervention procedures have been implemented and the data indicate that the student may be a student with a disability who needs special education and related services.
- The evaluation was initiated at parent request and the general education intervention activities will be completed concurrently with the evaluation, but before the determination of the student's eligibility for special education and related services.
- The nature or severity of the student's areas of concern makes the general education intervention procedures inappropriate in addressing the student's immediate needs.

¹⁹ Section 1008.25(5)(d) and (6)(c), F.S.

²⁰ Section 1008.25(5)(d) and (6)(c), F.S.

²¹ Section 1008.25(5)(a)1., F.S.; Rule 6A-6.053(5)(b), F.A.C.

²² Section 1008.25(6)(a)1., F.S.; Rule 6A-6.0533(7)(a)1., F.A.C.

²³ Section 1003.57(1)(a)-(b), F.S.

²⁴ 34 C.F.R. s. 300.111(c)(1); *Leigh Ann H. v. Riesel Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 18 F.4th 788, 796 n.6 (5th Cir. 2021) (citing *Krawietz ex rel. Parker v. Galveston Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 900 F.3d 673, 676 (5th Cir. 2018)).

²⁵ Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education, *OSEP Memorandum 11-07, "A Response to Intervention (RTI) Process Cannot Be Used to Delay-Deny an Evaluation for Eligibility under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)"* (Jan. 21, 2011).

²⁶ Rule 6A-6.0331(3), F.A.C.

²⁷ Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(b)-(c), F.A.C.

²⁸ Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(d)1.-3., F.A.C.

Initial evaluations must be completed within 60 calendar days after receipt of parental consent, excluding specified school holidays and breaks and summer vacation, and subject to specified exceptions and extensions.²⁹ An IEP must be developed within 30 days after a determination that the child needs special education and related services, and services must be made available as soon as possible following IEP development.³⁰

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1340 revises district responsibilities when screening indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia. The bill:

- Requires specified district action when screening indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.
- Requires the district to promptly pursue parental consent for an initial evaluation for exceptional student education when a screening indication provides reasonable suspicion that the student may be a student with a disability.
- Revises further screening requirements within the statewide coordinated screening and progress monitoring framework and requires State Board of Education (SBE) rulemaking.

Student Progression and Monitoring Plans

The bill modifies s. 1008.25, F.S., to require a school district to take specified actions when the statewide coordinated screening and progress monitoring system, or a district-approved screening instrument, indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.

When a student exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia, the district must ensure the student is covered by the progress monitoring plan already required for students who need intervention supports. The plan must include evidence-based interventions specific to the identified characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia. The interventions must be aligned, as appropriate, with the required reading intervention framework and the required mathematics intervention framework for students with the specific learning disabilities.

The bill also requires the district to treat the screening indication as reasonable suspicion that the student may be a student with a disability for purposes of the initial evaluation process for exceptional student education, and to promptly seek parental consent to conduct an initial evaluation consistent with SBE rule and applicable federal law.

In addition, the bill requires screening activities and required intervention procedures to occur concurrently with the evaluation process and prohibits using those activities or procedures to delay or deny an appropriate evaluation to determine eligibility for exceptional student education and related services.

Statewide Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring System

The bill retains the requirement for further screening when the statewide coordinated screening and progress monitoring (CSPM) system indicates that a student exhibits characteristics of

²⁹ Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(g), F.A.C.

³⁰ 34 C.F.R. s. 300.323(c)(1)-(2).

dyslexia or dyscalculia. The bill adds a further screening requirement when the system is not capable of identifying characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia and a student meets performance thresholds established by SBE rule.

The bill specifies that further screening is used to refine instructional planning and parent communication and is not a prerequisite to the intervention and evaluation obligations in the bill. The bill requires further screening activities to occur concurrently with required interventions and the evaluation process and prohibits using screening activities to delay or deny an appropriate evaluation.

The bill requires the SBE to adopt rules establishing timelines, performance thresholds, and parental notification requirements for further screening required under the CSPM system provisions governing identification of characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 1008.25 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Harrell

31-01183-26

20261340

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to coordinated screening and progress
 3 monitoring; amending s. 1008.25, F.S.; specifying
 4 requirements for a school district if a student
 5 exhibits characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia;
 6 providing circumstances under which a student is
 7 required to undergo further screening for dyslexia or
 8 dyscalculia; requiring the State Board of Education to
 9 adopt rules; providing an effective date.

10
 11 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

12
 13 Section 1. Paragraph (d) is added to subsection (4) of
 14 section 1008.25, Florida Statutes, and paragraph (a) of
 15 subsection (9) of that section is amended, to read:

16 1008.25 Public school student progression; student support;
 17 coordinated screening and progress monitoring; reporting
 18 requirements.—

19 (4) ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT.—

20 (d) If the coordinated screening and progress monitoring
 21 system under subsection (9), or any district-approved screening
 22 instrument, identifies a student as exhibiting characteristics
 23 of dyslexia or dyscalculia, the school district shall:

24 1. Ensure that the student is covered by a plan under
 25 paragraph (b) which includes evidence-based interventions that
 26 are specific to the identified characteristics of dyslexia or
 27 dyscalculia and that are aligned, as appropriate, with the
 28 interventions required under subsection (5) for reading and
 29 subsection (6) for mathematics.

Page 1 of 4

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20261340

30 2. Treat the screening result as reasonable suspicion that
 31 the student may be a student with a disability for purposes of
 32 s. 1003.57 and promptly seek parental consent to conduct an
 33 initial evaluation consistent with state board rule and
 34 applicable federal law.

35 3. Ensure that screening activities and intervention
 36 procedures, including interventions required under this
 37 subsection and subsections (5) and (6), occur concurrently with
 38 the evaluation process and are not used to delay or deny an
 39 appropriate evaluation.

40 (9) COORDINATED SCREENING AND PROGRESS MONITORING SYSTEM.—
 41 (a) The Department of Education, in collaboration with the
 42 Office of Early Learning, shall procure and require the use of a
 43 statewide, standardized coordinated screening and progress
 44 monitoring system for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education
 45 Program and public schools. The system must:

46 1. Measure student progress in meeting the appropriate
 47 expectations in early literacy and mathematics skills and in
 48 English Language Arts and mathematics standards as required by
 49 ss. 1002.67(1)(a) and 1003.41 and identify the educational
 50 strengths and needs of students.

51 2. For students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education
 52 Program through grade 3, measure student performance in oral
 53 language development, phonological and phonemic awareness,
 54 knowledge of print and letters, decoding, fluency, vocabulary,
 55 and comprehension, as applicable by grade level, and, at a
 56 minimum, provide interval level and norm-referenced data that
 57 measures equivalent levels of growth.

58 3. Be a valid, reliable, and developmentally appropriate

Page 2 of 4

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31-01183-26

20261340

59 computer-based direct instrument that provides screening and
 60 diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress;
 61 identifies students who have a substantial deficiency in reading
 62 or mathematics, including identifying students with
 63 characteristics of dyslexia, dyscalculia, and other learning
 64 disorders; and informs instruction. Any student identified by
 65 the system as having characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia
 66 shall undergo further screening. Any student whose performance
 67 in the system meets thresholds established by State Board of
Education rule in circumstances in which the system is not
capable of identifying characteristics of dyslexia or
dyscalculia must undergo further screening. The further
screening required under this subparagraph is used to refine
instructional planning and parental communication and is not a
prerequisite to the interventions or evaluation obligations
described in subsection (4). The State Board of Education shall
adopt rules establishing timelines, performance thresholds, and
parental notification requirements for further screening under
this subparagraph. Screening activities under this subsection
shall occur concurrently with the interventions and evaluation
obligations described in subsection (4) and may not be used to
delay or deny an appropriate evaluation. Beginning with the
 81 2023-2024 school year, the coordinated screening and progress
 82 monitoring system must be computer-adaptive.

