

|              |   |   |     |              |                         |                |
|--------------|---|---|-----|--------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Tab 2</b> | <b>CS/SB 1062 by ED, Brodeur (CO-INTRODUCERS) Burgess, Gaetz, Osgood, Massullo;</b> Compare to CS/H 01059 Speech and Debate Education |   |     |              |                         |                |
| 543898       | D   | S | RCS | AED, Brodeur | Delete everything after | 02/20 09:52 AM |

|              |   |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>Tab 3</b> | <b>SB 1718 by Calatayud;</b> Identical to CS/H 00561 Educator Preparation and Certification |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------|---|--|--|--|--|--|

|              |   |   |     |                |                     |                |
|--------------|---|---|-----|----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| <b>Tab 4</b> | <b>SB 7038 by HE;</b> Compare to CS/H 01279 Education |   |     |                |                     |                |
| 941220       | A   | S | RCS | AED, Calatayud | Delete L.138 - 416: | 02/20 09:52 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<br>SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS   | COMMITTEE ACTION           |
|-----|--|--|----------------------------|
| 1   | Review and Discussion of Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Issues Relating to Department of Education |  | Discussed                  |
| 2   | <b>CS/SB 1062</b><br>Education Pre-K - 12 / Brodeur<br>(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.<br><br>ED 01/27/2026 Fav/CS<br>AED 02/18/2026 Fav/CS<br>FP  | Fav/CS<br>Yeas 9 Nays 0    |
| 3   | <b>SB 1718</b><br>Calatayud<br>(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.<br><br>ED 01/27/2026 Favorable<br>AED 02/18/2026 Favorable<br>RC | Favorable<br>Yeas 9 Nays 0 |

**COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA**

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

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| TAB | BILL NO. and INTRODUCER  | BILL DESCRIPTION and<br>SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS  | COMMITTEE ACTION        |
|-----|--|---|-------------------------|
| 4   | <b>SB 7038</b><br>Education Postsecondary<br>(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.<br><br>AED 02/18/2026 Fav/CS<br>RC | Fav/CS<br>Yeas 9 Nays 0 |
| 5   | Other Related Meeting Documents  |   |                         |

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## 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# |
|  | 1    | <b>1100001</b> | <b>EARLY LEARNING SERVICES</b>  |       |                |               |             |            |             |             |               |             |                |               | 1    |
| 48220400   | 2    | <b>1100001</b> | <b>Startup (OPERATING)</b>  | 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   | <b>1100001</b> | <b>EARLY LEARNING SERVICES</b>  | 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   |                | <b>FEFP STATE GRANTS</b>  |       |                |               |             |            |             |             |               |             |                |               | 17   |
| 48250300   | 18   | <b>1100001</b> | <b>Startup (OPERATING)</b>  |       | 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   | <b>1100001</b> | <b>FEFP STATE GRANTS</b>  | -     | 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   |                | <b>NON FEFP STATE GRANTS</b>  |       |                |               |             |            |             |             |               |             |                |               | 27   |
| 48250400   | 28   | <b>1100001</b> | <b>Startup (OPERATING)</b>  |       | 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          | 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            | 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            | 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            | 1,000,000          | 48   |
| 48250400   | 49   | 5300460                              | Florida Civics Seal of Excellence - Restore Nonrecurring                                  |               | 3,500,000          | 3,500,000          |      |         |      |         |                      |                | 3,500,000            | 3,500,000          | 49   |
| 48250400   | 50   | 5300580                              | Civics Professional Learning - Restore Nonrecurring                                       |               | 500,000            | 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           | 15,000,000         | 51   |
| 48250400   | 52   | 5307000                              | Schools of Hope - Restore Nonrecurring  |               | 6,000,000          | 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            | 1,432,820          | 53   |
| 48250400   | 54   | 6P00075                              | Teacher Professional Development Appropriations Projects                                  |               | 1,850,000          | 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            | 6,123,651          | 55   |
| 48250400   | 56   | 6P00085                              | School and Instructional Enhancements Appropriations Projects                             |               | 20,358,153         | 20,358,153         |      |         |      |         |                      |                | 20,358,153           | 20,358,153         | 56   |
| 48250400   | 57   | 6P00090                              | Exceptional Education Appropriations Projects   |               | 2,340,000          | 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           | 35,041,813         | 58   |
| 48250400   | 59   | <b>NON FEPP STATE GRANTS</b>         |   |               | <b>465,888,437</b> | <b>243,389,626</b> |      |         |      |         | <b>8,324,718</b>     | <b>166,000</b> | <b>474,213,155</b>   | <b>243,555,626</b> | 59   |
|  | 60   |                                      |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                |                      |                    | 60   |
|  | 61   | <b>FEDERAL GRANTS K12</b>            |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                |                      |                    | 61   |
| 48250500   | 62   | <b>1100001</b>                       | <b>Startup (OPERATING)</b>  |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         | <b>2,555,830,704</b> |                | <b>2,555,830,704</b> |                    | 62   |
|  | 63   | <b>FEDERAL GRANTS K12</b>            |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         | <b>2,555,830,704</b> |                | <b>2,555,830,704</b> |                    | 63   |
|  | 64   |                                      |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                |                      |                    | 64   |
|  | 65   | <b>PGM: ED MEDIA &amp; TECH SERV</b> |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                |                      |                    | 65   |
| 48250600   | 66   | <b>1100001</b>                       | <b>Startup (OPERATING)</b>  |               | <b>5,293,345</b>   |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                | <b>5,293,345</b>     |                    | 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              | 350,000            | 68   |
|  | 69   | <b>PGM: ED MEDIA &amp; TECH SERV</b> |   |               | <b>5,743,345</b>   | <b>350,000</b>     |      |         |      |         |                      |                | <b>5,743,345</b>     | <b>350,000</b>     | 69   |
|  | 70   |                                      |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                |                      |                    | 70   |
|  | 71   | <b>STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>      |   |               |                    |                    |      |         |      |         |                      |                |                      |                    | 71   |
| 48998000   | 72   | <b>1100001</b>                       | <b>Startup (OPERATING)</b>  | <b>914.00</b> | <b>153,438,022</b> |                    |      |         |      |         | <b>154,826,381</b>   |                | <b>308,264,403</b>   |                    | 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            | 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              | 483,189            | 80   |

