

Tab

Tab 2	CS/SB 1062 by ED, Brodeur (CO-INTRODUCERS) Burgess, Gaetz ; Compare to CS/H 01059 Speech and Debate Education				
543898	D	S	AED, Brodeur	Delete everything after	02/16 04:17 PM
Tab 3	SB 1718 by Calatayud ; Identical to CS/H 00561 Educator Preparation and Certification				
Tab 4	SB 7038 by HE ; Compare to CS/H 01279 Education				
941220	A	S	AED, Calatayud	Delete L.138 - 416:	02/17 08:40 AM

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 18, 2026

TIME: 8:30—10:00 a.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	CS/SB 1062 Education Pre-K - 12 / Brodeur (Compare CS/H 1059)	Speech and Debate Education; Citing this act as the "Florida Speech and Debate Education Act"; creating the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame; requiring the Department of Management Services to set aside an area on a specified level in the Capitol Building; designating Florida Speech and Debate Week annually in February; designating the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as the official statewide speech and debate organization; requiring the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation; providing duties of the institute, etc. ED 01/27/2026 Fav/CS AED 02/18/2026 FP	
3	SB 1718 Calatayud (Identical CS/H 561, Compare CS/S 7036)	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 01/27/2026 Favorable AED 02/18/2026 RC	

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education
Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 8:30—10:00 a.m.

TAB	BILL NO. and INTRODUCER	BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS	COMMITTEE ACTION
4	SB 7038 Education Postsecondary (Compare CS/H 1279, S 1052)	Education; Requiring each Florida College System institution and state university to waive tuition and fees for members of the Florida State Guard if certain conditions are met; requiring entities that offer fee-based services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired to disclose in writing whether the service may be obtained elsewhere at no cost; authorizing school district career centers to use alternative methods adopted by the board in lieu of common placement tests to assess students in basic communication and computation skills; providing that a fee waiver only applies to a full-time undergraduate student, beginning with a specified academic year, etc. AED 02/18/2026 RC	
5	Other Related Meeting Documents		

Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education															Row#
BE CODE	Row#	ISSUE CODE	ISSUE TITLE	FTE	GR	NR GR	EETF	NR EETF	SSTF	NR SSTF	OTHER TF	NR OTHER TF	ALL FUNDS	NR ALL FUNDS	
	1		EARLY LEARNING SERVICES												1
48220400	2	1100001	Startup (OPERATING)	97.00	600,735,813						852,774,110		1,453,509,923	-	2
48220400	3	3002210	Voluntary Prekindergarten Program - Adjust Workload		(426,009)								(426,009)	-	3
48220400	4	3002250	Voluntary Prekindergarten Class Assessments		224,247	224,247					304,673		528,920	224,247	4
48220400	5	3400090	Fund Shift Federal Grants Trust Fund to Child Care and Development Trust Fund - Add								1,095,264		1,095,264	-	5
48220400	6	3400100	Fund Shift Federal Grants Trust Fund to Child Care and Development Trust Fund - Deduct								(1,095,264)		(1,095,264)	-	6
48220400	7	6P00060	Partnership for School Readiness Appropriations Projects		1,170,000	1,170,000							1,170,000	1,170,000	7
48220400	8	7601200	Partnership for School Readiness - Home Instruction Program for Pre School Youngsters (HIPPY)								2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	8
48220400	9	7601500	Partnership for School Readiness - Help Me Grow Florida								2,891,043	2,891,043	2,891,043	2,891,043	9
48220400	10	7601600	School Readiness Gold Seal Differentials								70,000,000	70,000,000	70,000,000	70,000,000	10
48220400	11	7601700	Pay Differential Program								40,000,000	40,000,000	40,000,000	40,000,000	11
48220400	12	7601720	Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program Assessments		2,095,525	2,095,525							2,095,525	2,095,525	12
48220400	13	7601800	Early Learning Match Program								30,000,000		30,000,000	-	13
48220400	14	7602300	School Readiness Special Needs Differentials								2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	14
	15		EARLY LEARNING SERVICES	97.00	603,799,576	3,489,772	-	-	-	-	1,000,969,826	117,891,043	1,604,769,402	121,380,815	15
	16														16
	17		FEFP STATE GRANTS												17
48250300	18	1100001	Startup (OPERATING)		14,965,024,817		599,283,707		310,800,000				15,875,108,524	-	18
48250300	19	3000800	Class Size Reduction		(80,442,949)								(80,442,949)	-	19
48250300	20	3003600	Florida Education Finance Program		144,056,671								144,056,671	-	20
48250300	21	3409040	Fund Shift from General Revenue to State School Trust Fund - Delete		(233,800,000)	(206,600,000)							(233,800,000)	(206,600,000)	21
48250300	22	3409050	Fund Shift from General Revenue to State School Trust Fund - Add						233,800,000	206,600,000			233,800,000	206,600,000	22
48250300	23	3409100	Fund Shift from Educational Enhancement Trust Fund to General Revenue - Add		9,295,475	(26,052,641)							9,295,475	(26,052,641)	23
48250300	24	3409150	Fund Shift from Educational Enhancement Trust Fund to General Revenue - Delete				(9,295,475)	26,052,641					(9,295,475)	26,052,641	24
	25		FEFP STATE GRANTS	-	14,804,134,014	(232,652,641)	589,988,232	26,052,641	544,600,000	206,600,000	-	-	15,938,722,246	-	25
	26														26
	27		NON FEFP STATE GRANTS												27
48250400	28	1100001	Startup (OPERATING)		329,843,322						8,158,718		338,002,040	-	28
48250400	29	2401500	Replacement of Motor Vehicles		943,189	943,189							943,189	943,189	29
48250400	30	3000250	Teacher and School Administrator Death Benefits		4,200								4,200	-	30
48250400	31	3000430	Florida Civics Seal of Excellence		1,500,000	1,500,000							1,500,000	1,500,000	31
48250400	32	3000440	Civics Professional Learning		1,000,000	1,000,000							1,000,000	1,000,000	32
48250400	33	3000760	Seed School of Miami - Residential Charter School for At-Risk Children		742,378								742,378	-	33
48250400	34	3000965	Patriotic Displays in Classrooms		200,000	200,000							200,000	200,000	34
48250400	35	3006400	Adjustment to Workload		5,000,000	5,000,000							5,000,000	5,000,000	35
48250400	36	30066C0	Safe Schools Security Assessments		91,790								91,790	-	36
48250400	37	3006910	Teacher of the Year		30,000								30,000	-	37
48250400	38	3006960	Civics Literacy Captains and Coaches		2,000,000	2,000,000							2,000,000	2,000,000	38
48250400	39	3007660	Early Childhood Music Education - Workload		600,000	600,000							600,000	600,000	39
48250400	40	3008010	Regional Education Consortium Services		3,650,000								3,650,000	-	40
48250400	41	33H2500	Operational Efficiency		(2,000,000)								(2,000,000)	-	41

Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

		Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education															
BE CODE	Row#	ISSUE CODE	ISSUE TITLE	FTE	GR	NR GR	EETF	NR EETF	SSTF	NR SSTF	OTHER TF	NR OTHER TF	ALL FUNDS	NR ALL FUNDS	Row#		
48250400	42	3400130	Fund Shift to Nonrecurring - Add			135,000,000							135,000,000	135,000,000	42		
48250400	43	3400140	Fund Shift to Nonrecurring - Deduct			(135,000,000)							(135,000,000)		43		
48250400	44	4300050	Technology-Based School Safety			2,500,000							2,500,000	2,500,000	44		
48250400	45	43020C0	Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool			137,121							137,121		45		
48250400	46	4700410	The Florida Civics and Debate Initiative			1,500,000							1,500,000	1,500,000	46		
48250400	47	4908400	Rural School District Supplemental Services Grant Program			25,000,000							25,000,000		47		
48250400	48	5300100	Civics Literacy Captains and Coaches - Restore Nonrecurring			1,000,000							1,000,000	1,000,000	48		
48250400	49	5300460	Florida Civics Seal of Excellence - Restore Nonrecurring			3,500,000							3,500,000	3,500,000	49		
48250400	50	5300580	Civics Professional Learning - Restore Nonrecurring			500,000							500,000	500,000	50		
48250400	51	5300600	Jewish Day Schools Security Guard and Transportation Grant Program - Restore Nonrecurring			15,000,000							15,000,000	15,000,000	51		
48250400	52	5307000	Schools of Hope - Restore Nonrecurring			6,000,000							6,000,000	6,000,000	52		
48250400	53	6P00070	Mentoring Or Student Assistance Initiatives Appropriations Projects			1,432,820							1,432,820	1,432,820	53		
48250400	54	6P00075	Teacher Professional Development Appropriations Projects			1,850,000							1,850,000	1,850,000	54		
48250400	55	6P00080	Strategic Statewide Initiatives Appropriations Projects			6,123,651							6,123,651	6,123,651	55		
48250400	56	6P00085	School and Instructional Enhancements Appropriations Projects			20,358,153							20,358,153	20,358,153	56		
48250400	57	6P00090	Exceptional Education Appropriations Projects			2,340,000					166,000	166,000	2,506,000	2,506,000	57		
48250400	58	990R000	Education Capital Projects			35,041,813							35,041,813	35,041,813	58		
	59	NON FEPP STATE GRANTS			-	465,888,437	243,389,626	-	-	-	-	8,324,718	166,000	474,213,155	243,555,626	59	
	60															60	
	61	FEDERAL GRANTS K12														61	
48250500	62	1100001	Startup (OPERATING)								2,555,830,704		2,555,830,704		-	62	
	63	FEDERAL GRANTS K12			-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,555,830,704	-	2,555,830,704		63	
	64															64	
	65	PGM: ED MEDIA & TECH SERV														65	
48250600	66	1100001	Startup (OPERATING)			5,293,345							5,293,345		-	66	
48250600	67	3002310	Florida Channel Year Round Coverage			100,000							100,000		-	67	
48250600	68	4000015	Florida Public Radio Emergency Network Storm Center			350,000							350,000		350,000	68	
	69	PGM: ED MEDIA & TECH SERV			-	5,743,345	350,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,743,345	350,000	69	
	70															70	
	71	STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION														71	
48998000	72	1100001	Startup (OPERATING)	914.00		153,438,022						154,826,381		308,264,403		-	72
48998000	73	2503080	Direct Billing for Administrative Hearings			(80,236)							(80,236)			-	73
48998000	74	30080C0	Transparency Tool			1,322,250							1,322,250		1,322,250	-	74
48998000	75	33H4000	Base Budget Reduction			(3,000,000)							(3,000,000)			-	75
48998000	76	3400510	Transfer the Teacher Certification Trust Fund to General Revenue - Deduct									(3,099,470)		(3,099,470)		-	76
48998000	77	3400710	Transfer the Teacher Certification Trust Fund to General Revenue - Add			3,099,470								3,099,470		-	77
48998000	78	3400820	Transfer Educational Certification Trust Fund to General Revenue - Deduct									(2,587,890)		(2,587,890)		-	78
48998000	79	3400830	Transfer Educational Certification Trust Fund to General Revenue - Add			2,587,890								2,587,890		-	79
48998000	80	3600PC0	Florida Planning, Accounting, and Ledger Management (PALM) Readiness			483,189								483,189		483,189	80

Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

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48998000	81	4000020	Florida Teacher Excellence Exam (FTEE)		628,928	628,928							628,928	628,928	81
48998000	82	53005C0	Restore Nonrecurring School Choice Web Applications and Database Update		845,250								845,250	-	82
48998000	83	53006C0	Collaborate Plan Align Motivate Share (CPALMS) System - Restore Nonrecurring		3,000,000								3,000,000	-	83
48998000	84	53007C0	Transparency Tool - Restore Nonrecurring		2,177,750	2,177,750							2,177,750	2,177,750	84
48998000	85	53010C0	Restore Nonrecurring School Choice Online Portal		1,800,000	1,800,000							1,800,000	1,800,000	85
86	STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION			914.00	166,302,513	6,412,117	-	-	-	-	149,139,021	-	315,441,534	6,412,117	86
87	Grand Total			1,011.00	16,045,867,885	20,988,874	589,988,232	26,052,641	544,600,000	206,600,000	3,714,264,269	118,057,043	20,894,720,386	371,698,558	87

Appropriation Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education Projects

Budget Entity	Appropriation Category	Project	Split	Operations	FCO	Total
EARLY LEARNING SERVICES	G/A-PRTNSHIP/SCHOOL READ			1,170,000	235,000	1,405,000
		Childcare Network Educator Tool Kits for Florida's Military Kids (SF 3150)	No	60,000	0	60,000
		ECS4Kids Early Learning Center (SF 3374)	Yes	15,000	235,000	250,000
		Florida Early Learning Corps (SF 1134)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Preschool Emergency Alert Response System (PEARLS) (SF 1035)	No	395,000	0	395,000
		Seminole County Public Schools' Center for Early Learning (SF 2725)	No	350,000	0	350,000
EARLY LEARNING SERVICES Total				1,170,000	235,000	1,405,000
STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP	G/A-MENTORING/STUDENT INIT			1,432,820	0	1,432,820
		Ladies Learning to Lead (SF 2908)	No	250,000	0	250,000
		Overtown Youth Center – College and Career Readiness (SF 1043)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Sowing SEEDS Project (SF 2828)	No	132,820	0	132,820
		YMCA State Alliance/ YMCA Reads (SF 2642)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Youth Matter Mentorship Program (SF 2199)	No	350,000	0	350,000
	TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEV			1,850,000	0	1,850,000
		Florida Rural Digital Literacy Program (FRDLP) (SF 1336)	No	1,500,000	0	1,500,000
		Uplifting School Mental Health Support across the State of Florida (SF 1981)	No	350,000	0	350,000
	G/A-STRAT STWD INITIATIVES			6,123,651	0	6,123,651
		All Pro Dad/iMOM Fatherhood Literacy and Family Engagement Campaign (SF 1427)	No	1,300,000	0	1,300,000
		American History Live (SF 3098)	No	120,000	0	120,000
		Big Brothers Big Sisters Bigs Inspiring Scholastic Success (BISS) Project (SF 3236)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Defibrillate Manatee CPR in Schools Implementation (SF 1290)	No	403,651	0	403,651
		Florida Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs - Workforce Development Programs (SF 1375)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Florida Arts and Tourism Economic Development Initiative (SF 3687)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Florida Debate Initiative (SF 1588)	No	2,400,000	0	2,400,000
		Learning Blade - STEM, Computer Science and CTE Career Awareness for Middle Schools (SF 2250)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Mobile Museums of Tolerance - Florida (SF 1220)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Securing the Continuation of the State Science & Engineering Fair of Florida: Project Year 4 of 5 (SF 2307)	No	150,000	0	150,000
	G/A-SCHOOL/INSTRUCT ENHANC			20,358,153	3,921,697	24,279,850
		Afterschool Programing for Franklin County (SF 1485)	No	107,240	0	107,240
		Agricultural Technology & Workforce Education Initiative (SF 3279)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Applied Water Resource Technology Career Training Program (SF 3536)	No	775,000	0	775,000
		ARK Innovation Center at Pinellas County Schools (SF 2506)	Yes	350,000	0	350,000
		Bay District Schools - Deane Bozeman School Agriculture Center (SF 3107)	Yes	50,000	200,000	250,000
		Boca Raton High School Robotics Lab and Teams Expansion (SF 3388)	Yes	350,000	0	350,000
		Breakthrough Miami Inc (SF 1990)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Career Pathways - Building Florida's Workforce (SF 3189)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Cathedral Arts Project Education Programs (SF 2691)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Charlie Ward Champions Ranch Phase 1A: Multi-Sport Field, Cafe/Program Building & Programs (SF 1558)	Yes	300,000	666,697	966,697
		Clay County District Schools: Expansion of Workforce Development (SF 2953)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Closing Florida's Reading Gap: Building the Workforce of Tomorrow Through Early Literacy (SF 1282)	No	350,000	0	350,000

Appropriation Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education Projects

STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP	G/A-SCHOOL/INSTRUCT ENHANC	Colonial High School Flight Academy FAA Approved Simulator (SF 2171)	No	99,000	0	99,000
		Crestview Robotics and STEM Hub (CRASH) --- STEM Expansion and Workforce Pipeline (SF 3454)	No	250,000	0	250,000
		Empowered of Central Florida expansion of the Rock Program Into Levy, Citrus & Sumter (SF 1703)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Hands of Mercy Everywhere Teen Moms and At-Risk Youth Vocational Training (SF 1341)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		HAPCO Music & Culinary Education Program (SF 2769)	No	200,000	0	200,000
		High School Internship Program in Integrated Mathematical Oncology (SF 2865)	No	100,000	0	100,000
		inSIGHT Through Education Traveling Holocaust Exhibit (SF 1120)	No	165,000	0	165,000
		Jacksonville Arts & Music School Inc. (JAMS): WAL (What A Leader Training Program) (SF 2669)	Yes	200,000	150,000	350,000
		Jewish Day School Student Transportation Safety Initiative (SF 2127)	No	3,500,000	0	3,500,000
		K12 Student Engagement at the Kennedy Space Center (SF 2006)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Links to Success (SF 3539)	Yes	585,000	115,000	700,000
		Miami-Dade County Public Schools SpaceHUB @ Booker T. Washington High School (SF 3646)	Yes	220,000	130,000	350,000
		Miami-Dade County Public Schools SpaceHUB @ Hialeah-Miami Lakes Senior High School (SF 2952)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		National Flight Academy (SF 3455)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Nicklaus Children's Student-Athlete EKG Screening Program (SF 1151)	No	500,000	0	500,000
		Okaloosa County Schools Classroom Technology (SF 3242)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Osceola County School District 24/7 Security Operations Center (SF 1612)	Yes	350,000	0	350,000
		Pasco High School Athletic Complex (SF 3418)	Yes	200,000	2,550,000	2,750,000
		Pasco Schools STEM Career Pathways Pilot (SF 3272)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Pinellas County: Expanding Access to Youth Athletics and Water Safety (SF 1792)	No	880,000	0	880,000
		Planned to A.T. Financial Literacy Curriculum Expansion in Duval County Public Schools (SF 2701)	No	100,000	0	100,000
		Project MPACT (Making Priorities Align for Community Transformation) (SF 2758)	No	125,000	0	125,000
		Putnam County School District- Engineering Pathways and Aviation Maintenance (SF 2583)	Yes	350,000	0	350,000
		Soaring Forward: Soar in 4 Lab Expansion (Manatee) (SF 1036)	Yes	250,000	100,000	350,000
		South Florida Trauma Response, Crisis, and Resilience Program (SF 2550)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		State Academic Tournament (SF 2322)	No	250,000	0	250,000
		StrongHer Mind, StrongHer Future (SF 2782)	No	55,000	0	55,000
		The Busch Wildlife Sanctuary Environmental Education Program (SF 2018)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		The Dali: Expanding Education and Outreach (SF 2862)	No	500,000	0	500,000
		The Florida Talent Pipeline: Connecting Classrooms to Careers (SF 2839)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		The Last Ones of Auschwitz Teaching Through Testimony (Book Program) (SF 2723)	No	487,500	0	487,500
		The Shul of Bal Harbour Family Initiative: Jewish Mothers & Babies of South Florida (SF 2638)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Victory High Schools (SF 3742)	No	300,000	0	300,000
		West Technical Education Center Glades Workforce Expansion (SF 1083)	Yes	350,000	0	350,000
		WOFT - Teacher Safety Training Program (SF 1890)	No	950,000	0	950,000
		Young Musicians Unite: Student Retention and Engagement Initiative (SF 1128)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Young Singers of the Palm Beaches Afterschool Music Program (SF 1691)	No	164,413	0	164,413
		Youth Summer, Camera, Action! (SF 3096)	Yes	140,000	10,000	150,000
		ZeroEyes AI Firearm Detection Franklin County (SF 1444)	No	15,000	0	15,000
		ZeroEyes AI Firearm Detection Miami-Dade (SF 1403)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		ZeroEyes AI Gun Detection Technology - Hernando (SF 3648)	No	240,000	0	240,000
		ZeroEyes AI Gun Detection Technology Seminole County (SF 1917)	No	250,000	0	250,000
	G/A-EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION			2,340,000	0	2,340,000
		Bridging the Gap: Therapeutic Education with the No Limits Method (SF 3301)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Live with LEV Beyond the Bell (SF 1797)	No	90,000	0	90,000