83 4. Provide data for Voluntary Prekindergarten Education
 84 Program accountability as required under s. 1002.68.

85 5. Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program
 86 providers, school districts, schools, teachers, and parents with
 87 data and resources that enhance differentiated instruction and

Page 3 of 4

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31-01183-26

20261340

88 parent communication.
 89 6. Provide baseline data to the department of each
 90 student's readiness for kindergarten. The determination of
 91 kindergarten readiness must be based on the results of each
 92 student's initial progress monitoring assessment in
 93 kindergarten. The methodology for determining a student's
 94 readiness for kindergarten must be developed by the department
 95 and aligned to the methodology adopted pursuant to s.
 96 1002.68(4).
 97 7. Assess how well educational goals and curricular
 98 standards are met at the provider, school, district, and state
 99 levels and provide information to the department to aid in the
 100 development of educational programs, policies, and supports for
 101 providers, districts, and schools.

102 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Page 4 of 4

CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K -12

BILL: SB 1646

INTRODUCER: Senator Simon

SUBJECT: Educational Facilities

DATE: January 26, 2026

REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. <u>Brick</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Pre-meeting</u>
2. _____	_____	<u>AED</u>	_____
3. _____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1646 revises provisions relating to Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund (PECO) allocations for district maintenance needs and the Department of Education's (DOE) Special Facility Construction program. The bill revises:

- The health and safety set-aside within the annual district allocation by shifting the one-tenth standard from a spending mandate to a prioritization standard.
- Special Facilities eligibility and administration by replacing the preapplication review request process with an application process and expanding the site eligibility criterion to incorporate the local government coordination framework.
- Special Facilities program administration and oversight by expanding DOE involvement in design, procurement, and construction monitoring, adjusting certain project and contracting timelines, and removing the Phase I plan approval deadline tied to the application year.
- The cost-per-student-station requirements by extending the exemption from the cost-per-student-station limitation.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Public Education Capital Outlay and Capital Outlay and Debt Service Funding Streams

The State Constitution dedicates specified proceeds from motor vehicle license revenues to district and community college capital outlay and debt service purposes, with the revenues deposited monthly into a capital outlay and debt service fund in the state treasury and used as provided in the constitutional provision.¹

¹ Section 9(d)(3), Art. XII, Fla. Const.

The State Constitution also authorizes public education capital outlay funding derived from gross receipts taxes, with the proceeds deposited into the Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund (PECO) and appropriated, as provided by law, for public education capital outlay purposes.²

For the 2025-26 fiscal year, \$10,536,509 in PECO funds was appropriated for public school projects.³

Funds for Remodeling, Renovation, Maintenance, Repairs, and Site Improvement

Appropriations from the PECO for remodeling, renovation, maintenance, repairs, and site improvement of existing satisfactory facilities receive priority consideration and are distributed to district school boards by multiplying the building value times the building age over the sum of the years' digits.⁴ The Department of Education (DOE) compiles a sum-of-the-digits report reflecting the statutory calculation and the resulting relative shares used in the PECO allocation process.⁵

The statutory formula is based on:⁶

- Building value, calculated using assignable square footage, the net-to-gross conversion rate in State Board of Education rule, and the current average new construction cost.
- Building age, calculated using the prior year's age adjusted by the prior year distribution relative to building value, with an annual increment.
- Assumed building life spans that vary by facility type, including 50 years for permanent facilities, 35 years for modular noncombustible facilities, and 20 years for relocatable facilities.

Two expenditure limitations apply to funds received under this distribution:⁷

- The funds may not be used to supplant funds in the district's current fiscal year approved operating budget.
- Budgeted funds must be expended at a similar rate not less than the amount that would have been expended had the district not received the distribution.

A portion of each district's annual allocation is directed to health and safety needs. At least one-tenth of the annual allocation is spent to correct unsafe, unhealthy, or unsanitary conditions in educational facilities, or a lesser amount sufficient to correct all deficiencies cited in annual comprehensive safety inspection reports.⁸

² Section 9(a)(2), Art. XII, Fla. Const.

³ Florida Department of Education, 2025-26 *Capital Projects Plan, Table 1* (Elementary and Secondary Education), "Public School Projects", available at <https://www.fl doe.org/file/7501/2526CPP.pdf>, at 3.

⁴ Section 1013.64(1)(a), F.S.

⁵ Section 1013.64(1)(a), F.S.; see, e.g., State University System of Florida, Board of Governors, *PECO allocation for Maintenance, Repair, Renovation and Remodeling aka: "Sum of Digits"*, available at <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-25-Maintenance-Repair-Renovation-Remodel-MRRR-Sum-of-Digits-Board-Request-v2.pdf>.

⁶ Section 1013.64(1)(a), F.S.

⁷ Section 1013.64(1)(b), F.S.

⁸ Section 1013.64(1)(f), F.S.; s. 1013.12(2), F.S.

Special Facility Construction Account

A separate account within the PECO, the Special Facility Construction Account, is used to provide construction funds to eligible school districts with urgent construction needs that lack sufficient current resources and cannot reasonably anticipate sufficient resources within the next 3 years from specified projected capital outlay revenue sources.⁹

Project selection and prioritization are routed through the Special Facility Construction Committee, and a project must be deemed a critical need and recommended for funding by the committee.¹⁰

A district request is limited in scope and frequency. A district submits one specific construction project, not to exceed one complete educational plant, and may not receive funding for more than one approved project in any 3-year period or while any portion of the district's participation requirement remains outstanding.¹¹

To be considered for funding, statutory criteria include, among other items:

- Committee review and critical need determination, based on factors that include facility capacity and utilization information and the district's growth and capital outlay enrollment projections.¹²
- Survey and priority list alignment, including that the construction project is recommended in the most recent educational plant survey or survey amendment and appears on the district's approved project priority list.¹³
- Site selection and planning coordination. The district selects and has an approved site for the construction project through the state site selection process and State Board of Education rules. Site planning and selection is coordinated with local governments through the interlocal agreement framework to ensure consistency with applicable local comprehensive plans and land development regulations.¹⁴
- Space utilization demonstration, including a district-adopted facilities list showing facilities do not exceed the norm for net square feet occupancy requirements under the State Requirements for Educational Facilities, using programmatic combinations for multiple uses of space to obtain maximum daily use.¹⁵
- Phase I plans are approved by the district school board as being in compliance with the building and life safety codes before June 1 of the year the application is made.¹⁶

Two program guardrails relevant to project administration include cost controls and timing controls:

- Cost Controls.

⁹ Section 1013.64(2), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1013.64(2)(a)1., F.S.

¹¹ Section 1013.64(2), F.S.

¹² Section 1013.64(2)(a)1., F.S.

¹³ Section 1013.64(2)(a)2., F.S.

¹⁴ Sections 1013.33(4)-(6) and 1013.36(1) and (6), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1013.64(2)(a)5., F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1013.64(2)(a)12., F.S.

