

**Tab 2** **SB 920** by **Gaetz**; Mathematics Education

**Tab 3** **CS/SB 1036** by **ED, Calatayud**; Compare to CS/CS/H 00753 School Counselors

**Tab 4** **SB 1216** by **Rodriguez**; Similar to H 01187 Public School Personnel Compensation

**The Florida Senate**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA**

**APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE ON PRE-K - 12**

**EDUCATION**

**Senator Burgess, Chair**

**Senator Pizzo, Vice Chair**

**MEETING DATE:** Wednesday, February 4, 2026

**TIME:** 1:00—3:15 p.m.

**PLACE:** *Mallory Horne Committee Room, 37 Senate Building*

**MEMBERS:** Senator Burgess, Chair; Senator Pizzo, Vice Chair; Senators Bradley, Calatayud, Gaetz, Jones, Massullo, Osgood, Simon, and Yarborough

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
1	Review and Discussion of Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Issues Relating to Department of Education		
2	<b>SB 920</b> Gaetz	<p>Mathematics Education; Providing requirements for mathematics pathways established by a certain workgroup; requiring the Department of Education to develop applied algebra courses; providing requirements for the applied algebra courses; requiring the department to collaborate with the Board of Governors of the State University System to ensure the courses are accepted as mathematics credits for state university admissions, etc.</p> <p>ED      01/20/2026 Favorable            AED    02/04/2026            FP</p>	
3	<b>CS/SB 1036</b> Education Pre-K - 12 / Calatayud (Compare CS/CS/H 753)	<p>School Counselors; Providing that school counselors are exempt from specified certification requirements, unless required for employment by a school district, etc.</p> <p>ED      01/20/2026 Fav/CS            AED    02/04/2026            RC</p>	
4	<b>SB 1216</b> Rodriguez (Similar H 1187, S 1720)	<p>Public School Personnel Compensation; Providing that cost-of-living adjustments are for employees with direct student contact; deleting a limitation on such adjustments; deleting certain limitations for salary adjustments under the performance salary schedule, etc.</p> <p>ED      01/20/2026 Favorable            AED    02/04/2026            AP</p>	

Other Related Meeting Documents

*Materials for this item  
to be presented at the  
time of the meeting.*

**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.)

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

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BILL: SB 920

INTRODUCER: Senator Gaetz

SUBJECT: Mathematics Education

DATE: February 3, 2026

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Palazesi	Bouck	ED	<b>Favorable</b>
2. Gray	Elwell	AED	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
3. _____	_____	FP	_____

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## I. Summary:

SB 920 directs the Department of Education (DOE) to develop applied algebra courses for designated career clusters on a phased timeline for district adoption in 2027-2028 and 2028-2029, authorizes districts to offer these courses in lieu of Algebra 1 (with successful completion satisfying Algebra 1 credit requirements for graduation or middle grades promotion), requires course alignment with the Algebra I end-of-course assessment and requires coordination to ensure the courses are accepted for state university admissions, supported by professional development and implementation resources.

The bill also updates Florida's existing secondary mathematics pathways by requiring the state's pathway workgroup to incorporate newly developed applied algebra courses that align Algebra 1 standards with career and technical education expectations. The bill requires the pathways to include at least one course sequence that includes an applied algebra course tied to a specific career cluster, allows flexibility for students to move between pathways, and creates clear links from precollege math to college-level pathways and workforce-aligned programs. The bill specifies pathway identification deadlines in September 2027 and September 2028.

The bill also requires the DOE to collaborate with the University of Florida's Lastinger Center to recommend an individualized, adaptive artificial intelligence tool to support K-12 math instruction and submit recommendations by December 1, 2026.

This bill has an indeterminate, likely significant, fiscal impact on the DOE. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

## II. Present Situation:

### Student Engagement in Mathematics

Student engagement in mathematics is a persistent challenge, particularly when students struggle to connect classroom content to real-world applications. A 2025 report by RAND reviewed reasons why student performance has not recovered to the pre-2019 student performance levels and had three key findings:

- About one-half of middle and high school students reported losing interest during their math lessons about half or more of the time.
- The students who are the most likely to maintain interest in math are the same ones who comprehend math, feel supported in math, are confident in their ability to do well in math, enjoy math, believe in the need to learn math, and see themselves as a math person.
- The students who are the most prone to disengage in math lessons want fewer online activities and more real-world applications in their math classes.<sup>1</sup>

Specifically, 55 percent of the least engaged students want fewer online activities compared with 17 percent of the most engaged students. Regarding real-world math problems, 54 percent of the least engaged students want more real-world math problems compared with 37 percent of the most engaged students.<sup>2</sup> The findings on students who are disengaged from mathematics complements other research on career and technical education, which finds that occupationally focused courses with real-world applications help engage disadvantaged students because the material is directly relevant to their future.<sup>3</sup>

Over the course of 10 weeks in the fall of 2023, the UF Lastinger Center Listening Tour team traveled from the Panhandle to the Florida Keys to listen to students, educators, leaders and policymakers and gather their perspectives on mathematics education in Florida. The Lastinger Center produced five briefs covering the following topics of mathematics education:

- Student Experience.
- Math Beyond High School (employers).
- Teacher Experiences.
- Math Beyond the School Day (parents).
- Early Learning and Math.<sup>4</sup>

In the Student Experience brief, when students were asked what they would change about math class or what they wished for, students asked for opportunities to more actively engage with the mathematics content, collaborate with others, and for their mathematics experience to be fun.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> RAND, *Students Lose Interest in Math*, p. 1 (2025), available at

[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA3900/RRA3988-1/RAND\\_RRA3988-1.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RRA3900/RRA3988-1/RAND_RRA3988-1.pdf), (last visited Jan. 27, 2026).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 6

<sup>3</sup> *Id.* at 8

<sup>4</sup> University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, *Lastinger Listening Tour Math Summit*, <https://lastinger.center.ufl.edu/research/listening-tour/summit/> (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