Appropriation Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education Projects

STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP	G/A-EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION	Miami Lighthouse Academy, LLC (SF 1630)	No	200,000	0	200,000
		Personalized Learning Initiative for K-12 Education (SF 3240)	No	350,000	0	350,000
		Specialized Education Services for Okaloosa County (SF 3456)	Yes	350,000	0	350,000
		The Family Cafe (SF 1028)	No	1,000,000	0	1,000,000
	PUBLIC SCHOOL SPECIAL PROJ			0	2,350,000	2,350,000
		Academy at the Farm Middle School (SF 3129)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Jacksonville Classical Academy Soccer / Football Field (SF 2597)	No	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
	FACIL REPAIRS/MAINT/CONST			0	3,535,116	3,535,116
		Achievement Centers: Safe and Secure Learning Environments (non-profit) (SF 1113)	No	0	121,116	121,116
		Boys & Girls Club & Teen Workforce Readiness Center of West Palm Beach (SF 1690)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Lucie County Lincoln Park Clubhouse (SF 1994)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Branches Allapattah (SF 1063)	No	0	500,000	500,000
		Carol Boies Teen Center/Facility Improvements (SF 1143)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Chi Chi Rodriguez Youth Foundation - Chi Chi Academy Upgrade & Expansion (SF 2476)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Holy Trinity Episcopal School (HTES) Expansion Project (SF 1889)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Immersive Holocaust Survivor Testimony Theater (SF 3184)	No	0	250,000	250,000
		Junior Achievement of North Florida Experiential Learning Center (SF 2813)	No	0	350,000	350,000
		Private School Safety Compliance Project (SF 2007)	No	0	214,000	214,000
		The Children's Complex Roof Replacement (SF 1217)	No	0	350,000	350,000
STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP Total				32,104,624	9,806,813	41,911,437
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY SERVICES	G/A-PUBLIC BROADCASTING			350,000	0	350,000
		University of Florida, Florida Public Radio Emergency Network (FPREN) Storm Center (SF 2817)	No	350,000	0	350,000
EDUCATIONAL MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY SERVICES Total				350,000	0	350,000
Grand Total				33,624,624	10,041,813	43,666,437

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 Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

BILL: CS/SB 1062

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee and Senator Brodeur and others

SUBJECT: Speech and Debate Education

DATE: February 17, 2026

REVISED: _____

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

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 1062 creates the “Florida Speech and Debate Education Act” to:

- Designate 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 while allowing participation in outside organizations.
- Require the FDI to establish and operate a charter school with specific emphasis on speech and debate.
- Create the Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program with the Department of Education (DOE) for one year.
- Require the DOE to collaborate with the FDI to establish regional traveling debate teams and outlines requirements for teams and expenditures.
- Provide annual reporting requirements for district school boards regarding speech and debate competitions.
- Add an additional one-half credit in speech and debate as a graduation requirement for a standard high school diploma beginning in 2028-2029.
- Create the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.
- Designate February 1 through 7 as “Florida Speech and Debate Week” and describes the purposes of the week.
- Allow a certified teacher to earn an endorsement in speech and debate.

- Require the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation and provides requirements for the institute.
- Require the development of undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates and micro-credentials in speech and debate education.
- Require the DOE to approve specific speech and debate courses for inclusion in dual enrollment programs.

The bill appropriates \$5.6 million from the General Revenue Fund to implement these provisions in Fiscal Year 2026-2027 and \$7.74 million from the General Revenue Fund in Fiscal Year 2027-2028 for the required charter school. **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.

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!

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.¹

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.

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.²

¹ Learning Leaders, *The History of Debate*, <https://www.learningleaders.com/insights/the-history-of-debate-from-ancient-greece-to-remote-learning> (last visited Feb 5, 2026).

² 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 Feb. 5, 2026).

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.³
- 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. territories following the Mexican War and would have a profound effect on the future of the United States.⁴
- 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.⁵

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.⁶ The association reported 200 Florida high school members with 10,344 students participating.⁷

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:

- 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

³ 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 Feb. 5, 2026).

⁴ Britannica, *Lincoln-Douglas debates*, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Lincoln-Douglas-debates> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

⁵ Britannica, *The Kennedy-Nixon debates*, <https://www.britannica.com/art/television-in-the-United-States/The-Kennedy-Nixon-debates> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

⁶ National Speech & Debate Association, *Membership at a Glance*, <https://www.speechanddebate.org/membership-database/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

⁷ Email, National Speech & Debate Association (Jan. 21, 2026) (on file with the Senate Committee on Pre-K-12 Education).

- Turning Tides (a partnership program to empower youth in the juvenile justice system).⁸

The program is funded with a specific appropriation in the Florida budget of \$2.4 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year.⁹

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.¹⁰ In 2020 the Governor 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 Foundation¹¹ committed \$5 million over a three-year period towards the initiative with the following goals:

- 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.¹²

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.¹³

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.¹⁴ Florida Law designates the following example observances:

⁸ Florida Debate Initiative, *Programs*, <https://www.floridadebate.org/programs> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

⁹ Specific Appropriation 106, Ch. 2025-198, Laws of Fla.

¹⁰ Executive Order 19-32 (2019)

¹¹ The Marcus Foundation, *About the Marcus Foundation*, <https://marcusfoundation.org/about-the-marcus-foundation/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

¹² 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> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

¹³ Florida Civics & Debate Initiative Handbook, at 5 (2025-2026), *available at* https://5400622c-3214-4001-887b-8a6328c71885.filesusr.com/ugd/ab06c2_3136dad194a64b39abf6fedbc941d5a2.pdf (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

¹⁴ Chapter 683, F.S.

- American Founders Month;¹⁵
- Holocaust Remembrance Day;¹⁶
- Responsible Fatherhood Month;¹⁷
- Foster Family Appreciation Week;¹⁸ and
- Drowsy Driving Prevention Week (Ronshay Dugans Act).¹⁹

Florida Educator Certificate Endorsements

Florida law allows the Department of Education (DOE) to adopt endorsements as add-ons to an existing educator certificate.²⁰ 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.²¹

Florida's Charter Schools

Charter schools are tuition-free public schools created through an agreement or “charter” that provides flexibility relative to regulations created for traditional public schools. During the 2025-2026 school year there are 408,481 students²² enrolled at 640 charter schools in 47 counties.²³

Charter schools are open to all students residing within the district; however, charter schools are allowed to target students within specific age groups or grade levels, students considered at-risk of dropping out or failing, students wishing to enroll in a charter school-in-the-workplace or charter school-in-a-municipality, students residing within a reasonable distance of the school,

¹⁵ Section 683.1455, F.S.

¹⁶ Section 683.196, F.S.

¹⁷ Section 683.3341, F.S.

¹⁸ Section 683.333, F.S.

¹⁹ Section 683.332, F.S.

²⁰ Section 1012.586, F.S.

²¹ Florida Department of Education, *Educator Certification-Certificate Subjects*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/certificate-subjects/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

²² Florida Department of Education, *Student Enrollment Counts and Indicator Percentages* (Indicator: Charter Schools; 2025-2026, Survey 2, Primary Service Type : K-12 General Education), available at <https://edudata.fldoe.org/AdvancedReports.html> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

²³ Florida Department of Education, *Number of Charter Public Elementary, Middle, High and Combination Schools (K-12 General Education) by District 2025-26 as of October 29th, 2025*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/file/7588/CharterGeneralEd2526.xlsx> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

students who meet reasonable academic, artistic or other eligibility standards established by the charter school, or students articulating from one charter school to another.²⁴

Charter schools are created when an individual, a group of parents or teachers, a business, a municipality, or a legal entity applies to the sponsoring entity (a school district, a state university or Florida College System institution); the sponsoring entity approves the application; the applicants form a governing board that negotiates a contract with the sponsoring entity; and the applicants and sponsor agree upon a charter or contract. The negotiated contract outlines the expectations of both parties regarding the school's academic and financial performance.

A charter school must be organized as, or be operated by, a nonprofit organization. The charter school may serve at-risk students, or offer a specialized curriculum or core academic program, provide early intervention programs, or serve exceptional education students.

All charter applicants must prepare and submit an application on a model application form prepared by the Department of Education, which:

- Demonstrates how the school will implement the guiding principles.
- Provides a detailed curriculum.
- Contains goals and objectives for improving student learning.
- Describes the separate reading curricula and differentiated strategies.
- Contains an annual financial plan.²⁵

Florida Graduation Requirements

Florida's graduation requirements for receiving a standard high school diploma are outlined in statute.²⁶ Florida students entering grade nine may choose from one of five options to earn a standard diploma. The five options are:

- 24-credit program.
- 18-credit program, Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning or ACCEL.
- A Career and Technical Education (CTE) Pathway.
- An International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum.
- An Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum.²⁷

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).
- Four credits in mathematics.
- Three credits in science.
- Three credits in social studies.
- One credit in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or career and technical education.

²⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Frequently Asked Questions (Charter Schools)*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/charter-schools/charter-school-faqs.shtml> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026). See also s. 1002.33(10), F.S.

²⁵ Section 1002.33(6), F.S.

²⁶ Sections 1003.4282, and 1002.3105, F.S.

²⁷ Florida Department of Education, Student Support Services, *Graduation Requirements*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/k-12-public-schools/sss/graduation-requirements/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

- One credit in physical education, which includes the integration of health.²⁸
- Seven and one-half credits in electives.
- One-half credit in personal financial literacy.²⁹

Florida Virtual School

The Florida Virtual School (FLVS)³⁰ was established in 1997 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.³¹

Features of the FLVS include the following:

- 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.
- Students attending a private school can enroll in FLVS Flex courses when their school affiliates with FLVS.³²

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill creates the "Florida Speech and Debate Education Act," and creates s. 1000.09, F.S., to provide the following legislative findings:

- 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.

²⁸ Section 1003.4282(3)(f), F.S.

²⁹ Section 1003.4282(3), F.S.

³⁰ Section 1002.37, F.S.

³¹ Florida Department of Education, *Florida Virtual School*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/florida-virtual-school/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

³² Florida Department of Education, *General Information About Florida Virtual School*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/school-choice/virtual-edu/florida-virtual-school/general-info-flvs.stml> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

- 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, however districts, schools, and students are permitted to participate in speech activities outside of the FDI. The FDI 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.

The FDI is given specific authorization to establish and maintain partnerships with school districts, charter schools, state agencies, postsecondary institutions, nonprofit organizations, private entities, and national or international organizations to achieve its goals.

Additionally, the FDI is required to implement and maintain a comprehensive suite of statewide programs, including each 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.
- 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.
- Memberships, affiliations, and participation fees related to civics education, speech, debate, leadership, and academic competition programs.

The FDI is required to establish and operate a charter school named the Florida Speech and Debate Academy. The charter school is required to provide a rigorous academic program

emphasizing civics education, leadership development, speech, debate, rhetoric, and public service.

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 that includes at least one member or designee from the FDI to establish procedures to nominate and select individuals to be featured in the Hall of Fame.

The bill creates s. 683.221, F.S., to designate that February 1 through 7 of each year 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.
- Coordinate with the FDI through a formal partnership for activities related to curriculum, instructional resources, competition preparation and state-wide access to speech and debate programming.

The bill modifies s. 1003.4282, F.S., to require one-half credit in speech, debate, argumentation or rhetoric as a requirement to earn a standard high school diploma. The requirement affects students entering grade 9 in the 2028-2029 school-year and thereafter.

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.³³

The bill takes effect January 1, 2027.

³³ Section 1007.271(1), F.S.

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 provides an appropriation of \$5.6 million for the 2026-2027 fiscal year as follows:

- \$2.4 million in recurring funds 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 from the General Revenue Fund to support FDI's responsibilities for regional traveling debate teams to support their training, coaching, lodging, and competition costs.
- \$1 million in nonrecurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Education for the Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program.
- \$700,000 in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to school districts for travel costs to attend speech and debate competitions.
- \$500,000 in recurring funds 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 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Virtual School to support the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation.

The bill provides an appropriation of \$7.74 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund in Fiscal Year 2027-2028 as follows:

- \$3.8 million to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy for teachers and teacher assistants.
- \$1.5 million to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy for other instructional personnel.
- \$708,000 to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy for administration.
- \$991,000 to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy for the operation and maintenance of facilities.
- \$256,000 to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy for materials, supplies, and capital outlay.
- \$485,000 to the Florida Speech and Debate Academy for food service.

There is an indeterminate fiscal impact to the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to develop undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-credentials in speech and debate education, coaching and tournament operations.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1001.42, 1002.37 and 1003.4282.

This bill creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 265.0042, 683.221, 1000.09, and 1004.0983.

The bill creates two undesignated sections of Florida Law.

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 on January 27, 2026:

The committee substitute maintains the provisions of the original bill but adds the following:

- Florida Debate Initiative (FDI) responsibilities and uses of funding.

- An authorization for school districts, schools and students to participate in events and organizations outside of the FDI.
- Establishment of the Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program for one year.
- An authorization for FDI to establish a charter school.
- The designation of February 1 through 7 as “Florida Speech and Debate Week” replacing a week in November.
- Requirements for the Florida Virtual School to coordinate with FDI on specific activities through a formal partnership.
- An additional requirement for earning a standard high school diploma for students entering grade 9 beginning in the 2028-2029 school year.
- An additional \$1 million in funding in 2026-2027 for the Debate Across the Curriculum pilot program.
- \$7.74 million in funding in 2027-2028 specifically for the Florida Speech and Debate Academy.

B. Amendments:

None.



543898

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause
and insert:

Section 1. Section 683.221, Florida Statutes, is created to
read:

683.221 Florida Speech and Debate Week.—

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

(2) Florida Speech and Debate Week shall be observed for



543898

all of the following purposes:

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

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

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

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

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

Section 2. Section 1000.09, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

1000.09 Competitive speech and debate.—

(1) CREATION, DESIGNATION, AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—In alignment with, and in support of, the Department of Education and the program it operates called the Florida Civics and Debate Initiative (FCDI), the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) is established as this state's nonprofit statewide speech and debate organization that manages, develops, and expands K-20 civics, speech, and debate programs.

(a)1. FDI shall support and expand access to statewide civic literacy and speech and debate programs by undertaking the following, which list is not exhaustive:

a. Educating and training coaches and students.

b. Training judges and volunteers.

c. Promoting educational competition opportunities.

d. Leading training and leadership development experiences.

e. Establishing competition standards.



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f. Maintaining statewide data reporting.

g. Assisting the FCDI, upon its request, in civics-focused education, training, and programming initiatives.

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

(b) FDI may establish and maintain partnerships with school districts, charter schools, state agencies, postsecondary institutions, nonprofit organizations, private entities, and national or international organizations to achieve the purposes of this section, including collaborative efforts with FCDI. In such collaboration:

1. FCDI and FDI shall jointly host and operate the annual National Civics and Debate Championship known as The Great Debate, a nationally recognized synthesis of civics education and debate competition that challenges students' civic knowledge, debate skills, and endurance through multi-day, multi-event competition.

2. FCDI shall lead specific civics immersion events, including FCDI Day at the Capitol and the Great American Civics Challenge, which includes the Ronald Reagan Presidential Debates and the We The People Civics Showdown.

3. FDI shall provide logistical support, debate tournament operations support, and tournament coordination support for The Great Debate and other collaborative initiatives to advance statewide speech and debate opportunities.

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



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

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

(c) Tournament operations, including logistics, staff, judge training, technology, awards, and regional team operations.

(d) Travel, lodging, training, and transportation for participants, including local, state, and national travel to competitions hosted by the FDI, FCDI, or other civics, speech, and debate organizations.

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

(f) Memberships, affiliations, and participation fees related to civics education, speech, debate, leadership, and academic competition programs, provided such memberships, affiliations, and participation advance the purposes of this section.

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

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

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

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



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(d) A categorized summary of all expenditures.

No later than November 1 of each year, the FCDI shall provide the FDI with the FCDI's most current reporting and data regarding paragraphs (a)-(d) above in order for the FDI to accurately report on the outcomes and expenditures related to any joint programming.