- Total cost per student station, including change orders, may not exceed the applicable maximum cost per student station unless the committee approves the excess costs. Allowable exceedance categories may include specified legal and administrative fees, certain site improvements or related offsite improvements, public shelter and hurricane hardening costs, disaster-related cost overruns, security enhancements approved by the school safety specialist, and unforeseeable circumstances beyond the district's control.¹⁷
- An unfinished new construction project that was started on or before July 1, 2028, is exempt from the total cost per student station limitation.¹⁸
- Timing Controls. The district signs an agreement stating that it will advertise for bids within 30 days after receipt of its encumbrance authorization from the DOE. If a contract is not signed within 90 days after advertising of bids, the project funding reverts to the Special Facility New Construction Account for reallocation, but the commissioner may grant an additional 90 days (maximum 180 days after bid advertisement).¹⁹

For the 2025-26 fiscal year, \$144,419,602 was appropriated for Special Facility Construction Account projects for six district school boards.²⁰

Local Participation Requirement and Referenced Local Revenue Authority

For projects before the 2019-2020 fiscal year, eligibility is tied to levying the maximum discretionary capital outlay millage authorized, or raising an equivalent amount from the school capital outlay surtax, at the time the request is made and continuing for the period necessary to meet the participation requirement. For projects beginning in the 2019-2020 fiscal year and thereafter, eligibility is tied to levying the maximum discretionary capital outlay millage authorized, or raising an equivalent amount from the school capital outlay surtax, for at least 3 years before submitting the request and continuing for the period necessary to meet the participation requirement.²¹

District school boards are authorized to levy discretionary capital outlay millage not to exceed 1.5 mills for specified capital outlay and related purposes, including new construction and remodeling, site acquisition and improvement, lease-purchase payments, and leasing or renting facilities and sites.²² Counties may levy, subject to referendum approval, a school capital outlay surtax of up to 0.5 percent for authorized fixed capital outlay purposes.²³

For districts with a new or active project funded under the special facilities program, no more than the value of 1 mill per year is budgeted to the project until the participation requirement is satisfied.²⁴

¹⁷ Section 1013.64(2)(a)6., F.S.; s. 252.34(2), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1013.64(6)(e), F.S.

¹⁹ Section 1013.64(2)(a)7. and 9., F.S.

²⁰ Florida Department of Education, *2025-26 Capital Projects Plan, Table 1* (Elementary and Secondary Education), "Special Facility Construction Account", available at <https://www.fl DOE.org/file/7501/2526CPP.pdf>, at 3.

²¹ Section 1013.64(2)(a)8., F.S.; s. 1011.71(2), F.S.; s. 212.055(6), F.S.

²² Section 1011.71(2), F.S.

²³ Section 212.055(6), F.S.

²⁴ Section 1013.64(2)(a)8., F.S.

District school boards budgeted \$5,091,671,664.40 in revenue from the district local capital improvement tax for fiscal year 2024-25.²⁵

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1646 revises provisions relating to Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund (PECO) allocations for district maintenance needs and the Department of Education's (DOE) Special Facility Construction program. The bill revises:

- The health and safety set-aside within the annual district allocation by shifting the one-tenth standard from a spending mandate to a prioritization standard.
- Special Facilities eligibility and administration by replacing the preapplication review request process with an application process and expanding the site eligibility criterion to incorporate the local government coordination framework.
- Special Facilities program administration and oversight by expanding DOE involvement in design, procurement, and construction monitoring, adjusting certain project and contracting timelines, removing the Phase I plan approval deadline tied to the application year.
- The cost-per-student-station requirements by extending the exemption from the cost-per-student-station limitation.

Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund (PECO) Allocations

The bill amends s. 1013.64(1)(a), F.S., to make technical and clarifying revisions to the description of the calculation used to allocate PECO funds for remodeling, renovation, maintenance, repairs, and site improvements for existing satisfactory facilities, without substantively changing the allocation methodology.

The bill amends s. 1013.64(1)(f), F.S., relating to the portion of a district school board's annual allocation used to address unsafe, unhealthy, or unsanitary conditions in educational facilities, to:

- Replace the requirement that at least one-tenth of the annual allocation be spent for corrective purposes with a requirement that the board prioritize a minimum of one-tenth of the annual allocation for those purposes.
- Conform and clarify existing language regarding use of a lesser amount when sufficient to correct all deficiencies cited in the board's annual comprehensive safety inspection reports.

Special Facility Construction Account – Application and Criteria

The bill amends s. 1013.64(2)(a)1., F.S., relating to Special Facility Construction Committee consideration of proposed facility projects, to:

- Replace the existing preapplication review request process with an application process for committee consideration.
- Require the district school board to submit the application via letter to the Special Facility Construction Committee Chair or the Director of Educational Facilities, rather than requesting a preapplication review by the committee or a project review subcommittee.

²⁵ Florida Department of Education, *Finance Data Base, District Summary Budget*, Section XIII (Capital Projects Funds 300), Fiscal Year 2024-25 State Cumulative Totals (run date Jan. 24, 2025), (account 3413, "District Local Capital Improvement Tax"), available at <https://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7507/ur1/StateTotalBUD2425.pdf>, at 39.

- Make conforming and clarifying changes to reflect the application terminology and reorganize existing language regarding timelines and subcommittee composition.

The bill amends s. 1013.64(2)(a)2., F.S., relating to criteria for Special Facility Construction Committee consideration of a construction project, to specify that, for a Special Facility Construction project to be considered, the district's selected and approved site must reflect completion of the required local government coordination and consistency review steps applicable to school facility planning and siting.

The bill amends s. 1013.64(2)(a), F.S., relating to requirements for participation in the special facility construction program, to:

- Require the DOE to participate in the design review process for program projects.
- Require a project to be disqualified from the program, with the district required to reapply, if the Office of Educational Facilities determines during the design phase that the project goes beyond the scope of the original requested project, including a change in site location, and the request is not corrected.
- Require the DOE to conduct construction site visits throughout the construction process.
- Require the district school board's signed bid-advertising agreement to be kept on file with the DOE.
- Revise the bid-advertising requirement by requiring the district school board to advertise for bids no later than 30 days after receipt of the encumbrance authorization for design and construction, rather than within 30 days after receipt of the encumbrance authorization from the DOE.

Special Facility Construction Account – Procurement and Contracting Requirements

The bill creates additional requirements governing procurement and contracting for special facility construction projects by:

- Requiring a district school board, when selecting an architect or construction manager through a request for qualifications or request for proposals process, to use the DOE's process, including the DOE's scoresheets, submittal requirements, and selection procedures.
- Requiring the DOE to collect and review all architect and construction manager selection documentation and authorizing the DOE to provide feedback or take action in the selection process, including overriding the district school board's selection and making a new selection.
- Authorizing district school boards to enter into a contingency construction contract for an amount up to the higher of the full construction amount initially requested at the Special Facility Construction Committee meeting or the final guaranteed maximum price, and requiring the contract to include a clause making subsequent years contingent on funding.
- Prohibiting an elected state official from participating in the architect or construction manager selection process, except to approve the selection committee's recommendation.

Special Facility Construction Account – Timelines and Participation

The bill revises the contract execution timeline by extending the period before project funds must revert from 90 days to 120 days after bid advertisement, while reducing the commissioner's

discretionary extension from 90 days to 60 days. However, the maximum time permitted to execute a construction contract after bid advertisement remains 180 days.