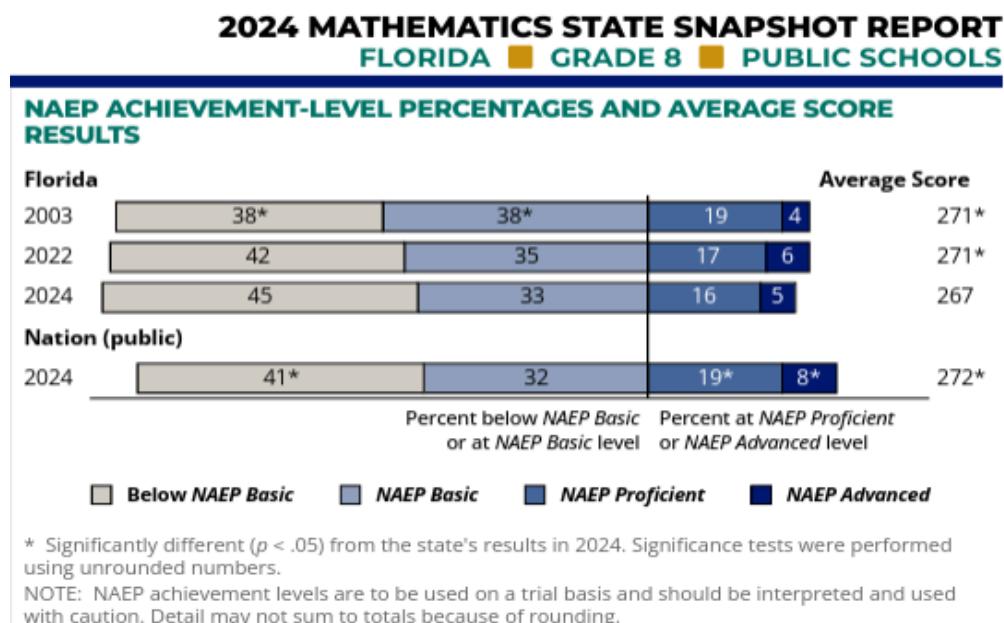
<sup>5</sup> University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, *Student Experiences in the Mathematics Classroom*, at 3 (2024), available at <https://lastinger.center.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Brief-1-Students-Experiences.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

Students also expressed a desire for less lecture and procedural practice, and more interaction with their peers to collaboratively solve problems.<sup>6</sup> Employers expressed a real need for students to enter the workforce with a core set of skills that can be tailored to a career of their choosing.<sup>7</sup>

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) researched the connection of incorporating mathematics instruction into CTE courses. In the study, SREB found that students in the classrooms of teachers who trained in the Math-in-CTE model performed significantly better on standardized math tests and community college math placement tests than students who received the regular CTE curriculum. Students also improved their math skills without losing the technical skills needed for college and career readiness.<sup>8</sup>

## Student Performance in Mathematics

On the 2024 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report, 21 percent of Florida's grade 8 students scored at NAEP Proficient or NAEP Advanced levels,<sup>9</sup> a 2 percent decrease from the 2022 results. Additionally, Florida's grade 8 students saw a 3 percent increase from 42 percent in 2022 to 45 percent in 2024 of students scoring at Below NAEP Basic. The chart below shows Florida's performance in Grade 8 NAEP Mathematics:<sup>10</sup>



<sup>6</sup> University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, *Student Experiences in the Mathematics Classroom*, at 4 (2024), available at <https://lastinger.center.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Brief-1-Students-Experiences.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

<sup>7</sup> University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning, *Importance of School Mathematics Beyond High School*, at 3 (2024), available at <https://lastinger.center.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Brief-2-Beyond-High-School.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

<sup>8</sup> Southern Regional Education Board, *Math-in-CTE Resources*, available at <https://www.sreb.org/nrccte-math-cte-resources>, (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

<sup>9</sup> NAEP provides scores in four achievement levels: Below NAEP Basic, NAEP Basic, NAEP Proficient and NAEP Advanced.

<sup>10</sup> Florida Department of Education, *2024 NAEP Mathematics Results*, available at <https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/subject/publications/stt2024/pdf/2024219FL8.pdf>, (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

On Florida's Algebra I end-of-course (EOC) assessment, there is a significant difference in performance between students who take Algebra I prior to entering high school versus students who take Algebra I while in high school. On the Algebra I EOC administration in the Spring of 2025, approximately 81,000 grade 8 students participated in the Algebra I EOC assessment, with 83 percent of students passing. In the same administration, approximately 95,000 grade 9 students participated in the Algebra I EOC assessment, with 40 percent of students passing. The table below shows the passing rate by grade level on the Spring 2025 Algebra I EOC administration.<sup>11</sup>

Grade	Number of Students	Percentage in Level 3 or Above
All Grades	231,744	60
03	1	*
04	1	*
05	6	*
06	190	100
07	24,772	95
08	81,379	83
09	95,760	40
10	26,764	28
11	2,035	27
12	732	27
AD	104	10

### **Middle School Promotion and High Graduation Requirements**

In order for a student to be promoted to high school from a school that includes middle grades 6, 7, and 8, the student must successfully complete the following courses:

- Three middle grades or higher courses in English Language Arts (ELA).
- Three middle grades or higher courses in mathematics.
- Three middle grades or higher courses in social studies.
- Three middle grades or higher courses in science.
- One course in career and education planning to be completed in grades 6, 7, or 8.

To be awarded a standard high school diploma under the 24-credit program requires students entering the ninth grade in 2023-2024 or later must earn the following credits:

- Four credits in English Language Arts (ELA) and students must pass the grade 10 ELA assessment.
- Four credits in mathematics and students must pass the Algebra I end-of-course assessment.

<sup>11</sup> Florida Department of Education, *2025 Florida Assessment of Student Thinking and B.E.S.T. Assessments*, available at <https://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/5668/ur1t/33Spring25Alg1SS.xls>, (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

- Three credits in science.
- Three credits in social studies.
- One credit in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or career and technical education.
- One credit in physical education, which includes the integration of health.
- Seven and one-half credits in electives.
- One-half credit in personal financial literacy.<sup>12</sup>

Students who earn an industry certification for which there is a statewide college credit articulation agreement approved by the State Board of Education may substitute the certification for one mathematics credit. Substitution may occur for up to two mathematics credits, except for Algebra I and Geometry.