Section 3. For the 2026-2027 fiscal year, the sum of \$2.4 million in recurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to support the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc.'s responsibilities assigned under s. 1000.09(1), Florida Statutes, including administrative, programmatic, and tournament operation duties.

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

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

Delete everything before the enacting clause
and insert:

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to speech and debate education;
creating s. 683.221, F.S.; designating Florida Speech
and Debate Week annually in February; providing
purposes for the annual observance; authorizing
specified entities to observe Florida Speech and
Debate Week; creating s. 1000.09, F.S.; establishing
the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as a
statewide speech and debate organization that performs
certain functions in support of the Florida Civics and



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127 Debate Initiative (FCDI) in the Department of
128 Education; providing the duties of FDI; providing
129 construction; authorizing FDI to establish and
130 maintain certain partnerships; specifying activities
131 for FDI and FCDI; providing authorized uses of funds
132 for FDI; requiring FDI to publish online and submit
133 annually by a specified date to the Department of
134 Education a specified report; specifying requirements
135 for the report; requiring FCDI to provide certain data
136 to FDI by a specified date; providing an
137 appropriation; providing an effective date.

By the Committee on Education Pre-K - 12; and Senators Brodeur, Burgess, and Gaetz

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to speech and debate education; 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 on a specified level in the Capitol Building; requiring the department to consult with the Florida Education Foundation and the Commissioner of Education for a certain purpose; providing the duties of the hall of fame; requiring the hall of fame to convene a committee for specified purposes; requiring the committee to include at least one member or his or her designee from the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc; creating s. 683.221, F.S.; designating Florida Speech and Debate Week annually in February; 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; providing construction; authorizing FDI to establish and maintain certain partnerships; requiring FDI to implement and maintain specified statewide programs; providing authorized uses of funds for FDI; requiring FDI to publish online and submit annually by a specified date to the Department of Education a specified report; specifying requirements for the report; authorizing a certified teacher to

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30 earn an endorsement in speech and debate; specifying
31 requirements for the endorsement; requiring the
32 department to collaborate with FDI to establish
33 regional traveling debate teams; requiring that teams
34 be accessible to students at specified schools;
35 requiring teams to provide certain training and
36 coaching; providing for coverage of travel costs;
37 authorizing a school district to use school buses to
38 transport students to and from speech and debate
39 competitions; creating the Debate Across the
40 Curriculum Pilot Program within the department, in
41 collaboration with FDI; providing the purpose of the
42 pilot program; requiring the pilot program to include
43 certain elements; providing an appropriation;
44 providing for expiration of the pilot program;
45 requiring FDI to establish and operate a charter
46 school for a certain purpose; amending s. 1001.42,
47 F.S.; requiring each district school board to annually
48 publish online and submit to the department a report;
49 specifying requirements for the report; amending s.
50 1002.37, F.S.; requiring the Florida Virtual School to
51 establish the Institute for Speech and Debate
52 Innovation; providing duties of the institute;
53 requiring the institute to enter into a formal
54 partnership with FDI; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.;
55 requiring that students complete at least one-half
56 credit in speech and debate as a requirement for high
57 school graduation, beginning in a specified school
58 year; creating s. 1004.0983, F.S.; requiring the Board

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of Governors of the State University System and the State Board of Education to develop specified undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-credentials; authorizing the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education to collaborate with FDI to develop coursework; requiring the department to approve specified dual enrollment courses; providing appropriations; providing an effective date.

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

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

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

265.0042 Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.—

(1) There is created the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame. The Department of Management Services shall set aside an area on the plaza level of the Capitol Building and shall consult with the Florida Education Foundation and the Commissioner of Education regarding the design and theme of the area.

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

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

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

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

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

94 Section 3. Section 683.221, Florida Statutes, is created to
95 read:

96 683.221 Florida Speech and Debate Week.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

111 Section 4. Section 1000.09, Florida Statutes, is created to
112 read:

113 1000.09 Competitive speech and debate.—

114 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—

115 (a) The Legislature finds that speech and debate
116 significantly improve literacy, critical thinking, research

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117 ability, civic knowledge, and leadership for students of this
118 state.

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

125 (c) The Legislature further finds that the Florida Debate
126 Initiative, Inc., (FDI) has demonstrated statewide effectiveness
127 and is uniquely positioned to ensure continuity, equitable
128 access, quality programming, tournament infrastructure, and
129 instructional rigor. It is the intent of the Legislature to
130 establish a comprehensive statewide infrastructure, under FDI's
131 direction, that expands, supports, and elevates K-20 speech and
132 debate education.

133 (2) CREATION, DESIGNATION, AND RESPONSIBILITIES.—FDI is
134 designated as the official statewide speech and debate
135 organization responsible for managing, developing, and expanding
136 K-20 speech and debate programs.

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

138 a. Manage the official Florida Speech and Debate League and
139 its regional teams.

140 b. Establish statewide competition rules, ballots, judging
141 standards, and tournament calendars.

142 c. Operate or supervise district, regional, and state
143 tournaments.

144 d. Train and certify coaches, judges, volunteers, and
145 tournament staff.

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146 e. Provide statewide programmatic support, including
147 student programs, educator training, and public service
148 initiatives.

149 f. Maintain statewide data reporting and annual
150 accountability.

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

153 2. This paragraph may not be construed to prohibit schools,
154 districts, or students from participating in speech and debate
155 activities, leagues, or competitions not operated or supervised
156 by FDI.

157 (b) FDI may establish and maintain partnerships with school
158 districts, charter schools, state agencies, postsecondary
159 institutions, nonprofit organizations, private entities, and
160 national or international organizations to achieve the purposes
161 of this section.

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

165 (a) Student speech and debate programs.

166 (b) Student leadership and service programs.

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

168 (d) Educator training.

169 (e) Postsecondary and workforce internships.

170 (f) Operation of speech and debate tournaments.

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

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

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

178 (c) Tournament operations, including logistics, staff,
179 judge training, technology, awards, and regional team
180 operations.

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

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

185 (f) Memberships, affiliations, and participation fees
186 related to civics education, speech, debate, leadership, and
187 academic competition programs, provided such memberships advance
188 the purposes of this section.

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

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

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

197 (c) Competitive and educational outcomes of statewide
198 programs.

199 (d) A categorized summary of all expenditures.

200 (6) ENDORSEMENT IN SPEECH AND DEBATE.—Pursuant to s.
201 1012.56 and State Board of Education rule, a certified teacher
202 may earn an endorsement in speech and debate if he or she
203 demonstrates all of the following:

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

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

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

211 (7) REGIONAL TRAVELING DEBATE TEAMS.—The department shall
212 collaborate with FDI to establish regional traveling debate
213 teams to represent this state in national competitions. Teams
214 must be accessible to students at Title I and rural schools.
215 Teams must provide competitive training and coaching for speech
216 and debate.

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

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

221 (8) DEBATE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM PILOT PROGRAM.—

222 (a) The Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program is
223 created within the department, in collaboration with FDI. The
224 purpose of the pilot program is to develop and integrate
225 structured debate and argumentation into core academic subjects.
226 The pilot program must include curriculum development,
227 professional development, instructional materials, and program
228 evaluation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Student participation rates.

(c) Competitive performance and public service engagement.

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

(e) Resources needed to expand the program.

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

1002.37 The Florida Virtual School.—

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

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

(b) Create artificial intelligence-based coaching tools,

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digital judging tutorials, and analytics dashboards.

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

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

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

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

1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

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

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

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

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

(1) Coursework may include all of the following:

(a) Rhetoric, argumentation, and communication theory.

(b) Coaching methods and competitive event instruction.

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291 (c) Tournament management and adjudication.

292 (d) Public speaking pedagogy.

293 (2) The Board of Governors and the State Board of Education
294 may collaborate with the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., to
295 develop coursework.

296 Section 9. The Department of Education shall approve
297 courses developed pursuant to s. 1004.0983, Florida Statutes,
298 for inclusion in dual enrollment programs under s. 1007.271,
299 Florida Statutes.

300 Section 10. (1) For the 2026-2027 fiscal year:

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

306 (b) The sum of \$250,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
307 from the General Revenue Fund to support the Florida Debate
308 Initiative, Inc.'s responsibilities assigned under s.
309 1000.09(7), Florida Statutes, including for regional traveling
310 debate teams to support their training, coaching, lodging, and
311 competition costs.

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

316 (2) The sum of \$700,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
317 from the General Revenue Fund to school districts for travel
318 costs to attend speech and debate competitions pursuant to s.
319 1000.09, Florida Statutes.

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

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

329 (5) For the 2027-2028 fiscal year:

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

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

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

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

346 (e) The sum of \$256,000 in recurring funds is appropriated
347 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida Speech and Debate
348 Academy under s. 1000.09(9), Florida Statutes, for materials,

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349 supplies, and capital outlay.

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

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

S01062

GENERAL BILL/CS by ED; Brodeur; (CO-INTRODUCERS) Burgess; Gaetz; (Compare CS/H 01059) Speech and Debate Education; Citing this act as the "Florida Speech and Debate Education Act"; creating the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame; requiring the Department of Management Services to set aside an area on a specified level in the Capitol Building; designating Florida Speech and Debate Week annually in February; designating the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as the official statewide speech and debate organization; requiring the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation; providing duties of the institute, etc. APPROPRIATION: \$13,340,000. EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/01/2027.

01/29/26 S Now in Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education; CS by Education Pre-K - 12 read 1st time

02/13/26 S On Committee agenda-- Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education, 02/18/26, 8:30 am, 37 Senate Building

H01059

GENERAL BILL/CS by SAS; Booth; (CO-SPONSORS) Bankson; Benarroch; Gerwig; López; J.; Tendrich; (Compare CS/S 01062)

Special Observances For Speech and Debate; Establishes Florida Speech & Debate Week in state. EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

02/12/26 H Now in Education & Employment Committee

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 Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

BILL: SB 1718

INTRODUCER: Senator Calatayud

SUBJECT: Educator Preparation and Certification

DATE: February 17, 2026

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Jahnke	Bouck	ED	Favorable
2.	Gray	Elwell	AED	Pre-meeting
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 a 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.

This bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on state revenues and expenditures. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

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

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

- Initial Teacher Preparation programs in public and private colleges and universities that require candidates to demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge² in one or more specific subject areas, mastery of general knowledge,³ 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.⁴

Educator Preparation Institute Participant Criteria

Each EPI participant must:

- 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.

¹ Section 1004.04, F.S. See Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026). See also Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

² Florida Department of Education, *Subject Area Knowledge*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/subject-area-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

³ Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/general-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

⁴ Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026). See also Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

- Achieve a passing score on the professional education competency examination,⁵ the General Knowledge Test, and the subject area examination for the subject area certification, as required by the State Board of Education (SBE) rule.⁶

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:

- 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;⁹
- 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.¹⁰

Temporary Educator Certificate

A temporary teaching certificate is valid for five school years and is nonrenewable.¹¹ the Department of Education (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:

- Meets the basic eligibility requirements for certification:¹³

⁵ Section 1012.56(7), 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.

⁶ Section 1004.85(3)(b), F.S.

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 Rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C.

¹⁰ Section 1012.56(2), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1012.56(7), F.S.

¹² Section 1012.56(1), F.S.

¹³ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

- 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.¹⁴

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 certification and demonstrates mastery of:

- General knowledge;
- Subject area knowledge; and
- Professional preparation and education competence.¹⁵

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 areas 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.¹⁶ The requirements for reinstatement may not be satisfied by subject area exams or college credits completed for issuance of the expired certificate.¹⁷

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. The Center works in collaboration with the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at the University of South Florida. Among other functions, the center is authorized to submit a professional learning system for approval under the School Community Professional Learning Act. 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.¹⁸

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill 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.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Section 1012.56(2), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1012.585(5)(b), F.S. *See also* Section 1012.585(3)(a) and (e), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1012.585, F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1012.981, 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.¹⁹ 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,²⁰ 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.

¹⁹ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

²⁰ *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.

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:

The bill provides a positive fiscal impact to the individuals that would otherwise have to pay to take a fee-based exam in order to reinstate certifications, such as the Florida subject area or standard examinations.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill has a negative fiscal impact to the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence as the bill requires the center to allow individuals to utilize their system at no cost and to submit their in-service hours to the Department.

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on the DOE, as it is unclear whether streamlining the reinstatement of certifications may provide an increase in the number of certifications issued by the Department.

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.

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

By Senator Calatayud

38-01409E-26

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A bill to be entitled

An act relating to educator preparation and certification; amending s. 1004.85, F.S.; authorizing an educator preparation institute to allow certain program participants to enroll in introductory coursework; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; revising the criteria for the award of a temporary educator certification to include certain persons with expired professional certificates; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.; requiring that subject area coverages and endorsements for a certificateholder be reinstated with the certificateholder's professional certificate; revising requirements for reinstatement of a professional certificate; providing that certain requirements for reinstatement of a professional certificate may not be satisfied using specific inservice points; amending s. 1012.981, F.S.; requiring the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence to collaborate with the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching for specified purposes; requiring, rather than authorizing, the center to submit a specified professional learning system for approval by the department; requiring the center to allow certain certified educators to use such professional learning system for specified purposes at no cost to the educator; requiring the center to submit inservice points for such educators to the department; requiring the center to provide information on certain school district professional learning systems to certain

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certified educators; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section 1004.85, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1004.85 Postsecondary educator preparation institutes.—

(3) Educator preparation institutes approved pursuant to this section may offer competency-based certification programs specifically designed for noneducation major baccalaureate degree holders to enable program participants to meet the educator certification requirements of s. 1012.56. An educator preparation institute choosing to offer a competency-based certification program pursuant to the provisions of this section must implement a program developed by the institute and approved by the department for this purpose. Approved programs shall be available for use by other approved educator preparation institutes.

(b) Each program participant must:

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

2. Demonstrate competency and participate in field

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

3. 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 and, except as provided in s. 1012.56(7)(a)3., achieving a passing score on the professional education competency examination, the basic skills examination, and the subject area examination for the subject area certification which is required by state board rule.

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

1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

(7) TYPES AND TERMS OF CERTIFICATION.—

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

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

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specialization in state board rule;

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

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

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

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At least 1 year before an individual's temporary certificate is set to expire, the department shall electronically notify the individual of the date on which his or her certificate will expire and provide a list of each method by which the qualifications for a professional certificate can be completed.

Section 3. Subsection (5) of section 1012.585, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1012.585 Process for renewal or reinstatement of professional certificates.—

(5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to allow the reinstatement of expired professional certificates, including each subject area coverage and endorsement held by the certificateholder at the time of the certificate's expiration. The department may reinstate an expired professional certificate if the certificateholder:

(a) Submits an application for reinstatement of the expired certificate.

(b) Completes the requirements in s. 1012.56(2)(a)-(f).

(c) ~~(b)~~ Documents completion of 6 college credits during the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the expired certificate, completion of 120 inservice points, or a combination thereof, in an area specified in paragraph (3)(a) to include the credit required under paragraph (3)(e).

~~(c) During the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the certificate, achieves a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination or, if a Florida subject area examination has not been developed, a standardized examination specified in state board rule for each subject to be shown on~~

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~~the reinstated certificate.~~

The requirements of this subsection may not be satisfied by ~~subject area examinations or~~ college credits or inservice points completed for issuance of the certificate that has expired.

Section 4. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 1012.981, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1012.981 The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence.—

(2) The center shall, in collaboration with the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Innovative Teaching within ~~and Learning at~~ the University of South Florida, do all of the following:

(a) Develop and deliver evidence-based professional learning opportunities aligned to the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices.

(b) Develop and deliver educator training programs pursuant to s. 1012.98 that integrate high-quality instructional materials included on the state-adopted instructional materials list under s. 1006.28, materials evaluated and identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(4), and materials developed by or under the direction of the department as provided in s. 1006.39. These programs must focus on the effective use of knowledge-based curricula, highlighting when and how to incorporate intervention materials, and emphasize the importance of background knowledge in building advanced reading comprehension grounded in the science of reading and critical thinking skills.

(c) Develop and design models of high-quality clinical experiences for aspiring teachers. These model experiences shall serve as a standard that institutions approved pursuant to ss.