The bill removes the requirement that Phase I plans be approved by the district school board as complying with applicable building and life safety codes by June 1 of the year in which the application is made.

Cost Per Student Station

The bill extends the exemption from the total cost per student station limitation for an unfinished new construction project that was started on or before July 1 by moving the applicable start-date deadline from July 1, 2028, to July 1, 2030.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact. The department can absorb any associated costs within its existing resources.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1013.64 and 1013.62.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Simon

3-01052B-26

20261646

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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3-01052B-26

20261646

30 Section 1. Subsections (1) and (2) and paragraph (e) of
31 subsection (6) of section 1013.64, Florida Statutes, are amended
32 to read:

33 1013.64 Funds for comprehensive educational plant needs;
34 construction cost maximums for school district capital
35 projects.-Allocations from the Public Education Capital Outlay
36 and Debt Service Trust Fund to the various boards for capital
37 outlay projects shall be determined as follows:

(1)(a) Funds for remodeling, renovation, maintenance, repairs, and site improvement for existing satisfactory facilities shall be given priority consideration by the Legislature for appropriations allocated to the boards from the total amount of the Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund appropriated. These funds must shall be calculated pursuant to the following basic formula: the building value multiplied by times the building age and divided by ever the most current sum of the years' digits report. These calculations assume assuming a 50-year building life span for permanent. For modular noncombustible facilities, a 35-year building life span for modular noncombustible facilities shall be used, and for relocatable facilities, a 20-year building life span for relocatable facilities shall be used. The "building value" is calculated by multiplying each building's total assignable square feet by times the appropriate net-to-gross conversion rate found in state board rules and multiplying that product by times the current average new construction cost. The "building age" is calculated by multiplying the prior year's building age by times 1 minus the prior year's sum received from this subsection divided by the prior year's building value and

Page 2 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

59 then adding, to the net result shall be added the number 1. Each
 60 board shall receive the percentage generated by the preceding
 61 formula of the total amount appropriated for the purposes of
 62 this section.

63 (b) Each board is prohibited from using the funds received
 64 pursuant to this section to supplant funds in the current fiscal
 65 year approved operating budget, and all budgeted funds must
 66 shall be expended at a similar rate not less than the amount
 67 that would have been expended had the funds under this section
 68 not been received.

69 (c) Each remodeling, renovation, maintenance, repair, or
 70 site improvement project will expand or upgrade current
 71 educational plants to prolong the useful life of the plant.

72 (d) Each board shall maintain its fund accounting in a
 73 manner which will permit a detailed audit of the funds expended
 74 in this program.

75 (e) Remodeling projects shall be based on the
 76 recommendations of a survey pursuant to s. 1013.31.

77 (f) A board shall prioritize a minimum of At least one-
 78 tenth of its a board's annual allocation provided under this
 79 section shall be spent to correct unsafe, unhealthy, or
 80 unsanitary conditions in its educational facilities, as required
 81 by s. 1013.12, or a lesser amount sufficient to correct all
 82 deficiencies cited in its annual comprehensive safety inspection
 83 reports. A board may use less than one-tenth of its allocation
 84 if that amount satisfies all This paragraph shall not be
 85 construed to limit the amount a board may expend to correct such
 86 deficiencies.

87 (g) When an existing educational plant is determined to be

Page 3 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

88 unsatisfactory pursuant to the survey conducted under s.
 89 1013.31, the board may, by resolution, designate the plant as a
 90 historic educational facility and may use funds generated for
 91 renovation and remodeling pursuant to this section to restore
 92 the facility for use by the board. The board shall agree to pay
 93 renovation and remodeling costs in excess of funds which such
 94 facility would have generated through the depreciation formula
 95 in paragraph (a) had the facility been determined to be
 96 satisfactory. The board shall further agree that the plant shall
 97 continue to house students. The board may designate a plant as a
 98 historic educational facility only if the Division of Historical
 99 Resources of the Department of State or the appropriate historic
 100 preservation board under chapter 266 certifies that:

101 1. The plant is listed or determined eligible for listing
 102 in the National Register of Historic Places pursuant to the
 103 National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, 16
 104 U.S.C. s. 470;

105 2. The plant is designated historic within a certified
 106 local district pursuant to s. 48(g)(3)(B)(ii) of the Internal
 107 Revenue Code; or

108 3. The division or historic preservation board otherwise
 109 finds that the plant is historically significant.

110 (h) University boards of trustees may utilize funds
 111 appropriated pursuant to this section for replacement of minor
 112 facilities. Minor facilities may ~~not~~ be replaced from funds
 113 provided pursuant to this section if unless the board determines
 114 that the cost of repair or renovation is greater than or equal
 115 to the cost of replacement.

116 (2) (a) The department shall establish, as a part of the

Page 4 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

117 Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund, a
 118 separate account, in an amount determined by the Legislature, to
 119 be known as the "Special Facility Construction Account." The
 120 Special Facility Construction Account shall be used to provide
 121 necessary construction funds to school districts which have
 122 urgent construction needs but which lack sufficient resources at
 123 present, and cannot reasonably anticipate sufficient resources
 124 within the period of the next 3 years, for these purposes from
 125 currently authorized sources of capital outlay revenue. A school
 126 district requesting funding from the Special Facility
 127 Construction Account shall submit one specific construction
 128 project, not to exceed one complete educational plant, to the
 129 Special Facility Construction Committee. A district may not
 130 receive funding for more than one approved project in any 3-year
 131 period or while any portion of the district's participation
 132 requirement is outstanding. The first year of the 3-year period
 133 shall be the first year a district receives an appropriation.
 134 The department shall encourage a construction program that
 135 reduces the average size of schools in the district. The request
 136 must meet the following criteria to be considered by the
 137 committee:

138 1. The project must be deemed a critical need and must be
 139 recommended for funding by the Special Facility Construction
 140 Committee. Before developing construction plans for the proposed
 141 facility, the district school board must submit an application
 142 via letter to request a preapplication review by the Special
 143 Facility Construction Committee Chair or the Director of
 144 Educational Facilities or a project review subcommittee convened
 145 by the chair of the committee to include two representatives of

Page 5 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

146 ~~the department and two staff members from school districts not~~
 147 ~~eligible to participate in the program.~~ A school district may
 148 apply request a preapplication review at any time; however, if
 149 the district school board seeks inclusion in the department's
 150 next annual capital outlay legislative budget request, the
 151 ~~district must apply preapplication review request must be made~~
 152 before February 1. Within 90 days after receiving the
 153 ~~application preapplication review request~~, the committee or
 154 subcommittee must meet in the school district to review the
 155 project proposal and existing facilities. ~~The committee or~~
 156 ~~subcommittee, convened by the committee chair, must include two~~
 157 ~~representatives from the department and two staff members from~~
 158 ~~school districts not eligible to participate in the program.~~ To
 159 determine whether the proposed project is a critical need, the
 160 committee or subcommittee shall consider, at a minimum, the
 161 capacity of all existing facilities within the district as
 162 determined by the Florida Inventory of School Houses; the
 163 district's pattern of student growth; the district's existing
 164 and projected capital outlay full-time equivalent student
 165 enrollment as determined by the demographic, revenue, and
 166 education estimating conferences established in s. 216.136; the
 167 district's existing satisfactory student stations; the use of
 168 all existing district property and facilities; grade level
 169 configurations; and any other information that may affect the
 170 need for the proposed project.