## Mathematics Pathways

In 2023, the Legislature required the Department of Education (DOE) to convene a workgroup, no later than December 1, 2024, to:

- Identify best practices in career and technical education pathways from middle school to high school to aid middle school students in career planning and facilitate their transition to high school programs. The career pathway must be linked to postsecondary programs; and
- Establish three mathematics pathways for students enrolled in secondary grades by aligning mathematics courses to programs, postsecondary education, and careers. The workgroup must collaborate to identify the three mathematics pathways and the mathematics course sequence within each pathway which align to the mathematics skills needed for success in the corresponding academic programs, postsecondary education, and careers.<sup>13</sup>

The DOE gathered a workgroup to discuss and determine three mathematics pathways for students enrolled in grades K-12 by aligning mathematics courses to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, postsecondary education and careers. The workgroup consisted of teacher-experts across the state selected through an application process and approved by the DOE. The workgroup met regularly to gather information and provide data for each of the mathematics pathways. Based on workgroup collaboration, the Bureau of Standards and Instructional Support within the DOE recommends the three pathways, that are tentatively scheduled to be adopted by rule in the Fall of 2026:

- Algebraic Thinking - Students will engage in mathematics courses that provide a strong foundation for success within various fields including engineering, health sciences, information technology and energy.
- Statistical Thinking - Students will engage in mathematics courses that provide a strong foundation for success within various fields including finance, marketing, business administration and education.
- Quantitative Thinking - Students will engage in mathematics courses that provide a strong foundation for success within various fields including human services, education, communication, public safety and manufacturing.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Section 1003.4282(3), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> Ch. 2023-81, s.22 Laws of Fla. *see also* s. 1003.4282(10), F.S.

<sup>14</sup> Email, Florida Department of Education, Governmental Relations (Jan. 13, 2026) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education Pre-K-12).

## Artificial Intelligence in Education

Artificial intelligence (AI) provides opportunities to customize and accelerate learning for students and reduce teacher workload.<sup>15</sup> However, school districts in Florida implement AI differently and are using different AI tools for educators and students. For example, in Hillsborough County School District, educators and students are using Ameria Learning as their main AI tool for instruction, whereas the Pinellas County School District not only uses Ameria Learning but several other AI tools. The top general AI tools being used by school districts are Microsoft Copilot, Canva, and Magicschool.ai and the top AI tools being used by students are Gemini for students, Khanmingo, Canva and Microsoft Copilot.<sup>16</sup>

In 2024, the Legislature passed HB 1361, which created the Florida Tutoring Advantage, administered by the UF Lastinger Center for Learning to support school districts with tutoring programs that include virtual tutoring and automated tutoring software for students in kindergarten through grade 5.<sup>17</sup> A school district may receive grant funds for subscription fees and professional learning to support and accelerate learning for students in grades 6 through 12 during the school day. Grant recipients must select an AI platform that:

- Uses large language models based on GPT-4, its equivalent, or a successor, and is on a closed system.
- Provides professional learning to teachers.
- Provides one-on-one tutoring aligned to the Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards for reading and mathematics.
- Provides standards-aligned lesson plans and provides insights on student progress. Provides district- and school-level reporting and parental access to artificial intelligence interactions.<sup>18</sup>

## III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill creates s. 1003.4936, F.S., to provide legislative intent that algebra is an important step in a student's mathematics pathway and is a prerequisite for higher level mathematics courses. The bill requires the DOE to develop an applied algebra course for each of the established CTE career clusters and provide professional development, instructional resources, and technical assistance to support district implementation. Each applied algebra course must:

- Integrate the CTE program standards and benchmarks for the relevant career cluster with the Florida Standards for Algebra I;
- Provide students with rigorous, career-relevant mathematical applications that demonstrate the use of algebraic concepts in authentic industry problems, processes, or settings;
- Prepare students to take the statewide, standardized Algebra I end-of-course assessment; and

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<sup>15</sup> Section 1002.321(3), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Dr. Maya Isreal, University of Florida, *Overview of AI in Florida Schools*, Presentation to the Student Academic Success Subcommittee, The Florida House of Representatives (Dec. 10, 2025), available at <https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loaddoc.aspx?MeetingId=14953&PublicationType=Committees&DocumentType=Meeting%20Packets> (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

<sup>17</sup> Chapter 2024-162, s. 9, Laws of Fla.

<sup>18</sup> Section 1002.321(3), F.S.

- Meet all requirements for a mathematics credit required for high school or for middle grades promotion.

The bill requires the DOE to develop applied algebra courses by the following timeline:

- Applied algebra courses in the following career clusters must be developed and available for district adoption in the 2027-2028 school year:
  - Agriculture, food, and natural resources.
  - Architecture and construction.
  - Business management and administration.
  - Energy.
  - Engineering and technology education.
  - Finance.
  - Health science.
  - Information technology.
  - Manufacturing.
  - Transportation and distribution logistics.
- Applied algebra courses in the following career clusters must be developed and available for district adoption in the 2028-2029 school year:
  - Arts, AV technology, and communications.
  - Education and training.
  - Government and public administration.
  - Hospitality and tourism.
  - Human services.
  - Law, public safety, and security.
  - Marketing, sales, and service.

The bill authorizes school districts to offer one or more applied algebra courses in lieu of Algebra I, and successful completion of the course will satisfy the Algebra I credit requirement for high school graduation or middle grades promotion. The bill also requires the DOE to work with the Board of Governors of the State University System to ensure that each applied algebra course is accepted as a mathematics credit for state university admissions.

The bill amends s. 1003.4282, F.S., to expand upon the DOE's requirement to establish three mathematics pathways for students enrolled in secondary grades by aligning mathematics courses to programs, postsecondary education, and careers. The bill requires the mathematics pathways to include:

- The applied algebra courses established by the bill, which are required to be aligned to the Florida Standards for Algebra I with the career and technical education (CTE) standards and benchmarks for each designated career cluster;
- At least one course sequence beginning with an applied algebra course aligned to a specific career cluster. The workgroup must identify additional mathematics courses that follow each applied algebra course and build on the algebraic reasoning, modeling, and quantitative skills introduced through industry-relevant applications. The mathematics pathways may include a plan to create new mathematics courses to complete a pathway;
- Flexibility and the ability to move between pathways if necessary; and

- Clear links between precollege mathematics and college-level math pathways, and support student progression into postsecondary academic programs, state college career and technical education programs, career center programs, industry certification programs, and high-skill, high-wage occupations.

The bill requires the DOE's workgroup to submit identified mathematics pathways that incorporate the first set of applied algebra courses established in the bill no later than September 1, 2027, and the second set of applied algebra courses established in the bill no later than September 1, 2028, to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The bill creates an undesignated section of law that requires the DOE to collaborate with the Lastinger Center for Learning at the University of Florida to recommend to the Legislature an individualized, adaptive artificial intelligence tool to support mathematics instruction in kindergarten through grade 12. The DOE must submit its recommendations to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 1, 2026. The recommendations must:

- Ensure that recommended tools align to the Florida academic standards and prepare students for state assessments;
- Consider alternate mathematics sequencing and grade-level progression, and alternate funding models to support individualized progression through content;
- Evaluate the extent to which tools provide real-time diagnostic assessments, individualized learning pathways, adaptive sequencing of content, and immediate, personalized feedback to students;
- Evaluate the applicability of the tool to progress monitoring tools, district learning management systems, suggested interventions, small-group instructional supports, and professional development that enables teachers to integrate the tools into classroom instruction;
- Provide for student data privacy and transparency in data collection and retention; and
- Consider statewide and district-level costs.