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

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

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

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

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

(3) The center:

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

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

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

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

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

S01718

GENERAL BILL by Calatayud; (Identical CS/H 00561, Compare CS/S 07036)

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. EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

01/27/26 S Favorable by Education Pre-K - 12; YEAS 6 NAYS 0; Now in Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

02/13/26 S On Committee agenda-- Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education, 02/18/26, 8:30 am, 37 Senate Building

H00561

GENERAL BILL/CS by EEC; Gerwig; (CO-SPONSORS) Daniels; López; J.; Salzman; (Identical S 01718, Compare CS/S 07036)

Educator Preparation and Certification; Revises provisions relating to educator preparation institutes, award of temporary educator certifications, & reinstatement & renewal of professional educator certificates; & revises requirements for Florida Center for Teaching Excellence. EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

02/11/26 H Added to Second Reading Calendar

S07036

GENERAL BILL/CS by AED, ED; (Compare S 00320, CS/H 00561, S 00920, H 00963, CS/CS/CS/H 01071, S 01090, S 01340, S 01718)

Education; Removing certain schools from specified contract restrictions; providing additional criteria for award of a 15-year charter; authorizing a private school to purchase a supply of FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices, rather than epinephrine auto-injectors; requiring the Department of Children and Families to make a specified determination for child care providers; providing requirements for mathematics pathways established by a certain workgroup; requiring the Department of Education to develop applied algebra courses; revising the GATE Startup Grant Program, etc. EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

02/16/26 S Now in Rules

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 Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

BILL: SB 7038

INTRODUCER: Education Postsecondary Committee

SUBJECT: Education

DATE: February 17, 2026

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
		Bouck		HE Submitted as Comm. Bill/Fav
1.	Gray	Elwell	AED	Pre-meeting
2.			RC	

I. Summary:

SB 7038 modifies provisions related to public postsecondary education, workforce development, and related regulation, focusing on tuition and fee policies, consumer protections, career and technical education, student acceleration, and institutional operations. Specifically, the bill modifies the following:

- Relating to residency, tuition, and fee waivers, the bill:
 - Provides that an individual who qualifies as a resident for tuition purposes may not lose resident status solely due to incarceration in a state or federal correctional facility located in Florida.
 - Revises eligibility for the grandparent out-of-state fee waiver by limiting the waiver to full-time undergraduate students, removing the Classic Learning Test as a qualifying assessment, and delaying implementation until the 2026–2027 academic year.
 - Requires Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities to waive tuition and fees for active members of the Florida State Guard who enroll in up to six credit hours per academic term on a space-available basis, subject to approval by the Director of the Division of the State Guard.
- Relating to consumer protections and disability services, the bill:
 - Requires fee-based service providers serving individuals who are blind or visually impaired to disclose, in writing and in accessible formats upon request, whether equivalent or substantially similar services are available at no cost through the Division of Blind Services or another public agency.
 - Provides that failure to provide the required disclosure constitutes an unfair or deceptive trade practice.
 - Replaces the vocational rehabilitation service provider registration process with an application and approval framework, establishes minimum qualifications and annual approval requirements, and requires the development of an annual effectiveness report for approved providers.
- Relating to postsecondary program oversight and governance, the bill:

- Narrows the exemption from licensure and jurisdiction of the Commission for Independent Education by removing “course” from the exemption and clarifying that colleges or schools approved by another state agency solely to offer licensed programs do not qualify for the exemption.
- Authorizes the chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board to appoint a qualified designee to serve as a director of its direct-support organization and on the board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc.
- Relating to transfer pathways and student acceleration, the bill:
 - Reduces from 60 to 30 days the timeframe for FCS institutions and state universities to submit comments on proposed Specialized Associate in Arts Transfer degree programs.
 - Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms, including dual enrollment and advanced coursework.
 - Revises the dual enrollment program by limiting eligibility to Florida students, clarifying eligible postsecondary institutions, and removing statutory requirements related to grade point average (GPA) weighting while prohibiting discriminatory grading practices.
 - Expands reimbursement eligibility under the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program to include tuition and instructional materials costs for public school students enrolled at eligible independent postsecondary institutions during fall and spring terms.
- Relating to college readiness and developmental education, the bill:
 - Expands the use of SBE–approved alternative assessment methods for determining college readiness to include FCS institutions and school district career centers.
 - Revises readiness exemptions, assessment requirements, and developmental education protections, and applies developmental education requirements to school district career centers.
- Relating to workforce education and student financial incentives, the bill:
 - Removes geographic limitations on supplemental funding eligibility for regional and local demand certifications on the Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Industry Certification Funding List.
 - Modifies eligibility requirements for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars Award by reducing required postsecondary credit hours earned through CAPE certifications and adding a minimum weighted GPA requirement.
 - Allows eligible students to defer receipt of an initial Benacquisto Scholarship Program award for up to one year while retaining eligibility.
- Relating to funding models and institutional fiscal requirements, the bill:
 - Establishes an additional Florida Education and Finance Program (FEFP) funding incentive for student performance in the Florida Advanced Courses and Tests (FACT) College Algebra course, including associated teacher bonuses.
 - Revises the FCS Program Fund apportionment model to require recognition of a minimum funding level per full-time equivalent (FTE) student and additional economic factors, and standardizes institutional reserve thresholds.
 - Standardizes end-of-year carry-forward reserve requirements at 7 percent for all FCS institutions, revises reporting and notification requirements, and authorizes retention of excess reserves for future authorized expenditures.

This bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on state revenues and expenditures. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

The present situation for the relevant portions of the bill is discussed under the Effect of Proposed Changes of this bill analysis.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Residency Status for Tuition Purposes

Present Situation

Students must be classified as residents or nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in postsecondary educational programs offered by charter technical career centers, career centers operated by school districts, Florida College System (FCS) institutions, and state universities. Students pay differing tuition rates based on their status as residents or nonresidents of Florida.¹ A “resident for tuition purposes” means an admitted or currently enrolled student who meets the residency requirements in statute and rule or regulation and is therefore eligible to pay the resident tuition and fee rate.²

Specifically, to qualify as a resident for tuition purposes a person, or if that person is a dependent child, his or her parent or parents must have established legal residence in Florida and must have maintained legal residence for at least 12 consecutive months immediately prior to his or her initial enrollment in an institution of higher education.³

A person must provide proof that he or she should be classified as a resident for tuition purposes and may not receive the in-state tuition rate until clear and convincing evidence related to legal residence and its duration has been provided. Each institution of higher education must make a residency determination that is documented by the submission of written or electronic verification that includes two or more specified documents that:

- Must include at least one of the following (“Tier 1”):
 - A Florida voter’s registration card.
 - A Florida driver license.
 - A State of Florida identification card.
 - A Florida vehicle registration.
 - Proof of a permanent home in Florida which is occupied as a primary residence by the individual or by the individual’s parent if the individual is a dependent child.
 - Proof of a homestead exemption in Florida.
 - Transcripts from a Florida high school for multiple years if the Florida high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma was earned within the last 12 months.
 - Proof of permanent full-time employment in Florida for at least 30 hours per week for a 12-month period.

¹ Section 1009.21, F.S.

² Rule 6A-10.044, F.A.C. and Board of Governors Regulation 7.005.

³ Section 1009.21(2)(a), F.S.

- May include one or more of the following (“Tier 2”):
 - A declaration of domicile in Florida.
 - A Florida professional or occupational license.
 - Florida incorporation.
 - A document evidencing family ties in Florida.
 - Proof of membership in a Florida-based charitable or professional organization.
 - Any other documentation that supports the student’s request for resident status, including, but not limited to, utility bills and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments; a lease agreement and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments; or an official state, federal, or court document evidencing legal ties to Florida.⁴

Florida Residency for Incarcerated Individuals

Each FCS institution and state university must develop regulations, policies, and procedures for determining each admitted student’s Florida residency status for tuition purposes.⁵ Therefore, each institution of higher education must establish policies regarding incarcerated individuals. For example, Tallahassee State College and St. Petersburg College both require an incarcerated individual to provide documentation that he or she lived in Florida for 12 months before incarceration, and require Tier 1 and Tier 2 documentation to prove his or her physical presence in Florida for 12 months before incarceration. If the individual has been released for a year or longer, he or she must provide documentation for the most recent 12 months.⁶

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill modifies s. 1009.21, F.S., by providing that an individual who has met the requirements to be classified as a resident for tuition purposes may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes solely because of incarceration in a state or federal correctional facility in Florida.

Public Postsecondary Tuition and Fees

Present Situation

Florida law defines “tuition” as the basic fee charged to a student for instruction provided by a public postsecondary educational institution.⁷ In addition to tuition, institutions charge a variety of required fees, such as student activity, technology, financial aid, and capital improvement fees, which together make up the total per-credit-hour cost.⁸

⁴ Section 1009.21(3), F.S.

⁵ Rule 6A-10.044(3), F.A.C. and Board of Governors Regulation 7.005(5).

⁶ Tallahassee Community College, *Residency FAQs*, <https://www.tsc.fl.edu/media/divisions/admissions-and-recruiting/forms/Residency-FAQs.pdf> and St. Petersburg College, *Residency FAQs*, <https://www.spcollege.edu/future-students/admissions/residency/residency-faqs> (last visited Feb. 10, 2026).

⁷ Section 1009.01(1), F.S.

⁸ Sections 1009.23 and 1009.24, F.S.

For the 2025-2026 academic year, the resident undergraduate tuition rate for the State University System (SUS) is currently set in statute at \$105.07 per credit hour.⁹ When combined with required fees, the SUS average undergraduate tuition and fees total is \$200.08 per credit hour.¹⁰

Within the Florida College System (FCS), standard tuition for college credit courses is \$71.98 per credit hour, with additional required fees set by each institution. Tuition for the baccalaureate degree program is \$91.79 per credit hour for students classified as residents for tuition purposes, plus required fees.¹¹

Florida law extends fee waivers to students who meet specified conditions. Some fee waivers are mandatory,¹² while others are permissive.¹³

Grandparent Out-of-State Fee Waiver

State universities are required to waive the out-of-state fee for certain nonresident undergraduate students whose grandparent is a legal resident of Florida. To be eligible for the waiver, a student must earn a high school diploma comparable to a Florida standard high school diploma or complete a home education program, achieve designated SAT, ACT, or Classic Learning Test score thresholds, and enroll as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.¹⁴

State Employee Tuition and Fee Waiver

Each SUS and FCS institution must waive tuition and fees for state employees for up to six credit hours per academic term, on a space-available basis. Participation is subject to approval by the employee's agency head. The waiver applies to tuition and required fees charged per credit hour.¹⁵ Institutions may continue to charge non-waivable fees, such as laboratory or materials fees, as authorized elsewhere in statute.¹⁶

For purposes of this waiver, employees of the state include individuals employed by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government, but exclude employees of state universities. The Chief Financial Officer, in cooperation with SUS and FCS institutions, must identify and implement measures to reduce administrative burdens associated with the waiver program, including streamlining how institutions verify state employment.

⁹ Section 1009.24(4)(a), F.S.

¹⁰ Florida Board of Governors, *State University System of Florida, Tuition and Required Fees, 2025-2026*, available at, <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/2025-2026-SUS-Tuition-and-Fees-Report.pdf> (last visited Feb. 10, 2026).

¹¹ Section 1009.23(3), F.S.

¹² Section 1009.26 (5), (7)-(8), (12)-(14), (17)-(20) F.S. Mandatory fee waivers include, but are not limited to, waivers for graduate students in state-approved school psychology internship programs, spouses of deceased state employees, recipients of a Purple Heart or other qualifying combat decoration, and active duty members of the Armed Forces.

¹³ Section 1009.26 (1)-(4), (6), (9)-(11), (15)-(16), and (21), F.S. Permissive fee waivers include, but are not limited to, waivers for full-time university employees, Florida residents 60 years of age or older on a space-available basis, purposes that support and enhance the mission of the university, and intercollegiate student athletes receiving an athletic scholarship.

¹⁴ Section 1009.26(20)(a), F.S. The term "grandparent" means a person who has a legal relationship to a student's parent as the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of the student's parent.

¹⁵ Section 1009.265(1), F.S.

¹⁶ Sections 1009.23(12) and 1009.24(14), F.S.

Eligible employees may be required to wait until after priority registration periods to enroll in courses. Participation in the waiver does not guarantee placement in a specific course or section and is dependent on institutional capacity.

SUS and FCS institutions are reimbursed for administrative costs associated with the waiver program from funds specifically appropriated for that purpose, and the Auditor General reviews the related cost assessment data as part of his or her regular audit responsibilities.¹⁷

Florida State Guard

The Florida State Guard (FSG) was created in 2022¹⁸ as a component of the state's organized guard and operates separately from the Florida National Guard.¹⁹ The FSG is a state-funded volunteer force that supports disaster-response and humanitarian efforts during state activations.²⁰

The FSG operates under the Governor's command and control and may be activated for use within the state or in other states for specific purposes.²¹ The FSG may also provide support to other states under the Emergency Management Assistance compact.²² The Division of the State Guard within the Department of Military Affairs is responsible for administering and managing the FSG.²³

Effect of Proposed Changes

Grandparent Out-of-State Fee Waiver

The bill amends s. 1009.26, F.S., by revising eligibility for the out-of-state fee waiver for certain nonresident students with a Florida-resident grandparent to apply only to full-time undergraduate students, eliminating the Classic Learning Test as a qualifying assessment option, and shifting the effective academic year for the changes to the waiver to 2026–2027.

Florida State Guard

The bill amends s. 251.001, F.S., by requiring each FCS institution and state university to waive tuition and fees for active members of the Florida State Guard who enroll in up to six credit hours per term on a space-available basis, subject to approval by the Director of the Division of the State Guard.

Blind Services

Present Situation

The Division of Blind Services, within the Department of Education, helps blind and visually impaired individuals achieve their goals and live their lives with as much independence and self-

¹⁷ Section 1009.265, F.S.

¹⁸ Chapter 2022-157, s. 80, Laws of Fla., and s. 251.001, F.S.

¹⁹ Section 251.001(1), F.S.

²⁰ Florida State Guard, *About*, <https://www.floridastateguard.org/about> (last visited Feb. 10, 2026).

²¹ Section 251.001(2), F.S.

²² Section 251.001(8)(a), F.S.

²³ Section 251.001(3), F.S.

direction as possible.²⁴ All programs, projects, and activities of the division are to be carried out in a manner consistent with the following principles:

- Respect for individual dignity, personal responsibility, self-determination to live independently, and pursuit of meaningful careers, based on informed choice;
- Support for the involvement of an individual's representative if an individual requests, desires, or needs such support;
- Respect for the individual's privacy and equal access, including the use of information in accessible formats; and
- Integration and full participation of individuals who are blind in society on equal terms with others.²⁵

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill creates s. 413.0114, F.S., to require individuals and entities that offer fee-based services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired to provide a written disclosure, before entering into a contract or accepting payment, indicating whether equivalent or substantially similar services are available at no cost through the Division of Blind Services or another public agency.

The bill requires the written disclosure to:

- Be provided in plain language, and upon request in an accessible format, such as braille, large print, or audio;
- Include contact information for the Division of Blind Services; and
- Be signed or electronically acknowledged by the consumer or his or her representative.

The bill provides that a violation constitutes an unfair or deceptive trade practice subject to enforcement and penalties under part II of ch. 501, F.S. The bill also authorizes the Department of Education to adopt rules to implement the section.

Vocational Rehabilitation Service Providers

Present Situation

The State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program is authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973²⁶ 2 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)²⁷ and provides federal funding to states to operate vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs within a statewide workforce development system.²⁸

In Florida, vocational rehabilitation services are administered by two agencies housed within the Department of Education: the Division of Blind Services, which serves individuals who are blind

²⁴ Florida Department of Education, Division of Blind Services, *Welcome Message*, <https://dbs.fldoe.org/> (last visited Jan. 29, 2026).

²⁵ Section 413.011(1), F.S.

²⁶ Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Pub. L. No. 93-112, 87 Stat. 355.

²⁷ Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Pub. L. 113-128.

²⁸ United States Department of Education, *State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program*, <https://rsa.ed.gov/about/programs/vocational-rehabilitation-state-grants> (last visited Feb. 10, 2026).

or visually impaired, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), which serves individuals with other disabilities.²⁹

Service providers must register with the DVR. To qualify for registration, the DVR must ensure that the service provider maintains an internal quality assurance system, has proven functional systems, and is subject to a due diligence inquiry into its fitness to undertake service responsibilities.³⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 413.208, F.S., by replacing service provider registration with an application and approval framework. The bill specifies that, to qualify for approval, a service provider must maintain an internal quality assurance system, have a proven functional system, meet minimum qualifications, and be subject to a due diligence inquiry into its fitness to undertake service responsibilities.

The bill requires the DVR to establish minimum qualifications and an annual application process for service providers offering employment-related vocational rehabilitation services. The bill allows the DVR to approve or deny any service provider application. Beginning January 1, 2027, only service providers that meet the minimum qualifications and that have been approved to provide employment-related services to individuals with disabilities may participate in the vocational rehabilitation program.

The bill also requires the DVR to develop and publish an annual report on service provider effectiveness, including an evaluation system that measures the effectiveness of all service providers approved by the DVR to provide employment-related services to individuals with disabilities.

The bill requires service providers participating in the VR program to meet minimum standards of effectiveness, including successful placement of individuals in competitive and integrated employment, in order to maintain approved status with the division. The bill requires rates for VR services to be allocable, reasonable, and necessary, as determined by the division.

The Commission for Independent Education

Present Situation

The Commission for Independent Education (CIE) was established in 2001 and is responsible for matters related to nonpublic postsecondary educational institutions. The CIE's functions include consumer protection, program improvements, institutional policies and administration, data management, and the licensure of independent schools, colleges, and universities.³¹ Under current law, any college, school, or course that is licensed or approved for establishment and

²⁹ Part I and Part II, ch. 413, F.S.

³⁰ Section 413.208(1), F.S.

³¹ Section 1005.21, F.S., and Florida Department of Education, *Commission for Independent Education*, <https://www.fl DOE.org/policy/cie/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2026).

operation by another state agency is not under the jurisdiction of the CIE and is not required to obtain CIE licensure.³²

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1005.06, F.S., by removing “course” from the exemption from CIE licensure and jurisdiction, limiting the exemption to a college or school licensed or approved by another state agency. The bill also specifies that colleges or schools approved by another state agency to offer one or more courses or programs in nursing, dentistry, real estate, or other licensed programs do not qualify for the exemption solely because the course or program is licensed or approved.

Specialized Associate in Arts Transfer Degree

Present Situation

In 2024, the Legislature authorized Florida College System (FCS) institutions to offer Specialized Associate in Arts Transfer (SAAT) degrees designed for students who need supplemental lower-division coursework to prepare for transfer to another institution. These degrees must include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and require 60 semester hours or more of college credit.³³

The State Board of Education (SBE) is required to establish criteria for the review and approval of new SAAT degrees. As part of the approval process, an FCS institution seeking to offer a SAAT degree must submit a notice of intent to the Division of Florida Colleges (division). The division is required to forward the notice within 10 business days to all FCS institutions and to the Chancellor of the State University System, who must distribute the notice to all state universities. State universities and FCS institutions have 60 days after receipt of the notice to submit comments on the proposed SAAT degree before the proposing institution may submit a formal program proposal.³⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1007.25, F.S., by reducing the comment submission timeframe on proposed SAAT degree programs from 60 to 30 days.

Middle and High School Grading System

Present Situation

The grading system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses for students in public schools is as follows:

³² Section 1005.06(1)(b), F.S. This includes colleges, schools, or courses licensed under part I of chapter 464 (Nurse Practice Act), chapter 466 (Dentistry, Dental Hygiene, and Dental Laboratories), chapter 475 (Real Estate Brokers, Sales Associates, Schools, and Appraisers), or any other chapter of the Florida Statutes.

³³ Section 1007.25(9), F.S.; Rule 6A-14.094, F.A.C.

³⁴ *Id.* See also Florida Department of Education, Florida College System, *SAAT Proposal Approval Process Timeline*, <https://www.fldoe.org/schools/higher-ed/fl-college-system/administrators/saat.shtml> (last visited Feb. 11, 2026).