171 2. The construction project must be recommended in the most
 172 recent survey or survey amendment cooperatively prepared by the
 173 district and the department, and approved by the department
 174 under the rules of the State Board of Education. If a district

Page 6 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

175 employs a consultant in the preparation of a survey or survey
 176 amendment, the consultant may not be employed by or receive
 177 compensation from a third party that designs or constructs a
 178 project recommended by the survey.

179 a.3. The construction project must appear on the district's
 180 approved project priority list under the rules of the State
 181 Board of Education.

182 b.4. The district must have selected and have an ~~had~~
 183 approved a site for the construction project in compliance with
 184 ss. 1013.33 and 1013.36 ~~s.~~ 1013.36 and the rules of the State
 185 Board of Education.

186 c. The district must have developed a district school
 187 board-adopted list of facilities that do not exceed the norm for
 188 net square feet occupancy requirements under the State
 189 Requirements for Educational Facilities, using all possible
 190 programmatic combinations for multiple uses of space to obtain
 191 maximum daily use of all spaces within the facility under
 192 consideration.

193 3.a. The department shall participate in the design review
 194 process in compliance with ss. 1013.04 and 1013.41. If at any
 195 time during the design phase the Office of Educational
 196 Facilities determines a project goes beyond the scope of the
 197 original requested project, to include changing site location,
 198 and the request is not corrected, the project is disqualified
 199 from the program and the district must reapply.

200 b. The department shall conduct construction site visits
 201 throughout the construction process in compliance with s.
 202 1013.04.

203 5. The district shall have developed a district school

Page 7 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

204 ~~board adopted list of facilities that do not exceed the norm for~~
 205 ~~net square feet occupancy requirements under the State~~
 206 ~~Requirements for Educational Facilities, using all possible~~
 207 ~~programmatic combinations for multiple use of space to obtain~~
 208 ~~maximum daily use of all spaces within the facility under~~
 209 ~~consideration.~~

210 4.6. Upon construction, the total cost per student station,
 211 including change orders, must not exceed the cost per student
 212 station as provided in subsection (6) unless approved by the
 213 Special Facility Construction Committee. At the discretion of
 214 the committee, costs that exceed the cost per student station
 215 for special facilities may include legal and administrative
 216 fees, the cost of site improvements or related offsite
 217 improvements, the cost of complying with public shelter and
 218 hurricane hardening requirements, cost overruns created by a
 219 disaster as defined in s. 252.34(2), costs of security
 220 enhancements approved by the school safety specialist, and
 221 unforeseeable circumstances beyond the district's control.

222 5.7. There shall be an agreement signed by the district
 223 school board and kept on file with the department stating ~~that~~
 224 it will advertise for bids no later than ~~within~~ 30 days after ~~of~~
 225 receipt of its encumbrance authorization for design and
 226 construction from the department.

227 6. The selection of an architect and construction manager
 228 will be as follows:

229 a. When selecting an architect and a construction manager
 230 through the "Request for Qualifications" or "Request for
 231 Proposals," the district shall use the process developed by the
 232 department, including scoresheets, submittal requirements, and

Page 8 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

233 ~~selection process. The department shall collect and review all~~
 234 ~~selection documentation and may provide feedback or take action~~
 235 ~~in the selection process, up to and including overriding the~~
 236 ~~board's selection and making a new selection.~~

237 ~~b. District school boards may enter into a contingency~~
 238 ~~construction contract for the full construction amount initially~~
 239 ~~requested at the Special Facilities Construction Account~~
 240 ~~Committee meeting or the final Guaranteed Maximum Price,~~
 241 ~~whichever is higher. The contract must have a clause stating~~
 242 ~~that subsequent years are contingent on funding.~~

243 ~~c. An elected state official may not participate in the~~
 244 ~~selection process other than approving the selection committee's~~
 245 ~~recommendation.~~

246 ~~7.8. For construction projects for which Special Facilities~~
 247 ~~Construction Account funding is sought before the 2019-2020~~
 248 ~~fiscal year, the district shall, at the time of the request and~~
 249 ~~for a continuing period necessary to meet the district's~~
 250 ~~participation requirement, levy the maximum millage against its~~
 251 ~~nonexempt assessed property value as allowed in s. 1011.71(2) or~~
 252 ~~shall raise an equivalent amount of revenue from the school~~
 253 ~~capital outlay surtax authorized under s. 212.055(6). Beginning~~
 254 ~~with construction projects for which Special Facilities~~
 255 ~~Construction Account funding is sought in the 2019-2020 fiscal~~
 256 ~~year and thereafter, the district shall, for a minimum of 3~~
 257 ~~years before applying for a special facilities project~~
 258 ~~submitting the request and for a continuing period necessary to~~
 259 ~~meet its participation requirement, levy the maximum millage~~
 260 ~~against the district's nonexempt assessed property value as~~
 261 ~~authorized under s. 1011.71(2) or shall raise an equivalent~~

Page 9 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

262 ~~amount of revenue from the school capital outlay surtax~~
 263 ~~authorized under s. 212.055(6). Any district with a new or~~
 264 ~~active project, funded under the provisions of this subsection,~~
 265 ~~shall be required to budget no more than the value of 1 mill per~~
 266 ~~year to the project until the district's participation~~
 267 ~~requirement of its maximum relating to the local discretionary~~
 268 ~~capital improvement millage pursuant to s. 1011.71(2) for 3~~
 269 ~~years or the equivalent amount of revenue from the school~~
 270 ~~capital outlay surtax is satisfied.~~

271 ~~8.9. If a construction contract has not been signed 120 90~~
 272 ~~days after the advertising of bids, the funding for the specific~~
 273 ~~project must shall revert to the Special Facility New~~
 274 ~~Construction Account to be reallocated to other projects on the~~
 275 ~~list. However, an additional 60 90 days may be granted by the~~
 276 ~~commissioner.~~

277 ~~9.10. The department shall certify the inability of the~~
 278 ~~district to fund the survey-recommended project over a~~
 279 ~~continuous 3-year period using projected capital outlay revenue~~
 280 ~~derived from s. 9(d), Art. XII of the State Constitution, as~~
 281 ~~amended, paragraph (3)(a) of this section, and s. 1011.71(2).~~

282 ~~10.11. The district shall have on file with the department~~
 283 ~~an adopted resolution acknowledging its commitment to satisfy~~
 284 ~~its participation requirement, which is equivalent to all~~
 285 ~~unencumbered and future revenue acquired from s. 9(d), Art. XII~~
 286 ~~of the State Constitution, as amended, paragraph (3)(a) of this~~
 287 ~~section, and s. 1011.71(2), in the year of the initial~~
 288 ~~appropriation and for the 2 years immediately following the~~
 289 ~~initial appropriation.~~

290 ~~11.a.12. Phase I plans must be approved by the district~~

Page 10 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

291 ~~school board as being in compliance with the building and life~~
 292 ~~safety codes before June 1 of the year the application is made.~~

293 (b) The Special Facility Construction Committee shall be
 294 composed of the following: two representatives of the Department
 295 of Education, a representative from the Governor's office, a
 296 representative selected annually by the district school boards,
 297 and a representative selected annually by the superintendents. A
 298 representative of the department shall chair the committee.

299 b.~~fe~~ The committee shall review the requests submitted
 300 from the districts, evaluate the ability of the project to
 301 relieve critical needs, and rank the requests in priority order.
 302 This statewide priority list for special facilities construction
 303 shall be submitted to the Legislature in the commissioner's
 304 annual capital outlay legislative budget request at least 45
 305 days prior to the legislative session.