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:**

The bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to develop algebra courses. In order to implement the bill, the DOE estimated it would need \$698,693, which includes salary and benefits for five new positions and funding to support workgroup operations such as travel, lodging, meeting space and related operating expenses.

The bill also requires the DOE to collaborate with the Lastinger Center for Learning to recommend to the Legislature an individualized, adaptive artificial intelligence tool to support mathematics instruction in kindergarten through grade 12. The costs for developing such recommendations can be absorbed within existing resources.

The bill authorizes school districts to choose to offer one or more applied algebra courses in lieu of Algebra I. If any school district chooses to offer one of the courses developed by the DOE, then the DOE is required to provide professional development, instructional resources, and technical assistance to support district implementation.<sup>19</sup>

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

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<sup>19</sup> Department of Education, *Senate Bill 920 Fiscal Analysis* (Dec. 19, 2025) (on file with the Senate Appropriations Committee on Pre-K-12 Education).

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 1003.4282 of the Florida Statutes.

This bill creates section 1003.4936 of the Florida Statutes.

This bill creates an undesignated section 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

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

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By Senator Gaetz

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to mathematics education; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; providing requirements for mathematics pathways established by a certain workgroup; requiring that certain courses for the mathematics pathways be identified by specified dates; requiring the workgroup to submit identified mathematics pathways to the Governor and the Legislature; creating s. 1003.4936, F.S.; providing legislative findings; requiring the Department of Education to develop applied algebra courses; providing requirements for the applied algebra courses; requiring the department to develop the courses on specified timelines; requiring the department to collaborate with the Board of Governors of the State University System to ensure the courses are accepted as mathematics credits for state university admissions; requiring the department to collaborate with the Lastinger Center for Learning at the University of Florida to make specified recommendations to the Legislature; providing requirements for the recommendations; requiring the department to submit its recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (10) of section

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30 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

31 1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

32 (10) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CREDIT.—The Department  
33 of Education shall convene a workgroup, ~~no later than December~~  
34 ~~1, 2024~~, to:

35 (b) Establish three mathematics pathways for students  
36 enrolled in secondary grades by aligning mathematics courses to  
37 programs, postsecondary education, and careers. The workgroup  
38 shall collaborate to identify the three mathematics pathways and  
39 the mathematics course sequence within each pathway which align  
40 to the mathematics skills needed for success in the  
41 corresponding academic programs, postsecondary education, and  
42 careers.

43 1. The mathematics pathways must incorporate the applied  
44 algebra courses established under s. 1003.4936 which align the  
45 Florida Standards for Algebra 1 with the career and technical  
46 education standards and benchmarks for each designated career  
47 cluster.

48 2. Each mathematics pathway must include at least one  
49 course sequence beginning with an applied algebra course aligned  
50 to a specific career cluster. The workgroup shall identify  
51 additional mathematics courses that follow each applied algebra  
52 course and build on the algebraic reasoning, modeling, and  
53 quantitative skills introduced through industry-relevant  
54 applications. The mathematics pathways may include a plan to  
55 create new mathematics courses to complete a pathway.

56 3. Each mathematics pathway must offer flexibility and the  
57 ability to move between pathways if necessary.

58 4. Mathematics pathways must create clear links between

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59 precollege mathematics and college-level math pathways, and  
60 support student progression into postsecondary academic  
61 programs, state college career and technical education programs,  
62 career center programs, industry certification programs, and  
63 high-skill, high-wage occupations.

64 5. The mathematics pathways that incorporate applied  
65 algebra courses created under s. 1003.4936(3)(a)1. must be  
66 identified no later than September 1, 2027. The mathematics  
67 pathways that incorporate applied algebra courses created under  
68 s. 1003.4936(3)(a)2. must be identified no later than September  
69 1, 2028. The workgroup shall submit identified mathematics  
70 pathways to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the  
71 Speaker of the House of Representatives.

72 Section 2. Section 1003.4936, Florida Statutes, is created  
73 to read:

74 1003.4936 Applied algebra for career and technical  
75 education.—

76 (1) The Legislature finds that algebra is an important step  
77 in a student's mathematics pathway. Algebra is a prerequisite  
78 for higher level mathematics courses, and success in algebra is  
79 strongly connected with later mathematics success. Establishing  
80 an applied algebra course that integrates career and technical  
81 education standards equips students with mathematical skills  
82 directly connected to real industry practices and increases the  
83 relevance of algebra instruction. By contextualizing algebraic  
84 concepts within authentic occupational problems, such applied  
85 algebra courses improve student engagement, strengthen  
86 understanding of core math standards, and better prepare  
87 students for high-skill, high-wage careers. Such a course will

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enable students to pass the Algebra 1 end-of-course assessment, but also develop practical skills that support success in Florida's workforce and postsecondary pathways.

(2) The Department of Education shall develop an applied algebra course for each of the established career and technical education career clusters. Each applied algebra course must:

(a) Integrate the career and technical education program standards and benchmarks for the relevant career cluster with the Florida Standards for Algebra 1.

(b) Provide students with rigorous, career-relevant mathematical applications that demonstrate the use of algebraic concepts in authentic industry problems, processes, or settings.

(c) Prepare students to take the statewide, standardized Algebra 1 end-of-course assessment required under s. 1008.22.

(d) Meet all requirements for a mathematics credit required for high school graduation under s. 1003.4282(3)(b) or for middle grades promotion pursuant to s. 1003.4156(1)(b).

(3) (a) The department shall develop the courses on the following timelines:

1. Applied algebra courses in the following career clusters must be developed and available for district adoption in the 2027-2028 school year:

- a. Agriculture, food, and natural resources.
- b. Architecture and construction.
- c. Business management and administration.
- d. Energy.
- e. Engineering and technology education.
- f. Finance.
- g. Health science.

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117        h. Information technology.

118        i. Manufacturing.

119        j. Transportation and distribution logistics.

120        2. Applied algebra courses in the following career clusters

121        must be developed and available for district adoption in the

122        2028-2029 school year:

123        a. Arts, AV technology, and communications.