- Grade “A” equals 90 percent through 100 percent, has a grade point average value of 4, and is defined as “outstanding progress.”
- Grade “B” equals 80 percent through 89 percent, has a grade point average value of 3, and is defined as “above average progress.”
- Grade “C” equals 70 percent through 79 percent, has a grade point average value of 2, and is defined as “average progress.”
- Grade “D” equals 60 percent through 69 percent, has a grade point average value of 1, and is defined as “lowest acceptable progress.”
- Grade “F” equals zero percent through 59 percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as “failure.”
- Grade “I” equals zero percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as “incomplete.”³⁵

For class ranking, district school boards are authorized to use a weighted grading system. School districts and Florida College System institutions must weigh dual enrollment courses the same as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses when calculating grade point averages (GPAs). Alternative grade calculation systems, alternative grade weighting systems, and information about student education options that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.³⁶

Generally, school districts apply a 0.5 GPA weight to honors, pre-IB, or pre-AICE courses, and a 1.0 weight to AP, IB, AICE, and dual enrollment courses.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1003.437, F.S., by requiring the State Board of Education to establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms, including dual enrollment, AP, IB, and AICE. The bill also requires school boards to use the weighted grading system to calculate weighted high school GPAs.

Dual Enrollment

Present Situation

The dual enrollment program allows an eligible secondary student or home education student to enroll in a postsecondary course that is creditable toward high school completion and a career certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree.³⁷ School districts and Florida College System (FCS) institutions are required to weigh dual enrollment courses the same as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses when calculating a student’s high school grade point average (GPA). Alternative grade calculation systems, alternative grade weighting systems, and information

³⁵ Section 1003.437, F.S.

³⁶ Section 1007.271(18), F.S.

³⁷ Section 1007.271(1), F.S.

about student education options that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.³⁸

Dual enrollment instruction may be provided by a Florida College System institution, a state university, or an eligible independent college or university. An eligible independent college or university is a nonprofit institution that is accredited by a regional or national accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education and that confers degrees.³⁹ The statute does not specify that an eligible school must be located in Florida.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1007.271, F.S., by specifying that the postsecondary institutions eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-for-profit independent colleges and universities.

Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program

Present Situation

The Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program (program) is established to reimburse eligible postsecondary institutions for the cost of providing dual enrollment instruction to certain secondary students. The program is administered by the Department of Education and operates subject to annual appropriations.

Eligible postsecondary institutions are reimbursed for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by eligible secondary students, with reimbursement for fall and spring term courses limited to eligible private school, home education program, and personalized education program secondary students. and reimbursement for summer term courses extended for public school, private school, home education program, and personalized education program secondary students.⁴⁰

Public postsecondary institutions that provide dual enrollment instruction to public high school students receive payment through school district FEFP funds during the fall and spring terms, as specified in the dual enrollment articulation agreement.⁴¹ The program reimburses eligible postsecondary institutions when district funding is not provided. However, private postsecondary institutions do not receive district funding, but are not authorized to receive program funds in the fall and spring terms.⁴²

To receive reimbursement, participating institutions must report eligible student enrollments to the Department of Education within statutorily prescribed timeframes, and reimbursement payments are contingent upon funding provided in the General Appropriations Act.⁴³

³⁸ Section 1007.271(18), F.S.

³⁹ Section 1011.62(1)(i), F.S.

⁴⁰ Section 1009.30, F.S.

⁴¹ Section 1007.271(21)(n)1., F.S.

⁴² Section 1009.30, F.S.

⁴³ Section 1009.30(5) and (7), F.S.

Reimbursement amounts vary by institution type and are based on statutorily established tuition rates, with instructional materials costs reimbursed separately.⁴⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.30, F.S., by expanding reimbursement eligibility under the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program. Specifically, the bill authorizes reimbursement to eligible independent postsecondary institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by public school students during the fall and spring terms.

College Readiness Assessment Alternatives

Present Situation

Florida public postsecondary institutions determine whether students demonstrate readiness for college-level communication and computation skills to place students in appropriate coursework and identify the need for developmental education. The State Board of Education (SBE) adopts rules establishing common placement tests and alternative methods for assessing readiness for college-level coursework in communication and computation readiness.⁴⁵

Readiness for college-level communication and computation may be demonstrated by achieving or exceeding standard scores on approved placement assessments, including the Florida Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT), ACT, SAT, ACCUPLACER, and other approved assessments. Readiness may also be demonstrated through alternative methods, including specified concordant scores on approved national assessments, successful performance in designated high school coursework with a minimum grade point average, credit-by-examination, or the use of institution-approved local placement methods for developmental education at Florida College System (FCS) institutions.⁴⁶

Students who entered 9th grade in a Florida public school in the 2003–2004 school year or thereafter and earned a Florida standard high school diploma, as well as students serving as active-duty members of any branch of the United States Armed Services, are exempt from being assessed for readiness for college-level work in communication and computation and from enrollment in developmental education instruction at an FCS institution. Exempt students may elect to be assessed and to enroll in developmental education instruction upon request. Students assessed for readiness in college-level communication and computation whose assessment results indicate a need for developmental education must be advised of all developmental education options offered at the institution and, after advisement, may enroll in the developmental education option of their choice. Students who demonstrate readiness by achieving or exceeding test scores established by the SBE and enroll in an FCS institution within two years are not required to retest or complete developmental education.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Section 1009.30(6), F.S.

⁴⁵ Section 1008.30(1) and (2), F.S.

⁴⁶ Rule 6A-10.0315, F.A.C.

⁴⁷ Section 1008.30(3), F.S.

FCS institutions are required to implement the developmental education strategies defined in statute⁴⁸ and SBE rule.⁴⁹ Institutions must use placement test results or alternative methods established by the SBE to determine the extent to which each student demonstrates sufficient communication and computation skills for the student's chosen meta-major, and must counsel students into college-credit coursework as quickly as possible, with developmental education limited to the content necessary for success in the meta-major.⁵⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1008.30, F.S., by expanding the use of alternative assessment methods to allow both FCS and school district career centers to assess students' communication and computational skills using SBE-approved alternatives to common placement tests. The bill authorizes FCS institutions to request approval of institution-specific alternative methods in accordance with the SBE rule.

The bill revises student readiness exemptions by specifying that students who earned a Florida Standard High School Diploma and demonstrated readiness through an approved common placement test or alternative assessment method are exempt from assessment and developmental education.

The bill requires assessment opportunities for non-ready graduates by specifying that students who earned a Florida standard high school diploma but have not demonstrated readiness must be offered the opportunity to be assessed and, if necessary, advised of available developmental education options before enrolling.

The bill extends retesting and developmental education protections to both FCS institutions and school district career centers, providing that students who demonstrate readiness and enroll within two years may not be required to retest or complete developmental education.

Additionally, the bill applies developmental education requirements to school district career centers, including implementing SBE-defined strategies, using placement or alternative assessments tied to a student's chosen meta-major, and counseling students into college-credit coursework as quickly as possible, with developmental education limited to content necessary for success.

Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Certification Funding List

Present Situation

The Career and Professional Education (CAPE) Industry Certification Funding List identifies industry certifications that are eligible for additional funding when earned by students. The State Board of Education (SBE) must adopt the funding list at least annually, based on recommendations from the Commissioner of Education. The list assigns categories of industry

⁴⁸ Section 1008.02, F.S.

⁴⁹ Rule 6A-10.0315, F.A.C.

⁵⁰ Section 1008.30(4), F.S.

certificates and certifications⁵¹ to certifications identified in the Master Credentials List⁵² that meet statewide, regional, or local workforce demand. Certifications designated as meeting regional or local demand are eligible for supplemental funding only in the areas where such demand has been identified by the Credentials Review Committee.⁵³

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1008.44, F.S., by removing the limitation that supplemental funding for regional and local demand certifications may only be earned in demand areas as identified by the Credentials Review Committee.

Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars Awards

Present Situation

The Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars Award, established within the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program,⁵⁴ recognizes high school students who earn postsecondary credit through CAPE industry certifications that articulate for college credit.⁵⁵ To be eligible for the award, a student must meet the general eligibility requirements for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program,⁵⁶ earn at least five postsecondary credit hours through eligible CAPE industry certifications, and complete a required number of volunteer service or paid work hours, or a combination of both.⁵⁷ The award may be used to fund career-focused postsecondary programs, including technical degrees, applied technology diplomas, or career certificates, and may also be applied toward baccalaureate degree programs in specified articulated pathways.⁵⁸

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.536, F.S., by modifying the eligibility requirements for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award. Specifically, the bill reduces the required minimum postsecondary credit hours earned through CAPE industry certifications from five to three and adds a requirement that students earn a minimum cumulative weighted grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 in all subjects required for high school graduation, excluding electives.

The bill also expands eligibility by allowing students who complete the GATE Program to apply for the award before or within three months of completion.

⁵¹ Section 1003.4203, F.S.

⁵² Section 445.004(4), F.S. CareerSource Florida, *Florida's Master Credentials List*, <https://careersourceflorida.com/master-credentials-list/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2026).

⁵³ Section 1008.44(1), F.S.

⁵⁴ Section 1009.53, F.S.

⁵⁵ Section 1009.536, F.S.

⁵⁶ See Section 1009.531, F.S.

⁵⁷ Section 1009.536(2), F.S.

⁵⁸ Section 1009.536(5), F.S.

The Benacquisto Scholarship Program

Present Situation

The Benacquisto Scholarship Program is established to reward high school graduates who are recognized as National Merit Scholars and enroll in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution. The program applies to students who initially enroll in the 2014–2015 academic year or later.

The Department of Education administers the program in accordance with rules and procedures adopted by the State Board of Education and is responsible for advertising the availability of the scholarship and notifying students, parents, educators, and school administrators of the eligibility criteria.

To qualify for an initial award, a student must meet specified residency, academic, and enrollment requirements. A Florida resident student must earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its equivalent, subject to statutory exceptions for home education students and students who earn a diploma from a non-Florida school while residing with a parent on a military or public service assignment out of state. The student must also be accepted by and enroll full time in a baccalaureate degree program at a regionally accredited Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution during the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.⁵⁹

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.893, F.S., by allowing an eligible student to defer receipt of an initial Benacquisto Scholarship Program award for up to one year while retaining eligibility for the scholarship.

Florida Prepaid College Board

Present Situation

The Florida Prepaid College Board is authorized to establish a direct-support organization (DSO) organized as a Florida not-for-profit corporation to receive, hold, invest, and administer property and to make expenditures for the benefit of the board and the Florida Prepaid College Program. The DSO must be certified by the board as operating in a manner consistent with the board's goals and in the best interests of the state, and may not use the name of the prepaid or savings program unless so certified.

The DSO operates under a written contract with the board that governs its structure and oversight, including board approval of its articles of incorporation and bylaws, submission of an annual budget for board approval, annual certification of compliance by the board, reversion of assets to the board or the state if the organization ceases to operate, and required disclosures to donors. The DSO's fiscal year runs from July 1 through June 30.

⁵⁹ Section 1009.893, F.S.

The DSO is subject to financial oversight requirements, including an annual financial audit, and donor identities may remain confidential as provided by law. The chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board serves as a director of the DSO, and the chair and the executive director jointly appoint additional directors. The board may authorize the DSO to use board property, facilities, and personal services under conditions established by rule.

The board may invest certain DSO funds related to advance payment contracts and the DSO is responsible for administering the Florida Prepaid Tuition Scholarship Program. The board may also establish additional scholarship programs funded by escheated funds, subject to statutory criteria and reporting requirements.⁶⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.983, F.S., by authorizing the chair of the board of the Florida Prepaid College Board to appoint a designee who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in accounting, risk management, or investment management to serve as the director of the direct-support organization.

Florida ABLE Program

Present Situation

The Florida ABLE Program is established to encourage and assist individuals with disabilities in saving private funds in tax-advantaged accounts to pay for qualified disability expenses, consistent with federal law authorizing ABLE programs.⁶¹ The program is administered by Florida ABLE, Inc., a direct-support organization established by the Florida Prepaid College Board as a Florida not-for-profit corporation to receive, hold, invest, and administer property for the benefit of the Florida ABLE Program.⁶²

The board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc. consists of the chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board or his or her designee; up to three individuals appointed by the Florida Prepaid College Board with expertise in accounting, risk management, or investment management; one individual with similar expertise appointed by the Governor; and two individuals appointed by legislative leadership who are advocates for persons with disabilities, including at least one advocate for persons with developmental disabilities.⁶³

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1009.986, F.S., by authorizing the chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board to appoint a designee to serve on the board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., provided that the designee possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in accounting, risk management, or investment management.

⁶⁰ Section 1009.983, F.S.

⁶¹ Section 1009.986(1), F.S.

⁶² Section 1009.986(3)(a), F.S.

⁶³ Section 1009.986(3)(d), F.S.

Academic Acceleration Options Supplement

Present Situation

The Academic Acceleration Options Supplement is established to assist school districts in providing academic acceleration options, career-themed courses, and courses that lead to digital tool certificates and industry certifications for prekindergarten through grade 12 students. The supplement is allocated annually under the General Appropriations Act, based on each school district's proportionate share of the state's total academic acceleration value.⁶⁴ For the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the total Academic Acceleration Options Supplement is \$596.8 million.⁶⁵

The weighted full-time equivalent (FTE) values for student attainment in specified academic acceleration programs vary based on the type of program and the level of achievement and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Advanced Placement (AP)**
 - 0.16 FTE for a score of 3 or higher on an AP examination.
 - 0.30 FTE for receipt of an AP Capstone diploma.
- **International Baccalaureate (IB)**
 - 0.16 FTE for a score of 4 or higher on an IB subject examination or a score of “C” or higher in the Theory of Knowledge course.
 - 0.30 FTE for receipt of an IB diploma.
- **Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)**
 - 0.16 FTE for completion of a full-credit AICE course with a score of “E” or higher.
 - 0.08 FTE for completion of a half-credit AICE course with a score of “E” or higher.
 - 0.30 FTE for receipt of an AICE diploma.
- **Dual Enrollment**
 - 0.16 FTE for early college program students who complete a general education core course with a grade of “A” or better.
 - 0.08 FTE for non-early college students who complete a general education core course or qualifying career course with a grade of “A”.
 - 0.30 FTE for receipt of an associate degree through dual enrollment with a 3.0 GPA or higher.
- **Career and Professional Education (CAPE)**
 - 0.025 FTE for CAPE Digital Tool certificates earned by elementary and middle school students.
 - 0.10–0.30 FTE for completion of career-themed courses or embedded industry certifications.
 - 0.50–1.0 FTE for CAPE Acceleration industry certifications articulating to postsecondary credit.
- **Early High School Graduation**
 - 0.25 FTE for graduation one semester early.
 - 0.50 FTE for graduation one year or more early.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Section 1011.62(17)(a), F.S.

⁶⁵ Section 1011.62(17), F.S.; Chapter 2025-198, Laws of Fla., s. 2, Specific Appropriations 5 and 88.

⁶⁶ Section 1011.62(17)(b)-(f) and (h), F.S.

Using funds received through the supplement, school districts must award performance-based bonuses to teachers whose instruction results in qualifying student achievement. Teacher bonuses are awarded in addition to any regular salary or other bonus received by the teacher:

- \$50 per student for qualifying AP, IB, or AICE examination scores.
- Additional bonuses of up to \$500 for eligible teachers in schools designated with a grade of “D” or “F”.
- \$25 to \$100 per student for instruction leading to the attainment of qualifying CAPE industry certifications, depending on the assigned acceleration value.⁶⁷

School districts must use remaining supplement funds for expenses associated with the applicable acceleration courses and programs, and such funds may not be used to supplant base FEFP funding.⁶⁸

Florida Advanced Courses and Tests

In 2023,⁶⁹ the Legislature established advanced courses developed by the Department of Education (DOE) in collaboration with public postsecondary institutions as an additional acceleration option for students. The DOE collaborated with secondary and postsecondary faculty to develop a high school advanced mathematics course and associated assessment that will offer students an opportunity to earn college credit in college algebra. The DOE launched a pilot of the Florida Advanced Courses and Tests (FACT) College Algebra in the 2025-26 academic year, coordinated by the Division of Florida Colleges and the Florida Student Success Center. Participating secondary instructors received professional learning and will provide feedback to the DOE on the course. Full statewide implementation is scheduled for the 2026-27 school year.

The FACT College Algebra assessment will be based on the B.E.S.T. Standards in the 9-12 Florida Advanced College Algebra course and aligned with the competencies and outcomes identified in the College Algebra (MAC X105) course curriculum. The assessment will be offered during the normal spring (March – May) K-12 testing window. Upon passing the FACT College Algebra assessment, students will receive college credit for MAC X105 good at any public college or university in the state of Florida. Additionally, students who pass the assessment will be prepared for courses in the “Algebra through Calculus” postsecondary mathematics pathway, including pre-calculus, statistics, and/or business calculus.⁷⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1011.62, F.S., by adding a new funding incentive that generates additional full-time equivalent (FTE) student membership based on student performance in the Florida Advanced Courses and Tests (FACT) College Algebra course, similar to incentives provided for other advanced courses, such as AP, IB, AICE, and CAPE industry certifications. Specifically, the bill:

⁶⁷ Section 1011.62(17)(c)-(g), F.S.

⁶⁸ Section 1011.62(17)(b)-(f) and (h), F.S.

⁶⁹ Chapter 2023-39, s. 18, Laws of Fla.

⁷⁰ Florida Department of Education, *Memorandum, Subject: Florida Advanced Course and Test (FACT) College Algebra* (June 13, 2025), available at <https://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Version-11717/20225-69.pdf> (last visited Feb. 11, 2026).

- Awards additional FTE membership for each student enrolled in a FACT College Algebra course who achieves a minimum qualifying score on an approved assessment.
- Assigns a value of 0.16 FTE for each qualifying student and adds the additional FTE to the district's total FTE membership in basic programs for grades 9 through 12 in the subsequent fiscal year.
- Requires school districts to allocate at least 80 percent of the funds generated from the additional FTE to the high school that generated the funds through FACT College Algebra instruction.
- Requires districts to distribute performance-based bonuses to teachers who provided FACT College Algebra course instruction, including:
 - A \$50 bonus for each student taught by the teacher who achieves a qualifying score; and
 - An additional one-time \$500 bonus to each FACT College Algebra course teacher in a school graded "D" or "F" who has at least one qualifying student, regardless of the number of qualifying students or courses taught.