306 (6)

307 (e) Notwithstanding the requirements of this subsection, an
 308 unfinished construction project for new construction of
 309 educational plant space which ~~that~~ was started on or before July
 310 1, 2030 ~~2028~~, is exempt from the total cost per student station
 311 requirements established in paragraph (b).

312 Section 2. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section
 313 1013.62, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

314 1013.62 Charter schools capital outlay funding.—

315 (3) If the school board levies the discretionary millage
 316 authorized in s. 1011.71(2), the department shall use the
 317 following calculation methodology to determine the amount of
 318 revenue that a school district must distribute to each eligible
 319 charter school:

Page 11 of 12

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3-01052B-26

20261646

320 (a) Reduce the total discretionary millage revenue by the
 321 school district's annual debt service obligation incurred as of
 322 March 1, 2017, which has not been subsequently retired, and any
 323 amount of participation requirement pursuant to s.

324 1013.64(2)(a)7. s. 1013.64(2)(a)8. that is being satisfied by
 325 revenues raised by the discretionary millage.

326
 327 By October 1 of each year, each school district shall certify to
 328 the department the amount of debt service and participation
 329 requirement that complies with the requirement of paragraph (a)
 330 and can be reduced from the total discretionary millage revenue.
 331 The Auditor General shall verify compliance with the
 332 requirements of paragraph (a) and s. 1011.71(2)(e) during
 333 scheduled operational audits of school districts.

334 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Page 12 of 12

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The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K -12

BILL: SB 1718

INTRODUCER: Senator Calatayud

SUBJECT: Educator Preparation and Certification

DATE: January 26, 2026

REVISED: _____

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Jahnke	Bouck	ED	Pre-meeting
2.		AED	
3.		RC	

I. Summary:

SB 1718 increases flexibility and efficiency in educator preparation, certification, and professional learning. The bill allows educator preparation institute participants to complete coursework while obtaining an statement of status of eligibility, expands access to temporary certification for certain educators with expired professional certificates, and streamlines the reinstatement process by removing duplicative subject area examination requirements while maintaining existing eligibility safeguards.

The bill also updates statutory references relating to the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence and expands the Center's responsibilities to provide no-cost professional learning and administrative support to educators seeking to renew or reinstate their certificates.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher preparation programs are accountable for producing individuals with the competencies and skills necessary to achieve the state education goals. State-approved teacher preparation programs are offered by Florida public and private postsecondary institutions, public school districts, and private providers, through which candidates for educator certification can, depending on the type of program, demonstrate mastery of general knowledge, professional preparation and education competence, and/or subject area knowledge for purposes of attaining an educator certificate.¹

¹ Section 1004.04, F.S. See Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fl doe.org/teaching/preparation> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026). See also Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

There are various state-approved teacher preparation programs that individuals may use to receive the training needed to attain an educator certificate, including:²

- Initial Teacher Preparation programs in public and private colleges and universities that require candidates to demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge³ in one or more specific subject areas, mastery of general knowledge,⁴ and mastery of professional preparation and education competence. Program completers qualify for a professional educator certificate.
- Educator Preparation Institutes (EPIs) that offer alternative certification programs by postsecondary institutions and qualified private providers for baccalaureate degree holders. These programs provide professional preparation for career-changers and recent college graduates who do not already possess a Professional Educator Certificate and require mastery of general knowledge, subject-area knowledge, and professional preparation and education competence.
- District professional learning certification and education competency programs. Such programs are cohesive competency-based professional preparation certification programs offered by school districts, charter schools, and charter management districts, through which instructional staff can satisfy the mastery of professional preparation and education competence requirements. In addition to completing the district program, candidates must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge and subject area knowledge.

Educator Preparation Institute Participant Criteria

Each EPI participant must:⁵

- Meet certification application requirements, including obtaining a statement of eligibility, established in law, and meet all basic eligibility requirements for an educator certificate before participating in field experiences. Generally, a student must receive a statement of eligibility for a certificate prior to enrollment in an EPI.
- Demonstrate competency and participate in field experiences that are appropriate to the participant's educational plan, including completion of all competencies for a reading endorsement when seeking certification in a certificate area that includes reading instruction or interventions in kindergarten through grade six.
- Before completion of the program, fully demonstrate his or her ability to teach the subject area for which he or she is seeking certification by documenting a positive impact on student learning growth in a prekindergarten through grade 12 setting.
- Achieve a passing score on the professional education competency examination,⁶ the General Knowledge Test, and the subject area examination for the subject area certification, as required by the State Board of Education (SBE) rule.

² Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fl DOE.org/teaching/preparation> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026). See also Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

³ Florida Department of Education, *Subject Area Knowledge*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/subject-area-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

⁴ Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/general-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

⁵ Section 1004.85(3)(b), F.S.

⁶ Section 1012.56(7)(a)3., F.S. An individual who completes an educator preparation institute and is rated highly effective by his or her performance evaluation is not required to take or achieve a passing score on the professional education competency examination in order to be awarded a professional certificate.

Educator Certification

To serve as an educator in a traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, or other publicly operated school, a person must hold a certificate issued by the DOE.⁷ The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel to “possess the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools.”⁸

To be eligible for an educator certificate, a person must meet the following basic eligibility requirements:⁹

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Sign an affidavit attesting that the applicant will uphold the U.S. and State Constitutions;
- Earn a bachelor’s or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning or from a non-accredited institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor’s or higher degree and have attained at least a 2.5 overall grade point average in the applicant’s major field of study;¹⁰
- 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
- Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher.

Temporary Educator Certificate

A temporary teaching certificate is valid for five school years and is nonrenewable.¹¹ The DOE is required to issue a temporary certificate to a qualifying applicant within 14 calendar days after receipt of a request from an employer and is required to electronically notify the applicant’s employer that the temporary certificate has been issued and provide the applicant with an official statement of status of eligibility at the time the certificate is issued.¹²

The DOE must issue a temporary certificate to any applicant who:¹³

- Meets the basic eligibility requirements for certification;¹⁴
- Completes applicable subject area content requirements or demonstrates mastery of subject area knowledge by, for example, successful completion of an approved exam; and
- Holds an accredited degree or a degree approved by the DOE at the level required for the subject area specialization in the SBE rule.

⁷ Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.

⁸ Section 1012.54, F.S. See Rule 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

⁹ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

¹⁰ Rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C.

¹¹ Section 1012.56(7), F.S.

¹² Section 1012.56(1)(b), F.S.

¹³ Section 1012.56(7)(b) and (d), F.S. As specified in law, alternative pathways for a temporary certificate are available for military service members and participants in the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

¹⁴ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

Professional Educator Certificate

A professional certificate is valid for five school years and is renewable. A professional certificate is awarded to an applicant who meets the basic eligibility requirements for certification¹⁵ and demonstrates mastery of:¹⁶

- General knowledge;
- Subject area knowledge; and
- Professional preparation and education competence.