124        b. Education and training.

125        c. Government and public administration.

126        d. Hospitality and tourism.

127        e. Human services.

128        f. Law, public safety, and security.

129        g. Marketing, sales, and service.

130        (b) In grades 6 through 12, school districts may offer one

131        or more applied algebra courses in lieu of Algebra 1, and

132        successful completion of the course will satisfy the Algebra 1

133        credit requirement for high school graduation or middle grades

134        promotion.

135        (c) The department shall collaborate with the Board of  
136        Governors of the State University System to ensure that each  
137        applied algebra course is accepted as a mathematics credit for  
138        state university admissions.

139        (d) The department shall provide professional development,  
140        instructional resources, and technical assistance to support  
141        district implementation.

142        Section 3. (1) The Department of Education shall  
143        collaborate with the Lastinger Center for Learning at the  
144        University of Florida to recommend to the Legislature an  
145        individualized, adaptive artificial intelligence tool to support

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146 mathematics instruction in kindergarten through grade 12. The  
147 recommendations must:

148       (a) Ensure that recommended tools align to the Florida  
149 academic standards and prepare students for state assessments.

150       (b) Consider alternate mathematics sequencing and grade-  
151 level progression, and alternate funding models to support  
152 individualized progression through content.

153       (c) Evaluate the extent to which tools provide real-time  
154 diagnostic assessments, individualized learning pathways,  
155 adaptive sequencing of content, and immediate, personalized  
156 feedback to students.

157       (d) Evaluate the applicability of the tool to progress  
158 monitoring tools, district learning management systems,  
159 suggested interventions, small-group instructional supports, and  
160 professional development that enables teachers to integrate the  
161 tools into classroom instruction.

162       (e) Provide for student data privacy and transparency in  
163 data collection and retention.

164       (f) Consider statewide and district-level costs.

165       (2) The department shall submit its recommendations to the  
166 Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the  
167 House of Representatives by December 1, 2026.

168       Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

**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.)

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

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BILL: CS/SB 1036

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee and Senator Calatayud

SUBJECT: School Counselors

DATE: February 3, 2026      REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1. Sabitsch	Bouck	ED	<b>Fav/CS</b>
2. Gray	Elwell	AED	<b>Pre-meeting</b>
3. _____	_____	RC	_____

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**

PLEASE MAKE SELECTION

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## **I. Summary:**

CS/SB 1036 provides an exemption for individuals employed as a school counselor from the current certification requirement to demonstrate mastery of both general and subject area knowledge but does not limit a school district from requiring that mastery as a condition of employment.

The bill does not have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures. See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

## **II. Present Situation:**

### **Educator Certification**

Florida law requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to classify school services, designate the certification subject areas, establish competencies and certification requirements for all school-based personnel. The SBE adopts rules by which professional, temporary, and part-time certificates are issued by the Department of Education (DOE) to applicants who meet the established standards. Florida law requires each person in the following positions in any public school to hold an educator certificate required by law and by rules of the SBE:

- School supervisor.

- School principal.
- Teacher.
- Library media specialist.
- School counselor.
- Athletic coach.
- Other positions in which the individual serves in an instructional capacity.<sup>1</sup>

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.”<sup>2</sup>

The DOE issues three main types of educator certificates:

- Professional Certificate: The professional certificate is Florida’s highest type of full-time educator certification.<sup>3</sup> The professional certificate is valid for five years and is renewable.<sup>4</sup>
- Temporary Certificate: The temporary certificate covers employment in full-time positions for which educator certification is required.<sup>5</sup> An individual holding a temporary certificate must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge and professional preparation and education competence in order to apply for a professional certificate. Generally, a temporary certificate is valid for five years and is nonrenewable.<sup>6</sup>
- Athletic Coaching Certificate: The athletic coaching certificate covers full-time and part-time employment as a public school’s athletic coach.<sup>7</sup> The DOE issues two types of athletic coaching certificates – one is valid for five years and may be issued for subsequent five-year periods while the other is valid for three years and may be issued only once. The five-year certificate requires satisfaction of certain specialization requirements established in rule.<sup>8</sup>

### ***Professional Certificate Requirements***

To be eligible for a professional certificate, a person must:

- 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 nonaccredited institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor’s or higher degree;
- 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;
- Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher;
- Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge;

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1012.55(1), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1012.54, F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(5), F.A.C.

<sup>4</sup> Section 1012.56(7), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(1), F.A.C.

<sup>6</sup> Section 1012.56(7), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1012.55(2), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(7), F.A.C.

- Demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge; and
- Demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence, if the person serves as a classroom teacher or school administrator.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Demonstrating Mastery of General Knowledge***

Mastery of general knowledge may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:

- Achieving a passing score on the General Knowledge Test, which consist of subtests areas that include Essay, English Language Skills, Reading and Mathematics;<sup>10</sup>
- Achieving passing scores established in SBE rule on national or international examinations that test comparable content and relevant standards in verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning skills (e.g., the verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning portions of the Graduate Record Examination);
- Providing documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another U.S. state or territory, by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), or by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE);
- Completing two semesters of successful, part-time or full-time teaching in a Florida College System institution, state university, or private college or university that awards an associate or higher degree and is an accredited institution or an institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program;
- Achievement of passing scores, identified in state board rule, on national or international examinations that test comparable content and relevant standards in verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning skills, including, but not limited to, the verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning portions of the Graduate Record Examination and the SAT, ACT, and Classic Learning Test; or
- Documentation of receipt of a master's or higher degree from an accredited postsecondary institution that the DOE has identified as having a quality program resulting in a baccalaureate degree or higher.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Demonstrating Mastery of Subject Area Knowledge***

Mastery of subject area knowledge may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:

- Bachelor's Degree Level (for certification in a subject area for which SBE rule requires a bachelor's or higher degree):
  - If a Florida subject area examination has been developed, achieving a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination specified in SBE rule<sup>12</sup> or documentation of receipt of a master's or higher degree from an accredited postsecondary institution that the DOE has identified as having a quality program resulting in a baccalaureate degree or higher in the certificate subject area as identified in SBE rule.
  - If a Florida subject area examination has not been developed, achieving a passing score on a standardized examination specified in SBE rule, including passing scores on both the

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<sup>9</sup> Section 1012.56(2), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Florida Department of Education, Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida, pg. 14 (2025) , available at: <https://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7479/ur1/FTCE28thEdition22Rule.pdf> (last visited Jan. 26, 2026).