Florida College System Program Funding Model

Present Situation

State financial support for FCS institutions is determined through an annual process that establishes the amount to be included in the FCS Program Fund for institutional operating programs. The DOE annually analyzes operating costs to determine costs per FTE student and submits this information, along with current college operating budgets, as part of the legislative budget request process. Funding allocations are based on advanced and professional disciplines, developmental education, and other adult education programs, including lifelong learning and education for disabled adults, while certain enrollments, including state inmate education and courses fully funded by external agencies, are excluded from FTE calculations for state funding purposes.⁷¹

The annual apportionment of state funds to each FCS institution is determined through the General Appropriations Act. In determining each institution's apportionment, the Legislature considers multiple components, including the base budget and a cost-to-continue allocation consisting of incremental changes to the base budget. The cost-to-continue allocation is distributed through a funding model approved by the Legislature and may recognize differing economic factors among institutions, including direct instructional funding, academic support, student services support, library support, special projects, operations and maintenance of plant, and comparable wage factors. The apportionment process also accounts for certain enrollments that are not counted toward FTE workload adjustments, operating cost adjustments for new facilities, and new or improved program enhancements. Student fee revenues included in the base budget and generated by fee increases are deducted from the total of these components to determine the net annual state apportionment to each institution.⁷²

FCS institutions are prohibited from obligating funds for personnel or resources beyond those required to maintain the lower of the previously approved or revised enrollment level. Capital

⁷¹ Section 1011.84(1), F.S.

⁷² Section 1011.84(3), F.S.

outlay and debt service funds are apportioned separately and transmitted to institution boards of trustees in accordance with SBE rules.

Institutional reserve levels are monitored, and written notification to the SBE is required when unencumbered general fund balances fall below 5 percent for institutions with a final FTE enrollment of less than 15,000 in the prior year, or below 7 percent for institutions with a final FTE enrollment of 15,000 or greater. FCS institutions are also required to certify unexpended state funds remaining as of June 30 of the prior fiscal year by September 30 of each year.⁷³

Expenditures for apprenticeship programs and upper-division enrollment are reported separately, and institutions are required to report the volume and cost of developmental education options as a distinct component of their annual cost accounting system.⁷⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1011.84, F.S., by revising the components used to determine the annual apportionment to FCS institutions from the FCS Program Fund. The bill specifies that the cost-to-continue funding model used in the apportionment process is developed by FCS presidents in consultation with the DOE and approved by the Legislature. The bill requires the funding model to recognize a minimum level of funding per FTE student and account for differing economic factors among FCS institutions, including, but not limited to:

- Program offerings, weighting workforce FTE to account for priorities and costs;
- Completion of credentials, including certificates, certifications, and degrees;
- Size of the college;
- Economies of scale; and
- Regional cost differentials.

In addition, the bill removes provisions related to operating cost adjustments for new facilities. The bill also removes the statutory direction to deduct student fee revenues from the calculation of state apportionment amounts.

The bill retains institutional reserve notification and certification requirements and standardizes the reserve threshold to seven percent for all Florida College System institutions, regardless of institutional size. The bill requires FCS institution presidents to provide written notification when reserves fall below the threshold and to annually certify unexpended state funds.

End-of-Year Carry Forward Balances

Present Situation

Each Florida College System (FCS) institution must maintain a minimum carry forward balance of its state operating budget based on prior-year full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment. An institution with a final FTE enrollment of less than 15,000 must maintain a minimum carry forward balance of at least 5 percent,⁷⁵ while an institution with a final FTE enrollment of 15,000

⁷³ *Id.*

⁷⁴ Sections 1011.84(3) and 1011.84(5), F.S.

⁷⁵ Section 1013.841(2)(a), F.S.

or greater must maintain a minimum carry forward balance of at least 7 percent.⁷⁶ If an institution fails to maintain the applicable minimum balance, an institution with fewer than 15,000 FTE must provide written notification to the State Board of Education (SBE),⁷⁷ and an institution with 15,000 or more FTE must submit a plan to the SBE to attain the required balance.⁷⁸ An institution that retains a carry forward balance in excess of the applicable minimum must submit a spending plan for the excess carry forward balance to its board of trustees for approval by September 30 of each year, and the SBE must review and publish the plan by November 15 of each year.⁷⁹

For institutions required to submit a carry forward spending plan, the plan must include the estimated cost and a timeline for completion for each planned expenditure. Authorized expenditures in a carry forward spending plan may include commitments of funds to public education capital outlay projects requiring additional funds for completion, renovation, repair, or maintenance projects, remodeling or infrastructure projects that are survey-recommended, repair or replacement projects necessitated by natural disasters, operating expenditures that support the institution's mission, purposes approved by the SBE or specified in the General Appropriations Act, and commitments of funds to a contingency reserve for expenses related to a state of emergency declared by the Governor.⁸⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill amends s. 1013.841, F.S., by standardizing the minimum carry-forward reserve threshold at 7 percent for all FCS institutions, regardless of institutional FTE enrollment size. The bill authorizes FCS institutions to retain and report to the SBE an annual reserve balance exceeding that amount. The bill also requires FCS institution presidents to provide written notification when reserves fall below the threshold and to annually certify unexpended state funds.

The bill requires each FCS institution with a carry-forward balance exceeding the 7 percent minimum to submit an annual spending plan addressing the excess carry forward balance. In addition, the bill removes the separate carry forward balance and spending plan framework for institutions with a final FTE of 15,000 or more.

The bill authorizes spending plans to include retention of the carry forward balance as a reserve fund to be used for authorized expenses in subsequent years.

The bill is effective July 1, 2026.

⁷⁶ Section 1013.841(3)(a), F.S.

⁷⁷ Section 1013.841(2)(a), F.S.

⁷⁸ Section 1013.841(3)(a), F.S.

⁷⁹ Section 1013.841(2)(b) and (3)(b), F.S.

⁸⁰ Section 1013.841(4), F.S.

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:

Florida College System institutions and state universities may have a negative fiscal impact by granting a waiver of tuition and fees for active members of the Florida State Guard if the institution increases the number of spaces available to accommodate the expanded eligibility.

There is a potential indeterminate negative impact on fee-based providers of blind services and VR services, but a potential positive impact for consumers of those services. The impact on the Department of Education (DOE) to establish application and approval framework for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation will have an indeterminate fiscal impact.

There is an indeterminate cost to the DOE and school districts for the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system.

Adjustments to the grandparent fee waiver has an indeterminate fiscal impact to the institutions required to waive out of state fees.

Postsecondary institutions whose policies regarding incarcerated individuals do not currently allow individuals who were incarcerated to qualify for in-state tuition would incur a fiscal impact.

Expanding reimbursement eligibility under the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program to independent postsecondary institutions for the fall and spring term may result in the distribution of additional program funds.

The changes to the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award are indeterminate. It is assumed that reducing the required minimum postsecondary credit hours earned through CAPE would increase the number of eligible participants. There would be a negative fiscal impact on the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award by expanding it to include GATE Program completers.

Establishing bonus funds for the FACT College Algebra course will not have an impact on state revenues or expenditures, however the bill has a positive impact for teachers of the FACT College Algebra course who receive bonuses based on student assessment scores.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 251.001, 413.208, 1004.06, 1004.072, 1004.93, 1004.933, 1005.06, 1006.71, 1007.25, 1007.271, 1008.30, 1008.44, 1008.47, 1009.25, 1009.26, 1009.40, 1009.536, 1011.62, 1011.84, 1013.841, and 1009.895.

This bill creates section 413.0114 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.



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

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

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete lines 138 - 416

and insert:

(4) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to implement this section.

Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 413.208, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

413.208 Service providers; quality assurance; fitness for responsibilities; background screening.—



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(1) Service providers must apply to ~~register with~~ the division. To qualify for approval, ~~a registration~~, ~~the division must ensure that the~~ service provider must maintain ~~maintains~~ an internal system of quality assurance, have ~~has~~ proven functional systems, meet the minimum qualifications, and be ~~is~~ subject to a due-diligence inquiry as to its fitness to undertake service responsibilities.

(a) The division shall establish minimum qualifications for service providers. The division shall establish an annual application period for service providers to submit applications. The division may approve or deny any service provider application. Beginning January 1, 2027, only service providers that meet the minimum qualifications established by the division and that have been approved to provide employment-related services to individuals with disabilities may participate in the vocational rehabilitation program.

(b) The division shall develop and make publicly available an annual report of service provider effectiveness which includes an evaluation system measuring the effectiveness of all service providers that are approved by the division to provide employment-related services to individuals with disabilities.

(c) In order to maintain approved status with the division, service providers must meet minimum standards of effectiveness in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, including placement of individuals in competitive and integrated employment.

(d) Rates for vocational rehabilitation services must be allocable, reasonable, and necessary, as determined by the division.



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Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section 491.005, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

491.005 Licensure by examination.—

(3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by board rule, the department shall issue a license as a marriage and family therapist to an applicant whom the board certifies has met all of the following criteria:

(c)1. Attained one of the following:

a. A minimum of a master's degree in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

b. A minimum of a master's degree with a major emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field from a university program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs and graduate courses approved by the board.

c. A minimum of a master's degree with an emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, with a degree conferred before September 1, 2032 ~~2027~~, from an institutionally accredited college or university and graduate courses approved by the board.

2. If the course title that appears on the applicant's transcript does not clearly identify the content of the coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation, including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description published for the course. The required master's degree must have been received in an institution of higher education that, at the time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an



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institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an institution of higher education located outside the United States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard of training substantially equivalent to the standards of training of those institutions in the United States which are accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization. Such foreign education and training must have been received in an institution or program of higher education officially recognized by the government of the country in which it is located as an institution or program to train students to practice as professional marriage and family therapists or psychotherapists. The applicant has the burden of establishing that the requirements of this provision have been met, and the board shall require documentation, such as an evaluation by a foreign equivalency determination service, as evidence that the applicant's graduate degree program and education were equivalent to an accredited program in this country. An applicant with a master's degree from a program that did not emphasize marriage and family therapy may complete the coursework requirement in a training institution fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States Department of Education.

For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license



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as a marriage and family therapist any person who meets the requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure may not exceed those stated in this subsection.

Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 1001.92, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1001.92 State University System Performance-Based Incentive.—

(1) A State University System Performance-Based Incentive shall be awarded to state universities using performance-based metrics adopted by the Board of Governors of the State University System. Beginning with the Board of Governors' determination of each university's performance improvement and achievement ratings, and the related distribution of annual fiscal year appropriation, the performance-based metrics must include:

(a) The 4-year graduation rate for first-time-in-college students;

(b) Beginning in fiscal year 2022-2023, the 3-year graduation rate for associate in arts transfer students;

(c) Retention rates;

(d) Postgraduation education rates;

(e) Degree production;

(f) Affordability;

(g) Postgraduation employment and salaries, including wage thresholds that reflect the added value of a baccalaureate degree;

(h) Access rate, based on the percentage of first-year undergraduate students enrolled during the fall term who received a Pell Grant during the fall term; and



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(i) Beginning in fiscal year 2021-2022, the 6-year graduation rate for students who are awarded a Pell Grant in their first year.

The Board of Governors may approve other metrics in a publicly noticed meeting. The board shall adopt benchmarks to evaluate each state university's performance on the metrics to measure the state university's achievement of institutional excellence or need for improvement and minimum requirements for eligibility to receive performance funding. Benchmarks and metrics may not be adjusted after university performance data has been received by the Board of Governors.

Section 7. Section 1003.437, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1003.437 Middle and high school grading system.—The grading system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses for students in public schools shall be as follows:

(1) Grade "A" equals 90 percent through 100 percent, has a grade point average value of 4, and is defined as "outstanding progress."

(2) Grade "B" equals 80 percent through 89 percent, has a grade point average value of 3, and is defined as "above average progress."

(3) Grade "C" equals 70 percent through 79 percent, has a grade point average value of 2, and is defined as "average progress."

(4) Grade "D" equals 60 percent through 69 percent, has a grade point average value of 1, and is defined as "lowest



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acceptable progress."

(5) Grade "F" equals zero percent through 59 percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as "failure."

(6) Grade "I" equals zero percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as "incomplete."

The State Board of Education must establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms identified in s. 1007.27. For the purposes of class ranking, District school boards shall use the
~~may exercise a weighted grading system to calculate weighted high school grade point averages pursuant to s. 1007.271.~~

Section 8. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 1005.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1005.06 Institutions not under the jurisdiction or purview of the commission.—

(1) Except as otherwise provided in law, the following institutions are not under the jurisdiction or purview of the commission and are not required to obtain licensure:

(b) Any college or school, ~~or course~~ licensed or approved as an institution for establishment and operation by another state agency. A college or school, or any of its programs or courses, does not qualify for exemption from the commission's jurisdiction under this paragraph solely because another state agency licenses or approves one or more of its programs or courses ~~for establishment and operation under part I of chapter 464, chapter 466, or chapter 475, or any other chapter of the Florida Statutes requiring licensing or approval as defined in this chapter.~~



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Section 9. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section 1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites; other degree requirements.—

(9)

(b) An associate in arts specialized transfer degree must include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and require 60 semester hours or more of college credit. Specialized transfer degrees are designed for Florida College System institution students who need supplemental lower-level coursework in preparation for transfer to another institution. The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for the review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees. The approval process must require:

1. A Florida College System institution to submit a notice of its intent to propose a new associate in arts specialized degree program to the Division of Florida Colleges. The notice must include the recommended credit hours, the rationale for the specialization, the demand for students entering the field, and the coursework being proposed to be included beyond the 60 semester hours required for the general transfer degree, if applicable. Notices of intent may be submitted by a Florida College System institution at any time.

2. The Division of Florida Colleges to forward the notice of intent within 10 business days after receipt to all Florida College System institutions and to the Chancellor of the State University System, who shall forward the notice to all state universities. State universities and Florida College System institutions shall have 30 ~~60~~ days after receipt of the notice



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to submit comments to the proposed associate in arts specialized transfer degree.

3. After the submission of comments pursuant to subparagraph 2., the requesting Florida College System institution to submit a proposal that, at a minimum, includes:

a. Evidence that the coursework for the associate in arts specialized transfer degree includes demonstration of competency in a foreign language pursuant to s. 1007.262 and demonstration of civic literacy competency as provided in subsection (5).

b. Demonstration that all required coursework will count toward the associate in arts degree or the baccalaureate degree.

c. An analysis of demand and unmet need for students entering the specialized field of study at the baccalaureate level.

d. Justification for the program length if it exceeds 60 credit hours, including references to the common prerequisite manual or other requirements for the baccalaureate degree. This includes documentation of alignment between the exit requirements of a Florida College System institution and the admissions requirements of a baccalaureate program at a state university to which students would typically transfer.

e. Articulation agreements for graduates of the associate in arts specialized transfer degree.

f. Responses to the comments received under subparagraph 2.

Section 10. Subsections (1) and (16) of section 1007.271, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

(1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student in this state or home education



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student in this state in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and a career certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree. Postsecondary institutions that are eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-for-profit independent colleges and universities pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i). A student ~~who is~~ enrolled in postsecondary instruction that is not creditable toward a high school diploma may not be classified as a dual enrollment student.

(16) Students who ~~meet the eligibility requirements of this section and who choose to~~ participate in dual enrollment programs are exempt from the payment of registration, tuition, and laboratory fees.

Section 11. Subsections (2) and (3) and paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (4) of section 1008.30, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1008.30 Assessing college-level communication and computation skills for public postsecondary education.—

(2) ~~By January 31, 2022, the State Board of Education shall adopt rules to develop and implement alternative methods for assessing the basic communication and computation skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at a Florida College System institution.~~ Florida College System institutions and school district career centers may use ~~these~~ alternative methods adopted by the State Board of Education for assessing the basic communication and computation skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at a Florida College System institution or school district career center in lieu of the common placement tests under subsection (1) to assess student



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readiness for college-level work in communication and computation. Florida College System institutions may request approval of institution-specific alternative methods in accordance with State Board of Education rules.

(3) The rules adopted under subsection (2) must specify the following:

(a) A student who ~~entered 9th grade in a Florida public school in the 2003-2004 school year, or any year thereafter, and~~ earned a Florida standard high school diploma and who demonstrated readiness for college-level communication and computation skills by any of the approved common placement tests or alternative methods pursuant to this section or a student who is serving as an active duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Services is not required to be assessed for readiness for college-level work in communication and computation and is not required to enroll in developmental education instruction in a Florida College System institution or a school district career center. However, a student who is not required to be assessed for readiness for college-level work in communication and computation and is not required to enroll in developmental education under this paragraph may opt to be assessed and to enroll in developmental education instruction, and the college or school district career center shall provide such assessment and instruction upon the student's request.

(b) A student who earned a Florida standard high school diploma and has not demonstrated readiness for college-level courses pursuant to subsection (1) or subsection (2) must be offered the opportunity to be ~~is~~ assessed for readiness for college-level communication and computation and, if the



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student's ~~whose~~ assessment results indicate a need for developmental education, he or she must be advised of ~~all~~ the developmental education options offered at the institution. ~~and,~~ After advisement, the student may enroll in the developmental education option of his or her choice.

(c) A student who demonstrates readiness by achieving or exceeding the test scores established under subsection (1) by the state board and enrolls in a Florida College System institution or a school district career center within 2 years after achieving such scores may ~~shall~~ not be required to retest or complete developmental education when admitted to any Florida College System institution or school district career center.

(4) (a) Each Florida College System institution and school district career center shall implement the developmental education strategies defined in s. 1008.02 and rules established by the State Board of Education.

(b) Each Florida College System institution and school district career center shall use placement test results or alternative methods as established by the State Board of Education to determine the extent to which each student demonstrates sufficient communication and computation skills to indicate readiness for his or her chosen meta-major. Florida College System institutions and school district career centers shall counsel students into college credit courses as quickly as possible, with developmental education limited to that content needed for success in the meta-major.