Reinstatement of Professional Educator Certificate

To reinstate an expired professional educator certificate, the certificate holder must submit an application; complete 6 college credits, 120 inservice points, or a combination thereof, in specified areas¹⁷ during the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement; and pass a subject area exam for each subject to be shown on the reinstated certificate during those same prior 5 years.¹⁸ The requirements for reinstatement may not be satisfied by subject area exams or college credits completed for issuance of the expired certificate.¹⁹

The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence

The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence (Center) is established at Miami Dade College to prepare high-quality teachers in Florida through rigorous, evidence-based programs grounded in cognitive science, high-impact teaching strategies, and the implementation of knowledge-rich curricula.²⁰ The Center works in collaboration with the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at the University of South Florida.²¹ Among other functions, the center is authorized to submit a professional learning system for approval under the School Community Professional Learning Act.²² The Miami-Dade College Board of Trustees, in collaboration with the DOE, is responsible for establishing policies governing the supervision, administration, and governance of the Center.²³

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1718 amends s. 1004.85, F.S., to authorize educator preparation institutes to enroll participants and allow them to complete coursework while the participants are working to obtain an “eligible” statement of status of eligibility in the certification subject area included in the participant’s educational plan. Therefore a student may begin coursework in an EPI prior to a determination of eligibility for a certificate.

¹⁵ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1012.56(2)(g)-(i), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1012.585(5)(b), F.S. *See also* Section 1012.585(3)(a) and (e), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1012.585(5), F.S.

¹⁹ *Id.* (flush left).

²⁰ Section 1012.981(1), F.S.

²¹ Section 1012.981(2), F.S.

²² Section 1012.981(3), F.S. The School Community Professional Learning Act was established to bring together various education stakeholders to collaboratively establish a coordinated system of professional learning. *See* Section 1012.98, F.S.

²³ Section 1012.98(5), F.S.

The bill amends s. 1012.56, F.S., to require the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to issue a temporary certificate to an educator whose previously issued professional certificate has expired, provided the educator meets basic eligibility requirements for certification.²⁴ This allows the educator to begin teaching while completing required college coursework or inservice points without having to again demonstrate subject area mastery and may expedite the educator's return to the classroom.

The bill amends s. 1012.585, F.S., to require an applicant seeking reinstatement of a professional educator certificate to complete specified statutory certification eligibility requirements,²⁵ but removes the requirement that an educator retake subject area examinations for each subject included on the certificate when the educator has previously demonstrated mastery of subject area knowledge. Upon reinstatement, the professional certificate must include all subject area coverages and endorsements held at the time of expiration. The bill also specifies that inservice points that were earned in order to earn or renew a professional certificate that has since expired may not be used to satisfy reinstatement requirements.

The bill amends s. 1012.981, F.S., to update the name of the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at the University of South Florida with the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching as the required collaborating entity for the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence (Center).

The bill requires, rather than authorizes, the Center to submit to the DOE a professional learning system. The bill requires the Center to offer professional learning, at no cost, to certified educators seeking to renew or reinstate their certificate and to submit any inservice points earned to the DOE on the educator's behalf. The bill also requires the Center to provide such educators with information on school district professional learning systems that provide access to inservice training to individuals not employed by the school district.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

²⁴ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

²⁵ *See Id.* To seek certification, a person must be at least 18 years old; swear allegiance to constitutional principles; hold a bachelor's or higher degree; submit to background screening; be of good moral character; and be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of an educator.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1004.85, 1012.56, 1012.585, and 1012.981.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

By Senator Calatayud

38-01409E-26

20261718

Page 1 of 8

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38-01409E-26

20261718

30 certified educators; providing an effective date.

32 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

34 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section

35 1004.85, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

36 1004.05 Postsecondary educator preparation institutes.
37 (3) Educator preparation institutes approved pursuant to
38 this section may offer competency-based certification programs
39 specifically designed for noneducation major baccalaureate
40 degree holders to enable program participants to meet the
41 educator certification requirements of s. 1012.56. An educator
42 preparation institute choosing to offer a competency-based
43 certification program pursuant to the provisions of this section
44 must implement a program developed by the institute and approved
45 by the department for this purpose. Approved programs shall be
46 available for use by other approved educator preparation
47 institutes.

48 (b) Each program participant must:

49 1. Meet certification requirements pursuant to s.

50 1012.56(1) by obtaining an eligible a statement of status of
51 eligibility in the certification subject area of the educational
52 plan and meet the requirements of s. 1012.56(2)(a)-(f) before
53 participating in field experiences. An educator preparation
54 institute may allow a program participant to enroll in and
55 complete coursework while the participant is working to obtain
56 an eligible statement of status of eligibility in the
57 certification subject area of the educational plan.

58 2. Demonstrate competency and participate in field

Page 2 of 8

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38-01409E-26

20261718

59 experiences that are appropriate to his or her educational plan
 60 prepared under paragraph (a). Beginning with candidates entering
 61 an educator preparation institute in the 2022-2023 school year,
 62 a candidate for certification in a coverage area identified
 63 pursuant to s. 1012.585(3)(f) must successfully complete all
 64 competencies for a reading endorsement, including completion of
 65 the endorsement practicum through the candidate's field
 66 experience, in order to graduate from the program.

67 3. Before completion of the program, fully demonstrate his
 68 or her ability to teach the subject area for which he or she is
 69 seeking certification by documenting a positive impact on
 70 student learning growth in a prekindergarten through grade 12
 71 setting and, except as provided in s. 1012.56(7)(a)3., achieving
 72 a passing score on the professional education competency
 73 examination, the basic skills examination, and the subject area
 74 examination for the subject area certification which is required
 75 by state board rule.

76 Section 2. Paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section
 77 1012.56, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

78 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

79 (7) TYPES AND TERMS OF CERTIFICATION.—

80 (b) The department shall issue a temporary certificate to
 81 any applicant who:

82 1. Completes the requirements outlined in paragraphs
 83 (2)(a)-(f) and completes the subject area content requirements
 84 specified in state board rule or demonstrates mastery of subject
 85 area knowledge pursuant to subsection (5) and holds an
 86 accredited degree or a degree approved by the Department of
 87 Education at the level required for the subject area

Page 3 of 8

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38-01409E-26

20261718

88 specialization in state board rule;
 89 2. For a subject area specialization for which the state
 90 board otherwise requires a bachelor's degree, documents 48
 91 months of active-duty military service with an honorable
 92 discharge or a medical separation; completes the requirements
 93 outlined in paragraphs (2)(a), (b), and (d)-(f); completes the
 94 subject area content requirements specified in state board rule
 95 or demonstrates mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to
 96 subsection (5); and documents completion of 60 college credits
 97 with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0
 98 scale, as provided by one or more accredited institutions of
 99 higher learning or a nonaccredited institution of higher
 100 learning identified by the Department of Education as having a
 101 quality program resulting in a bachelor's degree or higher; ~~or~~

102 3. Is enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation
 103 program under s. 1004.04; is actively completing the required
 104 program field experience or internship at a public school;
 105 completes the requirements outlined in paragraphs (2)(a), (b),
 106 and (d)-(f); completes the subject area content requirements
 107 specified in state board rule or demonstrates mastery of subject
 108 area knowledge pursuant to subsection (5); and documents
 109 completion of 60 college credits with a minimum cumulative grade
 110 point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, as provided by one or more
 111 accredited institutions of higher learning or a nonaccredited
 112 institution of higher learning identified by the Department of
 113 Education as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's
 114 degree or higher; or

115 4. Completes the requirements in paragraphs (2)(a)-(f) and
 116 whose previously issued professional certificate has expired.