<sup>11</sup> Section 1012.56(3), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Note: The Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida (2025), Twenty-Eighth Edition, includes the subject area examination for School Counseling PK-12.

oral proficiency and written proficiency examinations administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages or successful completion of a United States Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center program or a passing score on the Defense Language Proficiency Test.

- For certification in any other subject area for which there is no Florida subject area test or standardized examination specified in state board rule (e.g., Dance), completing the required bachelor's or higher degree and content courses specified in SBE rule and verification of subject area competence by the district school superintendent or, for a state-supported or private school, the school's chief administrative officer.
- Master's Degree Level (for certification in a subject area for which SBE rule requires a master's or higher degree): completing the required master's or higher degree and content courses specified in SBE rule and achieving a passing score on the corresponding Florida-developed subject area test or standardized examination specified in SBE rule.
- Out-of-State Certification: providing documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued for a subject area by another U.S. state or territory or by NBPTS or ABCTE, if the certificate is comparable to the Florida professional certificate issued for the same subject area.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Educator Certification Examination Fees***

The DOE sets registration fees for the various exams required for educator certification, including initial registration and retakes. For the general knowledge exam, the initial registration fee is \$130.00 for the full battery of four subjects. An individual is able to retake the general knowledge exam by subtest with the retake registration fees being the following:

- One subtest - \$32.50.
- Two subtests - \$65.00.
- Three subtests - \$97.50.
- Full battery retake - \$130.00.

For subject area examinations and the professional educational test, the initial and retake registration fee is \$150.00.<sup>14</sup>

Current law and rule provide for several fee waivers including the Military Testing Fee Waiver, Retired First Responder Fee Waiver,<sup>15</sup> and Exceptional Student Education K–12/Elementary Education K–6 Waivers.<sup>16</sup>

### ***Specific Requirements for School Counseling Certification***

Florida Law provides multiple pathways to better enable students enrolled in postsecondary school counseling program to enter the workforce as certified school counselors.<sup>17</sup> SBE rules outline three plans for specialized requirements for certification in school counseling in addition to the basic requirements for certification, as follows:

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<sup>13</sup> Section 1012.56(5), F.S.

<sup>14</sup> Rule 6A-4.0021(4), F.A.C.

<sup>15</sup> Section 1012.59(3), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Section 1012.59(4), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Section 1004.0982, F.S.

- Plan one consists of a master's or higher degree with a graduate major in guidance and counseling or school counseling that includes a minimum of 600 clock hours of supervised internship serving school-aged students in a prekindergarten, an elementary or a secondary school setting.<sup>18</sup>
- Plan two consists of a master's or higher degree with a graduate major in counseling other than guidance and counseling or school counseling as specified in plan one that includes a minimum of 600 clock hours of supervised internship with school-aged children and their families with at least 9 semester hours of graduate credit to include the following areas:
  - Student appraisal and evaluation methods in prekindergarten, elementary and secondary schools;
  - College and career planning for prekindergarten, elementary and secondary school students including college and career exploration and knowledge of financial aid and financing of postsecondary education options;
  - Principles, philosophy, organization and administration of a comprehensive school counseling program in prekindergarten, elementary and secondary schools; and
  - Consultation skills and techniques for conferring with groups such as agencies, teachers and parents.<sup>19</sup>
- Plan three consists of a master's or higher degree with a graduate major in school counseling that includes a minimum of 300 clock hours of supervised internship serving school-aged students in a prekindergarten, elementary or secondary school setting if the applicant:
  - Is a current full-time teacher;
  - Has been employed as a teacher for at least 5 school years; and
  - Has earned an effective or highly effective rating under Section 1012.34, F.S., on his or her performance evaluation for the most recent 3 years the teacher was employed in a Florida public school.<sup>20</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill amends s. 1012.55, F.S., to exempt school guidance counselors from the demonstration of mastery of both general knowledge and subject area knowledge requirements for educator certification. The bill specifies, however, that school districts are not precluded from requiring demonstration of mastery as a condition of employment.

The bill is effective on July 1, 2026.

### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

#### **A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:**

None.

#### **B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

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<sup>18</sup> Rule 6A-4.0181(1), F.A.C.

<sup>19</sup> Rule 6A-4.0181(2), F.A.C.

<sup>20</sup> Rule 6A-4.0181(4), F.A.C.

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 have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 1012.55 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

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

**CS by Education Pre-K – 12 Committee on January 20, 2026:**

The committee substitute clarifies that the exemption from certification requirements authorized in the bill does not preclude public school districts from requiring the mastery of general and subject area knowledge as a condition of employment.

**B. Amendments:**

None.

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

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**By** the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senator Calatayud

581-02037-26

20261036c1

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to school counselors; amending s. 1012.55, F.S.; providing that school counselors are exempt from specified certification requirements, unless required for employment by a school district; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Present subsection (6) of section 1012.55, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (7), and a new subsection (6) is added to that section, to read:

#### 1012.55 Positions for which certificates required.—

(6) A person employed as a school counselor is exempt from the educator certification requirements in s. 1012.56(2)(g) and (h), relating to the mastery of general and subject area knowledge. Such exemption does not preclude a school district from requiring the person to demonstrate mastery of general and subject area knowledge as a condition of employment.

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

**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.)

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

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BILL: SB 1216

INTRODUCER: Senator Rodriguez

SUBJECT: Public School Personnel Compensation

DATE: February 3, 2026 REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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## **I. Summary:**

SB 1216 revises district school board compensation and salary schedule provisions. The bill:

- Specifies that the cost-of-living salary adjustment applies to certain district employees, provides that such an adjustment does not preclude other salary adjustments from additional funding sources, and removes the limitation that the adjustment may not exceed 50 percent of the annual adjustment provided to instructional personnel rated as effective;
- Expands the circumstances under which advanced degrees may be used in salary schedules for instructional personnel and school administrators and specifies what qualifies as an advanced degree for salary schedule purposes;
- Adds advanced degrees as a district-determined factor for differentiated pay under the grandfathered salary schedule; and
- Removes requirements governing the relative amounts of annual salary adjustments for employees rated highly effective and effective under the performance salary schedule.

This bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures. See **Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

## **II. Present Situation:**

### **Cost-of-living salary adjustment**

A district school board may provide a cost-of-living salary adjustment if the adjustment does not discriminate among comparable classes of employees based upon the salary schedule under

which they are compensated. The cost-of-living salary adjustment may not exceed 50 percent of the annual adjustment provided to instructional personnel rated as effective.<sup>1</sup>

### **Classroom Teacher and Other Instructional Personnel Salary Increase Allocation**

The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) includes a classroom teacher and other instructional personnel salary increase allocation that may be used to support the minimum base salary for full-time classroom teachers and FEFP funded certified prekindergarten teachers, or to provide salary increases to instructional personnel. Each district and charter school develops a salary distribution plan for the allocation, and the district submits the approved district plan and each approved charter school plan in the district to the Department of Education by October 1 of each fiscal year.<sup>2</sup>

### **Advanced Degrees**

Advanced degrees may be used in setting a salary schedule for instructional personnel or school administrators if the advanced degree is held in the individual's area of certification.<sup>3</sup>

### **Grandfathered and Performance Salary Schedules**

The grandfathered salary schedule serves as the basis for paying school employees hired before July 1, 2014. Instructional personnel on annual contract as of July 1, 2014, are placed on the performance salary schedule. Instructional personnel on continuing contract or professional service contract may opt into the performance salary schedule by relinquishing that contract and agreeing to annual contract status.<sup>4</sup> An employee who opts into the performance salary schedule may not return to the grandfathered salary schedule.<sup>5</sup>

In determining the grandfathered salary schedule for instructional personnel, a district school board bases a portion of each employee's compensation upon performance demonstrated under the district's evaluation system and provides differentiated pay for instructional personnel and school administrators based upon district-determined factors, including additional responsibilities, school demographics, high-demand teacher needs areas, and level of job performance difficulties.

### **Performance Salary Schedule Salary Adjustments and Related Limitations**

The performance salary schedule provides annual salary adjustments for instructional personnel and school administrators based upon performance determined under the district's evaluation

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1012.22(1)(c), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1011.62(14), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1012.22(1)(c), F.S.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* Instructional personnel hired before July 1, 1984, entered into continuing contracts entitled the employee to continued employment without the necessity of annual renewal. Section 231.36(3)(e), F.S. (1981). Instructional personnel hired on or after July 1, 1984, and up to July 1, 2011, were awarded professional service contracts after three years of probationary service; such contracts were automatically renewed each year, unless the employee was charged with unsatisfactory performance. Section 1012.33(3), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> Section 1012.22(1)(c), F.S.

system. A salary schedule may not provide an annual salary adjustment for an employee who receives a rating other than highly effective or effective for the year.

Salary adjustments for highly effective or effective performance include all of the following:

- The annual salary adjustment for an employee rated highly effective is at least 25 percent greater than the highest annual salary adjustment available to an employee of the same classification through any other salary schedule adopted by the district.
- The annual salary adjustment for an employee rated effective is at least 50 percent and no more than 75 percent of the annual adjustment provided for a highly effective employee of the same classification.<sup>6</sup>

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

This bill revises district school board compensation and salary schedule provisions.

#### **Cost-of-Living Salary Adjustments**

The bill amends s. 1012.22(1)(c)2., F.S., relating to cost-of-living adjustments provided by district school boards, to:

- Specify that the district school board's authority to provide a cost-of-living salary adjustment applies to district employees, including, but not limited to, instructional personnel, prekindergarten teachers, noninstructional personnel, and school administrators;
- Provide that a cost-of-living salary adjustment does not preclude a district school board from providing other salary adjustments from additional funding sources, including categorical funding, the classroom teacher and other instructional personnel salary increase under s. 1011.62(14), F.S., and supplemental funding sources, including grants; and
- Remove the limitation that a cost-of-living salary adjustment may not exceed 50 percent of the annual adjustment provided to instructional personnel rated as effective.

#### **Advanced Degrees in Salary Schedules**

The bill amends s. 1012.22(1)(c)3., F.S., relating to the use of advanced degrees in salary schedules, to:

- Expand the circumstances under which a district school board may use an advanced degree in setting a salary schedule for instructional personnel or school administrators by allowing an advanced degree held in the individual's area of certification, a field related to his or her teaching assignment, or a related field of study; and
- Specify that, for purposes of a salary schedule, an advanced degree may include:
  - A master's degree or higher that is in the individual's area of certification or teaching assignment; or
  - An advanced degree in another field if the individual has at least 18 graduate semester hours related to the individual's area of certification or teaching assignment.

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<sup>6</sup> Id.

### **Differentiated Pay Factors Under the Grandfathered Salary Schedule**

The bill amends s. 1012.22(1)(c)4.b., F.S., relating to differentiated pay under the grandfathered salary schedule, to include advanced degrees among the district-determined factors a district school board may use in providing differentiated pay for instructional personnel and school administrators.

### **Performance Salary Schedule Annual Salary Adjustments**

The bill amends s. 1012.22(1)(c)5.b., F.S., relating to salary adjustments under the performance salary schedule, to remove requirements governing how a district school board must establish annual salary adjustment amounts for employees rated highly effective and effective, including requirements that:

- The annual salary adjustment for an employee rated highly effective be at least 25 percent greater than the highest annual salary adjustment available to an employee of the same classification through any other salary schedule adopted by the district; and
- The annual salary adjustment for an employee rated effective be equal to at least 50 percent and no more than 75 percent of the annual adjustment provided for a highly effective employee of the same classification.

The bill retains the limitation that an annual salary adjustment is provided only for an employee rated highly effective or effective for the year.

### **Conforming and Stylistic Revisions**

The bill makes conforming and stylistic revisions throughout s. 1012.22(1)(c), F.S., including deleting an obsolete date reference and reorganizing language without substantively changing the operation of those provisions.

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 have a fiscal impact on state revenues or expenditures. The bill provides districts flexibility regarding compensation and salary schedules. The impact on a district that chooses to take advantage of this flexibility is indeterminate.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 1012.22 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.

**By** Senator Rodriguez

40-00435A-26

20261216

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

18           Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section  
19 1012.22, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1012.22 Public school personnel; powers and duties of the  
district school board.—The district school board shall:

27 (c) *Compensation and salary schedules.*—

28 1. Definitions.—As used in this paragraph:

29 a. "Adjustment" means an addition to the base salary

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20261216

30 schedule that is not a bonus and becomes part of the employee's  
31 permanent base salary and is ~~shall~~ be considered compensation  
32 under s. 121.021(22).

33 b. "Grandfathered salary schedule" means the salary  
34 schedule or schedules adopted by a district school board before  
35 July 1, 2014, pursuant to subparagraph 4.

36 c. "Instructional personnel" means instructional personnel  
37 as defined in s. 1012.01(2) (a)-(d), excluding substitute  
38 teachers.