Section 12. Subsection (1) of section 1008.44, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1008.44 CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.—



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(1) The State Board of Education shall adopt, at least annually, based upon recommendations by the Commissioner of Education, the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List that assigns categories of certificates and certifications as provided for in s. 1003.4203 to certifications identified in the Master Credentials List under s. 445.004(4) which meet a statewide, regional, or local demand. ~~Supplemental funding for regional and local demand certifications may only be earned in those areas with regional or local demand as identified by the Credentials Review Committee.~~

Section 13. Subsection (2) of section 1008.47, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1008.47 Postsecondary education institution accreditation.—

(2) ACCREDITATION.—

(a) ~~By September 1, 2022,~~ The Board of Governors or the State Board of Education, as applicable, shall identify and determine the accrediting agencies or associations best suited to serve as an accreditor for public postsecondary institutions. Such accrediting agencies or associations must be recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education. Within 3 years ~~In the year~~ following reaffirmation or fifth-year review by its accrediting agencies or associations, each public postsecondary institution must seek and obtain accreditation from an accrediting agency or association identified by the Board of Governors or State Board of Education, respectively, before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date. The requirements in this section are limited to a one-time change in accreditation. The requirements of this subsection are not applicable to those professional,



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graduate, departmental, or certificate programs at public postsecondary institutions that have specific accreditation requirements or best practices, including, but not limited to, law, pharmacy, engineering, or other similarly situated educational programs.

(b) Once a public postsecondary institution is required to seek and obtain accreditation from an agency or association identified pursuant to paragraph (a), the institution shall seek accreditation from an ~~a regional~~ accrediting agency or association and provide quarterly reports of its progress to the Board of Governors or State Board of Education, as applicable. If each ~~regional~~ accreditation agency or association identified pursuant to paragraph (a) has refused to grant candidacy status to an institution, the institution must seek and obtain accreditation from any accrediting agency or association that is different from its current accrediting agency or association and is recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education. If a public postsecondary institution is not granted candidacy status before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date, the institution may remain with its current accrediting agency or association.

(c) This subsection expires December 31, 2032.

Section 14. Present subsections (4) through (13) of section 1009.21, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (5) through (14), respectively, a new subsection (4) is added to that section, and present subsection (7) of that section is amended, to read:

1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition purposes.—Students shall be classified as residents or



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nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in postsecondary educational programs offered by charter technical career centers or career centers operated by school districts, in Florida College System institutions, and in state universities.

(4) An individual may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes solely by reason of his or her incarceration in a state or federal correctional facility in this state.

(8)(7) A person may ~~shall~~ not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes solely by reason of his or her serving, or, if such person is a dependent child, by reason of his or her parent's or parents' serving outside this state as active duty or civilian personnel:

(a) In the Armed Forces ~~outside this state.~~

(b) On assignment for the United States Department of State or Department of Defense.

(c) Teaching at a Department of Defense Dependent School.

Section 15. Paragraph (a) of subsection (20) of section 1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.26 Fee waivers.—

(20) (a) Beginning with the 2026-2027 ~~2022-2023~~ academic year, a state university shall waive the out-of-state fee for a full-time undergraduate student who:

1. Has a grandparent who is a legal resident as defined in s. 1009.21(1). For purposes of this subsection, the term "grandparent" means a person who has a legal relationship to a student's parent as the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of the student's parent.



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2. Earns a high school diploma comparable to a Florida standard high school diploma, or its equivalent, or completes a home education program.

3.a. Achieves an SAT combined score no lower than the 89th national percentile on the SAT;

b. Achieves an ACT score concordant to the required SAT score in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published national concordance table developed jointly by the College Board and ACT, Inc.; or

c. If a state university accepts the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admission purposes, achieves a CLT score concordant to the required SAT score specified in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published scoring comparison developed by Classic Learning Initiatives.

~~4. Beginning with students who initially enroll in the 2022 fall academic term and thereafter, enrolls as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.~~

===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

And the title is amended as follows:

Delete lines 11 - 54

and insert:

for the disclosure; authorizing the State Board of Education to adopt rules; amending s. 413.208, F.S.; requiring certain service providers to apply to, rather than register with, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; requiring the division to establish minimum qualifications for service providers;



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requiring the division to establish an annual application period; authorizing the division to approve or deny any service provider application; providing that, as of a specified date, only certain service providers may participate in the vocational rehabilitation program; requiring the division to develop and make publicly available a certain annual report; requiring service providers to meet certain standards to maintain approved status; requiring that the rates for vocational rehabilitation services meet certain criteria; amending s. 491.005, F.S.; revising the date for a requirement to obtain a license as a marriage and family therapist; amending s. 1001.92, F.S.; revising access rate performance-based metric; amending s. 1003.437, F.S.; requiring the State Board of Education to establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for specified courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms; requiring district school boards to use the system for a specified purpose; amending s. 1005.06, F.S.; revising the list of institutions that are not under the jurisdiction of the Commission for Independent Education; amending s. 1007.25, F.S.; revising the timeframe for Florida College System institutions and state universities to submit comments in response to a specified notice of intent; amending s. 1007.271, F.S.; revising the list of postsecondary institutions that are eligible to participate in a dual enrollment program; amending s. 1008.30, F.S.; deleting a requirement for the State



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Board of Education to adopt rules; authorizing school district career centers to use alternative methods adopted by the board in lieu of common placement tests to assess students in basic communication and computation skills; authorizing Florida College System institutions to request approval of institution-specific alternative methods; making conforming changes; amending s. 1008.44, F.S.; deleting a provision limiting how supplemental funding may be earned for the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List; amending s. 1008.47, F.S.; revising the timeframe for a public postsecondary institution to seek and obtain accreditation; amending s. 1009.21, F.S.; providing that a person may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes due to incarceration; providing that a person may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes due to his or her parent serving outside this state in certain capacities; amending s.

By the Committee on Education Postsecondary

589-02491-26

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to education; amending s. 251.001,
F.S.; requiring each Florida College System
institution and state university to waive tuition and
fees for members of the Florida State Guard if certain
conditions are met; creating s. 413.0114, F.S.;
requiring entities that offer fee-based services to
individuals who are blind or visually impaired to
disclose in writing whether the service may be
obtained elsewhere at no cost; providing requirements
for the disclosure; authorizing the Department of
Education to adopt rules; amending s. 413.208, F.S.;
requiring certain service providers to apply to,
rather than register with, the Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation; requiring the division to establish
minimum qualifications for service providers;
requiring the division to establish an annual
application period; authorizing the division to
approve or deny any service provider application;
providing that, as of a specified date, only certain
service providers may participate in the vocational
rehabilitation program; requiring the division to
develop and make publicly available a certain annual
report; requiring service providers to meet certain
standards to maintain approved status; requiring that
the rates for vocational rehabilitation services meet
certain criteria; amending s. 1003.437, F.S.;
requiring the State Board of Education to establish a
uniform weighted grading system for specified courses

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and articulated acceleration mechanisms; requiring district school boards to use such system for a specified purpose; amending s. 1005.06, F.S.; revising the list of institutions that are not under the jurisdiction of the Commission for Independent Education; amending s. 1007.25, F.S.; revising the timeframe for Florida College System institutions and state universities to submit comments in response to a specified notice of intent; amending s. 1007.271, F.S.; revising the list of postsecondary institutions that are eligible to participate in a dual enrollment program; amending s. 1008.30, F.S.; deleting a requirement for the State Board of Education to adopt rules; authorizing school district career centers to use alternative methods adopted by the board in lieu of common placement tests to assess students in basic communication and computation skills; authorizing Florida College System institutions to request approval of institution-specific alternative methods; making conforming changes; amending s. 1008.44, F.S.; deleting a provision limiting how supplemental funding may be earned for the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List; amending s. 1009.21, F.S.; providing that a person may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes due to incarceration; amending s. 1009.26, F.S.; providing that a fee waiver only applies to a full-time undergraduate student, beginning with a specified academic year; revising requirements for a fee waiver; amending s. 1009.30,

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F.S.; requiring that certain postsecondary institutions be reimbursed for public school students under the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program; amending s. 1009.536, F.S.; revising student eligibility requirements for the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards; authorizing a student to apply for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award within a specified timeframe; amending s. 1009.893, F.S.; authorizing a student to defer an award under the Benacquisto Scholarship Program; amending s. 1009.983, F.S.; authorizing a specified designee with certain credentials to serve as director of the direct-support organization for the Florida Prepaid College Foundation, Inc.; amending s. 1009.986, F.S.; revising the membership of the board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc.; amending s. 1011.62, F.S.; revising the academic acceleration options supplement in the Florida Education Finance Program to include a method for calculating additional full-time equivalent membership based on a specified course and test score; providing specified bonuses; amending s. 1011.84, F.S.; revising the components to be considered by the Legislature in determining an apportionment of state funds to a Florida College System institution; deleting obsolete provisions; amending s. 1013.841, F.S.; requiring all Florida College System institutions, rather than only certain institutions, to maintain a specified carry forward balance;

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providing that a Florida College System institution may retain an annual reserve amount exceeding the carry forward balance; deleting obsolete provisions; authorizing the inclusion in a carry forward spending plan of the retention of a carry forward balance as a reserve fund for a specified use; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Subsection (9) of section 251.001, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

251.001 Florida State Guard Act.—

(9) REIMBURSEMENT, BENEFIT, AND COMPENSATION.—

(a) The division shall reimburse members of the Florida State Guard for per diem and travel expenses incurred to attend required training or in the course of active service as provided in s. 112.061.

(b) Members of the Florida State Guard may be compensated for time spent training or in the course of active service at rates established by the director, subject to appropriation.

(c) A member of the Florida State Guard may not make any purchase or enter into any contract or agreement for purchases or services as a charge against the state without the authority of the director.

(d) As a benefit to the active members of the Florida State Guard, subject to approval by the director of the Division of the State Guard, each Florida College System institution and state university shall waive tuition and fees for active members

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of the Florida State Guard to enroll for up to 6 credit hours of courses per term on a space-available basis.

Section 2. Section 413.0114, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

413.0114 Consumer disclosure for blind-related services.—

(1) An individual, business, nonprofit, or other entity offering fee-based services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired shall, before entering into a contract or accepting payment, disclose in writing whether equivalent or substantially similar services may be available at no cost through the Division of Blind Services or another public agency.

(2) The written disclosure must:

(a) Be provided in plain language and, upon request, in an accessible format, such as braille, large print, or audio.

(b) Include contact information for the Division of Blind Services.

(c) Be signed or electronically acknowledged by the consumer or his or her representative.

(3) A violation of this section constitutes an unfair or deceptive trade practice under part II of chapter 501 and is subject to penalties and enforcement as provided therein.

(4) The Department of Education may adopt rules to implement this section.

Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 413.208, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

413.208 Service providers; quality assurance; fitness for responsibilities; background screening.—

(1) Service providers must apply to ~~register with~~ the division. To qualify for approval, a ~~registration~~, ~~the division~~

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146 ~~must ensure that the service provider~~ must maintain ~~maintains~~ an
147 internal system of quality assurance, have ~~has~~ proven functional
148 systems, meet the minimum qualifications, and be ~~is~~ subject to a
149 due-diligence inquiry as to its fitness to undertake service
150 responsibilities.

151 (a) The division shall establish minimum qualifications for
152 service providers. The division shall establish an annual
153 application period for service providers to submit applications.
154 The division may approve or deny any service provider
155 application. Beginning January 1, 2027, only service providers
156 that meet the minimum qualifications established by the division
157 and that have been approved to provide employment-related
158 services to individuals with disabilities may participate in the
159 vocational rehabilitation program.

160 (b) The division shall develop and make publicly available
161 an annual report of service provider effectiveness which
162 includes an evaluation system measuring the effectiveness of all
163 service providers that are approved by the division to provide
164 employment-related services to individuals with disabilities.

165 (c) In order to maintain approved status with the division,
166 service providers must meet minimum standards of effectiveness
167 in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services,
168 including placement of individuals in competitive and integrated
169 employment.

170 (d) Rates for vocational rehabilitation services must be
171 allocable, reasonable, and necessary, as determined by the
172 division.

173 Section 4. Section 1003.437, Florida Statutes, is amended
174 to read:

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1003.437 Middle and high school grading system.—The grading system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses for students in public schools shall be as follows:

(1) Grade "A" equals 90 percent through 100 percent, has a grade point average value of 4, and is defined as "outstanding progress."

(2) Grade "B" equals 80 percent through 89 percent, has a grade point average value of 3, and is defined as "above average progress."

(3) Grade "C" equals 70 percent through 79 percent, has a grade point average value of 2, and is defined as "average progress."

(4) Grade "D" equals 60 percent through 69 percent, has a grade point average value of 1, and is defined as "lowest acceptable progress."

(5) Grade "F" equals zero percent through 59 percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as "failure."

(6) Grade "I" equals zero percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as "incomplete."

The State Board of Education must establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms identified in s. 1007.27. ~~For the purposes of class ranking,~~ District school boards shall use the ~~may exercise a~~ weighted grading system to calculate weighted high school grade point averages pursuant to s. 1007.271.

Section 5. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 1005.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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1005.06 Institutions not under the jurisdiction or purview of the commission.—

(1) Except as otherwise provided in law, the following institutions are not under the jurisdiction or purview of the commission and are not required to obtain licensure:

(b) Any college or, school, ~~or course~~ licensed or approved, as an institution, for establishment and operation by another state agency. A college or school, or any of its programs or courses, does not qualify for exemption from the commission's jurisdiction under this paragraph solely because another state agency licenses or approves one or more of its programs or courses for establishment and operation under part I of chapter 464, chapter 466, or chapter 475, or any other chapter of the Florida Statutes requiring licensing or approval as defined in this chapter.

Section 6. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section 1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites; other degree requirements.—

(9)

(b) An associate in arts specialized transfer degree must include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and require 60 semester hours or more of college credit. Specialized transfer degrees are designed for Florida College System institution students who need supplemental lower-level coursework in preparation for transfer to another institution. The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for the review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees. The approval process must require:

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233 1. A Florida College System institution to submit a notice
234 of its intent to propose a new associate in arts specialized
235 degree program to the Division of Florida Colleges. The notice
236 must include the recommended credit hours, the rationale for the
237 specialization, the demand for students entering the field, and
238 the coursework being proposed to be included beyond the 60
239 semester hours required for the general transfer degree, if
240 applicable. Notices of intent may be submitted by a Florida
241 College System institution at any time.

242 2. The Division of Florida Colleges to forward the notice
243 of intent within 10 business days after receipt to all Florida
244 College System institutions and to the Chancellor of the State
245 University System, who shall forward the notice to all state
246 universities. State universities and Florida College System
247 institutions shall have 30 ~~60~~ days after receipt of the notice
248 to submit comments to the proposed associate in arts specialized
249 transfer degree.

250 3. After the submission of comments pursuant to
251 subparagraph 2., the requesting Florida College System
252 institution to submit a proposal that, at a minimum, includes:

253 a. Evidence that the coursework for the associate in arts
254 specialized transfer degree includes demonstration of competency
255 in a foreign language pursuant to s. 1007.262 and demonstration
256 of civic literacy competency as provided in subsection (5).

257 b. Demonstration that all required coursework will count
258 toward the associate in arts degree or the baccalaureate degree.

259 c. An analysis of demand and unmet need for students
260 entering the specialized field of study at the baccalaureate
261 level.

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d. Justification for the program length if it exceeds 60 credit hours, including references to the common prerequisite manual or other requirements for the baccalaureate degree. This includes documentation of alignment between the exit requirements of a Florida College System institution and the admissions requirements of a baccalaureate program at a state university to which students would typically transfer.

e. Articulation agreements for graduates of the associate in arts specialized transfer degree.

f. Responses to the comments received under subparagraph 2.

Section 7. Subsections (1) and (16) of section 1007.271, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

(1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student in this state or home education student in this state in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and a career certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree. Postsecondary institutions that are eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-for-profit independent colleges and universities pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i). A student ~~who is~~ enrolled in postsecondary instruction that is not creditable toward a high school diploma may not be classified as a dual enrollment student.

(16) Students who ~~meet the eligibility requirements of this section and who choose to~~ participate in dual enrollment programs are exempt from the payment of registration, tuition, and laboratory fees.

Section 8. Subsections (2) and (3) and paragraphs (a) and

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(b) of subsection (4) of section 1008.30, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1008.30 Assessing college-level communication and computation skills for public postsecondary education.—

(2) ~~By January 31, 2022, the State Board of Education shall adopt rules to develop and implement alternative methods for assessing the basic communication and computation skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at a Florida College System institution.~~ Florida College System institutions and school district career centers may use ~~these~~ alternative methods adopted by the State Board of Education for assessing the basic communication and computation skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at a Florida College System institution or school district career center in lieu of the common placement tests under subsection (1) to assess student readiness for college-level work in communication and computation. Florida College System institutions may request approval of institution-specific alternative methods in accordance with State Board of Education rules.

(3) The rules adopted under subsection (2) must specify the following:

(a) A student who ~~entered 9th grade in a Florida public school in the 2003-2004 school year, or any year thereafter, and~~ earned a Florida standard high school diploma and who demonstrated readiness for college-level communication and computation skills by any of the approved common placement tests or alternative methods pursuant to this section or a student who is serving as an active duty member of any branch of the United States Armed Services is not required to be assessed for

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320 readiness for college-level work in communication and
321 computation and is not required to enroll in developmental
322 education instruction in a Florida College System institution or
323 a school district career center. However, a student who is not
324 required to be assessed for readiness for college-level work in
325 communication and computation and is not required to enroll in
326 developmental education under this paragraph may opt to be
327 assessed and to enroll in developmental education instruction,
328 and the college or school district career center shall provide
329 such assessment and instruction upon the student's request.

330 (b) A student who earned a Florida standard high school
331 diploma and has not demonstrated readiness for college-level
332 courses pursuant to subsection (1) or subsection (2) must be
333 offered the opportunity to be ~~is~~ assessed for readiness for
334 college-level communication and computation and, if the
335 student's ~~whose~~ assessment results indicate a need for
336 developmental education, he or she must be advised of ~~all~~ the
337 developmental education options offered at the institution. ~~and,~~
338 After advisement, the student may enroll in the developmental
339 education option of his or her choice.