Page 4 of 8

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38-01409E-26 20261718_

117 At least 1 year before an individual's temporary certificate is
 118 set to expire, the department shall electronically notify the
 119 individual of the date on which his or her certificate will
 120 expire and provide a list of each method by which the
 121 qualifications for a professional certificate can be completed.
 122 Section 3. Subsection (5) of section 1012.585, Florida
 123 Statutes, is amended to read:
 124 1012.585 Process for renewal or reinstatement of
 125 professional certificates.—
 126 (5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to allow
 127 the reinstatement of expired professional certificates,
 128 including each subject area coverage and endorsement held by the
 129 certificateholder at the time of the certificate's expiration.
 130 The department may reinstate an expired professional certificate
 131 if the certificateholder:
 132 (a) Submits an application for reinstatement of the expired
 133 certificate.
 134 (b) Completes the requirements in s. 1012.56(2)(a)-(f).
 135 (c) ~~(b)~~ Documents completion of 6 college credits during the
 136 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the expired
 137 certificate, completion of 120 inservice points, or a
 138 combination thereof, in an area specified in paragraph (3)(a) to
 139 include the credit required under paragraph (3)(e).
 140 (e) ~~During the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement~~
 141 ~~of the certificate, achieves a passing score on the Florida-~~
 142 ~~developed subject area examination or, if a Florida subject area~~
 143 ~~examination has not been developed, a standardized examination~~
 144 ~~specified in state board rule for each subject to be shown on~~

Page 5 of 8

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38-01409E-26 20261718_

146 ~~the reinstated certificate.~~
 147
 148 The requirements of this subsection may not be satisfied by
 149 ~~subject area examinations or college credits or inservice points~~
 150 completed for issuance of the certificate that has expired.
 151 Section 4. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 1012.981,
 152 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
 153 1012.981 The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence.—
 154 (2) The center shall, in collaboration with the David C.
 155 Anchin Center for the Advancement of Innovative Teaching within
 156 and Learning at the University of South Florida, do all of the
 157 following:
 158 (a) Develop and deliver evidence-based professional
 159 learning opportunities aligned to the Florida Educator
 160 Accomplished Practices.
 161 (b) Develop and deliver educator training programs pursuant
 162 to s. 1012.98 that integrate high-quality instructional
 163 materials included on the state-adopted instructional materials
 164 list under s. 1006.28, materials evaluated and identified
 165 pursuant to s. 1001.215(4), and materials developed by or under
 166 the direction of the department as provided in s. 1006.39. These
 167 programs must focus on the effective use of knowledge-based
 168 curricula, highlighting when and how to incorporate intervention
 169 materials, and emphasize the importance of background knowledge
 170 in building advanced reading comprehension grounded in the
 171 science of reading and critical thinking skills.
 172 (c) Develop and design models of high-quality clinical
 173 experiences for aspiring teachers. These model experiences shall
 174 serve as a standard that institutions approved pursuant to ss.

Page 6 of 8

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38-01409E-26

20261718

175 1004.04 and 1004.85 can adopt or adapt, enabling participants to
176 demonstrate mastery of instructional techniques, classroom
177 management strategies, and the application of high-impact
178 teaching strategies in authentic educational settings.

179 (d) Collaborate with school districts and other educational
180 stakeholders to identify emerging needs in teacher preparation
181 and align center programs accordingly, conducting gap analyses
182 to provide comprehensive coverage of the science of learning,
183 high-impact teaching strategies, and knowledge-rich curriculum
184 implementation.

185 (e) Establish a statewide network of teachers and
186 instructional leaders equipped with the knowledge and skills to
187 mentor and support aspiring and current educators participating
188 in the center's programs. This network shall model effective
189 pedagogical practices and facilitate professional growth.

190 (f) Conduct research and disseminate findings on high-
191 impact teaching practices and the implementation of knowledge-
192 based curricula to inform policy, improve classroom instruction,
193 and address the importance of background knowledge in student
194 achievement.

195 (g) Report to the department the completion of professional
196 learning by individuals who are not employed by entities with an
197 approved professional learning system.

198 (3) The center:

199 (a) Must ~~may~~ submit a professional learning system for
200 approval pursuant to s. 1012.98.

201 (b) Shall allow a certified educator seeking to renew or
202 reinstate his or her certificate to use the system at no cost
203 and submit any inservice points earned by the educator through

Page 7 of 8

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38-01409E-26

20261718

204 the system to the department on the educator's behalf.

205 (c) Shall provide a certified educator seeking to renew or
206 reinstate a certificate with information on school district
207 professional learning systems that provide access to inservice
208 training to persons not employed by the school district.

209 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Page 8 of 8

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585

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Division of Elections

I, Cord Byrd, Secretary of State,
do hereby certify that

Layla Collins

is duly appointed a member of the

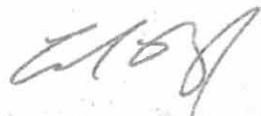
State Board of Education

for a term beginning on the Twelfth day of August, A.D., 2025,
until the Thirty-First day of December, A.D., 2028 and is
subject to be confirmed by the Senate during the next regular
session of the Legislature.

If photocopied or chemically altered, the word "VOID" will appear.

"State of Florida" appears in small letters across the face of this 8 1/2" x 11" document.

Given under my hand and the Great Seal of the
State of Florida, at Tallahassee, the Capital, this
the Twenty-Third day of December, A.D., 2025.



Secretary of State



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED

2025 JUL 15 PM 4:37

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS
TALLAHASSEE, FL

July 11, 2025

Secretary Cord Byrd
Department of State
R.A. Gray Building, Room 316
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

Dear Secretary Byrd:

Please be advised I have made the following appointment under the provisions of Section 1001.01, Florida Statutes:

Mrs. Layla Collins



as a member of the State Board of Education, succeeding Ben Gibson, subject to confirmation by the Senate. This appointment is effective August 1, 2025, for a term ending December 31, 2028.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. DeSantis".

Ron DeSantis
Governor

RD/dw

RECEIVED

OATH OF OFFICE

(Art. II, § 5(b), Fla. Const.; § 92.50, Florida Statutes)

2025 DEC 19 AM 10:08

STATE OF FLORIDA

County of Hillsborough

DIVISION OF ELECTIONS
TALLAHASSEE, FL

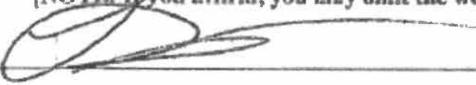
I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, protect, and defend the Constitution and Government of the United States and of the State of Florida; that I am duly qualified to hold office under the Constitution of the State, and that I will well and faithfully perform the duties of

State Board of Education

(Full Name of Office – Abbreviations Not Accepted)

on which I am now about to enter, so help me God.

[NOTE: If you affirm, you may omit the words "so help me God." See § 92.52, Fla. Stat.]

Signature 

Sworn to and subscribed before me by means of physical presence OR online notarization
this 11 day of Dec, 2025

S. Harrell / Sharon Irene Harren

Signature of Officer Administering Oath or of Notary Public

(To be completed only by judges administering oath – see § 92.50, Florida Statutes.)

Print Name

Title

Court

(To be completed by officer administering oath, other than judges – see § 92.50, Florida Statutes.)

Affix Seal Below



SHARON IRENE HARRELL
Commission # HH 301453
Expires August 16, 2026

Personally Known OR Produced Identification

Type of Identification Pro

ACCEPTANCE

I accept the office listed in the above Oath of Office.

Mailing Address: Home Office

Street or Post Office Box

City, State, Zip Code

Print Name

Signature

Laurel Collins