39 d. "Performance salary schedule" means the salary schedule  
40 or schedules adopted by a district school board pursuant to  
41 subparagraph 5.

42 e. "Salary schedule" means any ~~the~~ schedule ~~or~~ schedules  
43 used to provide the base salary for district school board  
44 personnel.

45 f. "School administrator" means a school administrator as  
46 defined in s. 1012.01(3) (c).

47 g. "Supplement" means an annual addition to the base salary  
48 for the term of the negotiated supplement as long as the  
49 employee continues his or her employment for the purpose of the  
50 supplement. A supplement does not become part of the employee's  
51 continuing base salary but is ~~shall~~ be considered compensation  
52 under s. 121.021(22).

53 2. Cost-of-living adjustment.—A district school board may  
54 provide a cost-of-living salary adjustment to district  
55 employees, including, but not limited to, instructional  
56 personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(2), prekindergarten teachers,  
57 noninstructional personnel, and school administrators as defined  
58 in s. 1012.01(3) (c), if the adjustment÷

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59        a. does not discriminate among comparable classes of  
60 employees based upon the salary schedule under which they are  
61 compensated. A cost-of-living adjustment does not preclude a  
62 district school board from providing other salary adjustments  
63 from additional funding sources, including categorical funding  
64 and the classroom teacher and other instructional personnel  
65 salary increase under s. 1011.62(14) and supplemental funding  
66 sources, including grants.

67        b. ~~Does not exceed 50 percent of the annual adjustment~~  
68 ~~provided to instructional personnel rated as effective.~~

69        3. Advanced degrees.—A district school board may use  
70 advanced degrees in setting a salary schedule for instructional  
71 personnel or school administrators if the advanced degree is  
72 held in the individual's area of certification, a field related  
73 to his or her teaching assignment, or a related field of study.  
74 For purposes of the salary schedule, an advanced degree may  
75 include a master's degree or higher that is in the area of  
76 certification or teaching assignment, or an advanced degree in  
77 another field with a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours  
78 related to the individual's area of certification or teaching  
79 assignment.

80        4. Grandfathered salary schedule.—

81        a. The district school board shall adopt a salary schedule  
82 or salary schedules to be used as the basis for paying all  
83 school employees hired before July 1, 2014. Instructional  
84 personnel on annual contract as of July 1, 2014, shall be placed  
85 on the performance salary schedule adopted under subparagraph 5.  
86 Instructional personnel on continuing contract or professional  
87 service contract may opt into the performance salary schedule if

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88 the employee relinquishes such contract and agrees to be  
89 employed on an annual contract under s. 1012.335. Such an  
90 employee shall be placed on the performance salary schedule and  
91 may not return to continuing contract or professional service  
92 contract status. Any employee who opts into the performance  
93 salary schedule may not return to the grandfathered salary  
94 schedule.

95 b. In determining the grandfathered salary schedule for  
96 instructional personnel, a district school board must base a  
97 portion of each employee's compensation upon performance  
98 demonstrated under s. 1012.34 and shall provide differentiated  
99 pay for both instructional personnel and school administrators  
100 based upon district-determined factors, including, but not  
101 limited to, additional responsibilities, school demographics,  
102 high-demand teacher needs areas, advanced degrees, and level of  
103 job performance difficulties.

104 5. Performance salary schedule.—~~By July 1, 2014~~, The  
105 district school board shall adopt a performance salary schedule  
106 that provides annual salary adjustments for instructional  
107 personnel and school administrators based upon performance  
108 determined under s. 1012.34. Employees hired on or after July 1,  
109 2014, or employees who choose to move from the grandfathered  
110 salary schedule to the performance salary schedule shall be  
111 compensated pursuant to the performance salary schedule once  
112 they have received the appropriate performance evaluation for  
113 this purpose.

114 a. Base salary.—The base salary shall be established as  
115 follows:

116 (I) The base salary for instructional personnel or school

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117      administrators who opt into the performance salary schedule  
118      shall be the salary paid in the prior year, including  
119      adjustments only.

120      (II) Instructional personnel or school administrators new  
121      to the district, returning to the district after a break in  
122      service without an authorized leave of absence, or appointed for  
123      the first time to a position in the district in the capacity of  
124      instructional personnel or school administrator shall be placed  
125      on the performance salary schedule.

126      b. Salary adjustments.—~~Salary adjustments for highly~~  
127 ~~effective or effective performance shall be established as~~  
128 ~~follows:~~

129      (I) ~~The annual salary adjustment under the performance~~  
130 ~~salary schedule for an employee rated as highly effective must~~  
131 ~~be at least 25 percent greater than the highest annual salary~~  
132 ~~adjustment available to an employee of the same classification~~  
133 ~~through any other salary schedule adopted by the district.~~

134      (II) ~~The annual salary adjustment under the performance~~  
135 ~~salary schedule for an employee rated as effective must be equal~~  
136 ~~to at least 50 percent and no more than 75 percent of the annual~~  
137 ~~adjustment provided for a highly effective employee of the same~~  
138 ~~classification.~~

139      (III) ~~A salary schedule shall not provide~~ An annual salary  
140 ~~adjustment shall only be provided~~ for an employee who receives a  
141 ~~rating of other than~~ highly effective or effective for the year.

142      c. Salary supplements.—In addition to the salary  
143      adjustments, each district school board shall provide for salary  
144      supplements for activities that must include, but are not  
145      limited to:

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146 (I) Assignment to a Title I eligible school.  
147 (II) Assignment to a school that earned a grade of "F" or  
148 three consecutive grades of "D" pursuant to s. 1008.34 such that  
149 the supplement remains in force for at least 1 year following  
150 improved performance in that school.

(III) Certification and teaching in high-demand teacher needs areas. Statewide high-demand teacher needs areas shall be identified by the State Board of Education under s. 1012.07. However, the district school board may identify other areas of high-demand needs within the school district for purposes of this sub-sub-subparagraph and may remove areas identified by the state board which do not apply within the school district.

158 (IV) Assignment of additional academic responsibilities.

If budget constraints in any given year limit a district school board's ability to fully fund all adopted salary schedules, the performance salary schedule may ~~shall~~ not be reduced on the basis of total cost or the value of individual awards in a manner that is proportionally greater than reductions to any other salary schedules adopted by the district. Any compensation for longevity of service awarded to instructional personnel who are on any other salary schedule must be included in calculating the salary adjustments required by sub-subparagraph b.

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