340 (c) A student who demonstrates readiness by achieving or
341 exceeding the test scores established under subsection (1) by
342 the state board and enrolls in a Florida College System
343 institution or a school district career center within 2 years
344 after achieving such scores may ~~shall~~ not be required to retest
345 or complete developmental education when admitted to any Florida
346 College System institution or school district career center.

347 (4)(a) Each Florida College System institution and school
348 district career center shall implement the developmental

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education strategies defined in s. 1008.02 and rules established by the State Board of Education.

(b) Each Florida College System institution and school district career center shall use placement test results or alternative methods as established by the State Board of Education to determine the extent to which each student demonstrates sufficient communication and computation skills to indicate readiness for his or her chosen meta-major. Florida College System institutions and school district career centers shall counsel students into college credit courses as quickly as possible, with developmental education limited to that content needed for success in the meta-major.

Section 9. Subsection (1) of section 1008.44, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1008.44 CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.—

(1) The State Board of Education shall adopt, at least annually, based upon recommendations by the Commissioner of Education, the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List that assigns categories of certificates and certifications as provided for in s. 1003.4203 to certifications identified in the Master Credentials List under s. 445.004(4) which meet a statewide, regional, or local demand. ~~Supplemental funding for regional and local demand certifications may only be earned in those areas with regional or local demand as identified by the Credentials Review Committee.~~

Section 10. Present subsections (4) through (13) of section 1009.21, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (5) through (14), respectively, and a new subsection (4) is added to that section, to read:

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1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition purposes.—Students shall be classified as residents or nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in postsecondary educational programs offered by charter technical career centers or career centers operated by school districts, in Florida College System institutions, and in state universities.

(4) An individual may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes solely by reason of incarceration in a state or federal correctional facility in this state.

Section 11. Paragraph (a) of subsection (20) of section 1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.26 Fee waivers.—

(20) (a) Beginning with the 2026-2027 ~~2022-2023~~ academic year, a state university shall waive the out-of-state fee for a full-time undergraduate student who:

1. Has a grandparent who is a legal resident as defined in s. 1009.21(1). For purposes of this subsection, the term “grandparent” means a person who has a legal relationship to a student’s parent as the natural or adoptive parent or legal guardian of the student’s parent.

2. Earns a high school diploma comparable to a Florida standard high school diploma, or its equivalent, or completes a home education program.

3.a. Achieves an SAT combined score no lower than the 89th national percentile on the SAT; or

b. Achieves an ACT score concordant to the required SAT score in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published national concordance table developed jointly by the College

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Board and ACT, Inc.; ~~or~~

~~e. If a state university accepts the Classic Learning Test (CLT) for admission purposes, achieves a CLT score concordant to the required SAT score specified in sub-subparagraph a., using the latest published scoring comparison developed by Classic Learning Initiatives.~~

4. Beginning with students who initially enroll in the 2022 fall academic term and thereafter, enrolls as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.

Section 12. Subsection (3) of section 1009.30, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.30 Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program.—

(3)(a) The program shall reimburse eligible postsecondary institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken during the fall or spring terms by eligible students, consisting of:

1. Private school students who take dual enrollment courses pursuant to s. 1007.271(24)(b);

2. Home education program secondary students; or

3. Personalized education program secondary students.

(b) The program shall reimburse eligible independent postsecondary institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by public school students during the fall or spring terms.

(c) The program shall reimburse institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by public school, private school, home education program, or personalized education program secondary students

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during the summer term.

Section 13. Subsection (2) of section 1009.536, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (6) is added to that section, to read:

1009.536 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards.—The Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award and the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award are created within the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to recognize and reward academic achievement and career preparation by high school students who wish to continue their education.

(2) A student is eligible for a Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award if he or she meets the general eligibility requirements for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, and the student:

(a) Earns a minimum of 3 5 postsecondary credits ~~credit~~ ~~hours~~ through CAPE industry certifications approved pursuant to s. 1008.44 which articulate for college credit; ~~and~~

(b) Earns a minimum cumulative weighted grade point average of 2.5, as calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, on all subjects required for a standard high school diploma, excluding elective courses; and

(c) Completes at least 30 hours of volunteer service, or 75 hours of volunteer service for students entering grade 9 in the 2024-2025 school year and thereafter, or 100 hours of paid work, approved by the district school board, the administrators of a nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for home education program students, or 100 hours of a combination of both. The student may identify a social or civic issue or a professional area that interests him or her and develop a plan

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for his or her personal involvement in addressing the issue or learning about the area. The student must, through papers or other presentations, evaluate and reflect upon his or her experience. Such volunteer service or paid work may include, but is not limited to, a business or governmental internship, work for a nonprofit community service organization, or activities on behalf of a candidate for public office. The hours of volunteer service or paid work must be documented in writing, and the document must be signed by the student, the student's parent or guardian, and a representative of the organization for which the student performed the volunteer service or paid work.

(6) Before or within 3 months after completion of the GATE Program as provided in s. 1004.933, a student may apply for the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award.

Section 14. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section 1009.893, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.893 Benacquisto Scholarship Program.—

(4) In order to be eligible for an initial award under the scholarship program, a student must meet the requirements of paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

(a) A student who is a resident of this state, as determined in s. 1009.40 and rules of the State Board of Education, must:

1. Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its equivalent pursuant to s. 1002.3105, s. 1003.4281, s. 1003.4282, or s. 1003.435 unless:

a. The student completes a home education program according to s. 1002.41; or

b. The student earns a high school diploma from a non-

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Florida school while living with a parent who is on military or public service assignment out of this state;

2. Be accepted by and enroll in a Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution that is regionally accredited; and

3. Be enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible regionally accredited Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution during the fall academic term following high school graduation. A student may defer the initial scholarship award for up to 1 year.

Section 15. Subsection (5) of section 1009.983, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.983 Direct-support organization; authority.—

(5) The chair of the board or a designee who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or investment management shall serve as a director of the direct-support organization. The chair and the executive director of the board shall jointly name, at a minimum, four other individuals to serve as directors of the organization.

Section 16. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section 1009.986, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.986 Florida ABLE program.—

(3) DIRECT-SUPPORT ORGANIZATION; FLORIDA ABLE, INC.—

(d)1. The board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., shall consist of:

a. The chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board, ~~or a his or her~~ designee who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or investment

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523 management.

524 b. Up to three individuals who possess knowledge, skill,
525 and experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or
526 investment management, one of whom may be a current member of
527 the Florida Prepaid College Board, who shall be appointed by the
528 Florida Prepaid College Board.

529 c. One individual who possesses knowledge, skill, and
530 experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or
531 investment management, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

532 d. Two individuals who are advocates of persons with
533 disabilities, one of whom shall be appointed by the President of
534 the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of
535 the House of Representatives. At least one of the individuals
536 appointed under this sub-subparagraph must be an advocate of
537 persons with developmental disabilities, as that term is defined
538 in s. 393.063.

539 2.a. The term of the appointees under sub-subparagraph 1.b.
540 shall be up to 3 years as determined by the Florida Prepaid
541 College Board. Such appointees may be reappointed.

542 b. The term of the appointees under sub-subparagraphs 1.c.
543 and d. shall be 3 years. Such appointees may be reappointed.

544 3. Unless authorized by the board of directors of Florida
545 ABLE, Inc., an individual director has no authority to control
546 or direct the operations of Florida ABLE, Inc., or the actions
547 of its officers and employees.

548 4. The board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc.:

549 a. Shall meet at least quarterly and at other times upon
550 the call of the chair.

551 b. May use any method of telecommunications to conduct, or

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552 establish a quorum at, its meetings or the meetings of a
553 subcommittee or other subdivision if the public is given proper
554 notice of the telecommunications meeting and provided reasonable
555 access to observe and, if appropriate, to participate.

556 c. Shall annually elect a board member to serve as chair.

557 5. A majority of the total current membership of the board
558 of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., constitutes a quorum of the
559 board.

560 6. Members of the board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc.,
561 and the board's subcommittees or other subdivisions shall serve
562 without compensation; however, the members may be reimbursed for
563 reasonable, necessary, and actual travel expenses pursuant to s.
564 112.061.

565 Section 17. Present paragraphs (h) and (i) of subsection
566 (17) of section 1011.62, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as
567 paragraphs (i) and (j), respectively, and a new paragraph (h) is
568 added to that subsection, to read:

569 1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual
570 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each
571 district for operation of schools is not determined in the
572 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing
573 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as
574 follows:

575 (17) ACADEMIC ACCELERATION OPTIONS SUPPLEMENT.—The academic
576 acceleration options supplement is created to assist school
577 districts in providing academic acceleration options, career-
578 themed courses, and courses that lead to digital tool
579 certificates and industry certifications for prekindergarten
580 through grade 12 students and shall be allocated annually in the

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581 General Appropriations Act.

582 (h) Calculation of additional full-time equivalent
583 membership based on the Florida Advanced Courses and Tests
584 (FACT) College Algebra course and test score of students.—A
585 value of 0.16 full-time equivalent student membership shall be
586 calculated for each student in the Florida Advanced Courses and
587 Tests (FACT) College Algebra course who achieves a minimum score
588 on an assessment identified by the Department of Education
589 pursuant to s. 1007.27(2) and added to the total full-time
590 equivalent student membership in basic programs for grades 9
591 through 12 in the subsequent fiscal year. Each district shall
592 allocate at least 80 percent of the funds provided to the
593 district for the FACT College Algebra course instruction, in
594 accordance with this paragraph, to the high school that
595 generates the funds. The school district shall distribute to
596 each classroom teacher who provided the FACT College Algebra
597 course instruction:

598 1. A bonus in the amount of \$50 for each student taught by
599 the FACT College Algebra course teacher in each FACT College
600 Algebra course who achieves a minimum score on an assessment
601 identified by the Department of Education pursuant to s.
602 1007.27(2).

603 2. An additional bonus of \$500 to each FACT College Algebra
604 course teacher in a school designated with a grade of "D" or "F"
605 who has at least one student who achieves a minimum score on an
606 assessment identified by the Department of Education pursuant to
607 s. 1007.27(2), regardless of the number of classes taught or of
608 the number of students who achieve a minimum score on an
609 assessment identified by the Department of Education pursuant to

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610 s. 1007.27(2).

611 Section 18. Paragraphs (b) and (e) of subsection (3) of
612 section 1011.84, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

613 1011.84 Procedure for determining state financial support
614 and annual apportionment of state funds to each Florida College
615 System institution district.—The procedure for determining state
616 financial support and the annual apportionment to each Florida
617 College System institution district authorized to operate a
618 Florida College System institution under the provisions of s.
619 1001.61 shall be as follows:

620 (3) DETERMINING THE APPORTIONMENT FROM STATE FUNDS.—

621 (b) The apportionment to each Florida College System
622 institution from the Florida College System Program Fund shall
623 be determined annually in the General Appropriations Act. In
624 determining each college's apportionment, the Legislature shall
625 consider the following components:

626 1. Base budget, which includes the state appropriation to
627 the Florida College System Program Fund in the current year plus
628 the related student tuition and out-of-state fees assigned in
629 the current General Appropriations Act.

630 2. The cost-to-continue allocation, which consists of
631 incremental changes to the base budget, including salaries,
632 price levels, and other related costs allocated through a
633 funding model developed by the Florida College System presidents
634 in consultation with the Department of Education and approved by
635 the Legislature. The model must ~~which may~~ recognize a minimum
636 level of funding per FTE and differing economic factors arising
637 from the individual educational approaches of the various
638 Florida College System institutions, including, but not limited

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to:

a. Program offerings, weighting workforce FTE to account for priorities and costs ~~Direct Instructional Funding, including class size, faculty productivity factors, average faculty salary, ratio of full-time to part-time faculty, costs of programs, and enrollment factors.~~

b. Completion of credentials, including certificates, certifications, and degrees ~~Academic Support, including small colleges factor, multicampus factor, and enrollment factor.~~

c. Size of the college ~~Student Services Support, including headcount of students as well as FTE count and enrollment factors.~~

d. Economies of scale ~~Library Support, including volume and other materials/audiovisual requirements.~~

e. Regional cost differentials ~~Special Projects.~~

f. ~~Operations and Maintenance of Plant, including square footage and utilization factors.~~

g. ~~Comparable wage factor.~~

3. Students enrolled in a recreation and leisure program and students enrolled in a lifelong learning program who may not be counted as full-time equivalent enrollments for purposes of enrollment workload adjustments.

4. ~~Operating costs of new facilities adjustments, which shall be provided, from funds available, for each new facility that is owned by the college and is recommended in accordance with s. 1013.31.~~

5. New and improved program enhancements, which shall be determined by the Legislature.

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~~Student fees in the base budget plus student fee revenues generated by increases in fee rates shall be deducted from the sum of the components determined in subparagraphs 1.-5. The amount remaining shall be the net annual state apportionment to each college.~~

(e) If at any time the unencumbered balance in the general fund of the Florida College System institution board of trustees approved operating budget goes below 7 5 percent for a Florida College System institution ~~with a final FTE less than 15,000 for the prior year, or below 7 percent for a Florida College System institution with a final FTE of 15,000 or greater for the prior year~~, the president must ~~shall~~ provide written notification to the State Board of Education. By September 30 of each year, the chief financial officer of each Florida College System institution shall certify the unexpended amount of state funds remaining in the general fund of an institution as of June 30 of the previous fiscal year.

Section 19. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section 1013.841, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1013.841 End of year balance of Florida College System institution funds.—

(2)(a) Each Florida College System institution ~~with a final FTE less than 15,000 for the prior year~~ shall maintain a minimum carry forward balance of at least 7 5 percent of its state operating budget; however, a Florida College System institution may retain and report to the State Board of Education an annual reserve balance exceeding that amount. If a Florida College System institution fails to maintain a 7 5 percent balance in state operating funds, the president must ~~shall~~ provide written

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notification to the State Board of Education.

(b) Each Florida College System institution ~~with a final FTE less than 15,000 for the prior year~~ that retains a state operating fund carry forward balance in excess of the 7 5 percent minimum shall submit a spending plan for its excess carry forward balance. The spending plan must ~~shall~~ include all excess carry forward funds from state operating funds. The spending plan must ~~shall~~ be submitted to the Florida College System institution's board of trustees for approval by September 30 of each year, 2020, and each September 30 thereafter. The State Board of Education shall review and publish each Florida College System institution's carry forward spending plan by November 15 of each year, 2020, and each November 15 thereafter.

(3)(a) ~~Each Florida College System institution with a final FTE of 15,000 or greater for the prior year shall maintain a minimum carry forward balance of at least 7 percent of its state operating budget. If a Florida College System institution fails to maintain a 7 percent balance in state operating funds, the institution shall submit a plan to the State Board of Education to attain the minimum balance.~~

~~(b) Each Florida College System institution with a final FTE of 15,000 or greater for the prior year that retains a state operating fund carry forward balance in excess of the 7 percent minimum shall submit a spending plan for its excess carry forward balance. The spending plan shall include all excess carry forward funds from state operating funds. The spending plan shall be submitted to the Florida College System institution's board of trustees for approval by September 30, 2020, and each September 30 thereafter. The State Board of~~

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~~Education shall review and publish each Florida College System institution's carry forward spending plan by November 15, 2020, and each November 15 thereafter.~~

~~(4)~~ A Florida College System institution identified in paragraph (2) (b) ~~(3) (b)~~ must include in its carry forward spending plan the estimated cost per planned expenditure and a timeline for completion of the expenditure. A carry forward spending plan may include retention of the carry forward balance as a reserve fund to be used for authorized expenses in subsequent years. Authorized expenditures in a carry forward spending plan may include:

(a) Commitment of funds to a public education capital outlay project for which an appropriation was previously provided, which requires additional funds for completion, and which is included in the list required by s. 1001.03(18) (d);

(b) Completion of a renovation, repair, or maintenance project that is consistent with s. 1013.64(1) or replacement of a minor facility;

(c) Completion of a remodeling or infrastructure project, if such project is survey recommended pursuant to s. 1013.31;

(d) Completion of a repair or replacement project necessary due to damage caused by a natural disaster for buildings included in the inventory required pursuant to s. 1013.31;

(e) Operating expenditures that support the Florida College System institution's mission;

(f) Any purpose approved by the state board or specified in the General Appropriations Act; and

(g) A commitment of funds to a contingency reserve for expenses incurred as a result of a state of emergency declared

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755 by the Governor pursuant to s. 252.36.

756 Section 20. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

S07038

GENERAL BILL by HE; (Compare S 01052, CS/H 01279)

Education; Requiring each Florida College System institution and state university to waive tuition and fees for members of the Florida State Guard if certain conditions are met; requiring entities that offer fee-based services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired to disclose in writing whether the service may be obtained elsewhere at no cost; authorizing school district career centers to use alternative methods adopted by the board in lieu of common placement tests to assess students in basic communication and computation skills; providing that a fee waiver only applies to a full-time undergraduate student, beginning with a specified academic year, etc. EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

02/09/26 S Referred to Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education; Rules

02/10/26 S Introduced

02/13/26 S On Committee agenda-- Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education, 02/18/26, 8:30 am, 37 Senate Building

S01052

GENERAL BILL by Grall; (Compare CS/H 01279, S 07038)

Education; Requiring each Florida College System institution and state university to waive tuition and fees for members of the Florida State Guard if certain conditions are met; prohibiting a Florida College System institution or state university from admitting a student who is not a citizen of the United States or lawfully present therein; revising eligibility requirements for the Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Program; prohibiting a Florida College System institution or state university from imposing certain graduation requirements; revising conditions for a student to meet the definition of homeless children and youths for purposes of tuition and fee exemptions, etc.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

01/13/26 S Introduced

H01279

GENERAL BILL/CS by CWS; Kincart Jonsson; (CO-SPONSORS) Kendall; Shoaf; (Compare S 01052, S 07038)

Education; Revises provisions relating to vocational rehabilitation services, dual enrollment, FCS institutions, state universities, & career centers. EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2026.

02/10/26 H Now in Education & Employment Committee