### 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# |
| 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   | <b>STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</b>                  |  | <b>914.00</b>   | <b>166,302,513</b>    | <b>6,412,117</b>  | -                  | -                 | -                  | -                  | <b>149,139,021</b>   | -                  | <b>315,441,534</b>    | <b>6,412,117</b>   | 86   |
|          | 87   | <b>Grand Total</b>                               |  | <b>1,011.00</b> | <b>16,045,867,885</b> | <b>20,988,874</b> | <b>589,988,232</b> | <b>26,052,641</b> | <b>544,600,000</b> | <b>206,600,000</b> | <b>3,714,264,269</b> | <b>118,057,043</b> | <b>20,894,720,386</b> | <b>371,698,558</b> | 87   |

Appropriation Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education Projects

| Budget Entity                               | Appropriation Category   | Project   | Split   | Operations       | FCO               | Total            |                   |
|---|--|---|---------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>EARLY LEARNING SERVICES</b>              | <b>G/A-PRTNSHIP/SCHOOL READ</b>  |   |         | <b>1,170,000</b> | <b>235,000</b>    | <b>1,405,000</b> |                   |
|   |  | 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          |                   |
|   | <b>EARLY LEARNING SERVICES Total</b>   |   |         |                  | <b>1,170,000</b>  | <b>235,000</b>   | <b>1,405,000</b>  |
| <b>STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP</b> | <b>G/A-MENTORING/STUDENT INIT</b>  |   |         | <b>1,432,820</b> | <b>0</b>          | <b>1,432,820</b> |                   |
|   |  | 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          |                   |
|   |  |   |         |                  |                   |                  |                   |
|   | <b>TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEV</b>  |   |         |                  | <b>1,850,000</b>  | <b>0</b>         | <b>1,850,000</b>  |
|   |  | 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          |                   |
|   |  |   |         |                  |                   |                  |                   |
|   | <b>G/A-STRAT STWD INITIATIVES</b>  |   |         |                  | <b>6,123,651</b>  | <b>0</b>         | <b>6,123,651</b>  |
|   |  | 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          |                   |
|   |  |   |         |                  |                   |                  |                   |
|   | <b>G/A-SCHOOL/INSTRUCT ENHANC</b>  |   |         |                  | <b>20,358,153</b> | <b>3,921,697</b> | <b>24,279,850</b> |
|   |  | 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   |                  |
|                                      |                            | <b>G/A-EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION</b>   |   |           | <b>2,340,000</b> | <b>0</b>  | <b>2,340,000</b> |
|                                      |                            |  | 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

|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP</b>              | <b>G/A-EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION</b> | 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         |                  |
|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
|  |                                  | <b>PUBLIC SCHOOL SPECIAL PROJ</b>  |  |                   | <b>0</b>          | <b>2,350,000</b>  | <b>2,350,000</b> |
|  |                                  |  | 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        |
|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
|  |                                  | <b>FACIL REPAIRS/MAINT/CONST</b>   |  |                   | <b>0</b>          | <b>3,535,116</b>  | <b>3,535,116</b> |
|  |                                  |  | 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           |                  |
|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>STATE GRANTS/K-12 PROGRAM - NON FEFP Total</b>        |                                  |  |  | <b>32,104,624</b> | <b>9,806,813</b>  | <b>41,911,437</b> |                  |
|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>EDUCATIONAL MEDIA &amp; TECHNOLOGY SERVICES</b>       | <b>G/A-PUBLIC BROADCASTING</b>   |  |  | 350,000           | 0                 | 350,000           |                  |
|  |                                  | University of Florida, Florida Public Radio Emergency Network (FPREN) Storm Center (SF 2817) | No   | 350,000           | 0                 | 350,000           |                  |
|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>EDUCATIONAL MEDIA &amp; TECHNOLOGY SERVICES Total</b> |                                  |  |  | <b>350,000</b>    | <b>0</b>          | <b>350,000</b>    |                  |
|  |                                  |  |  |                   |                   |                   |                  |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                       |                                  |  |  | <b>33,624,624</b> | <b>10,041,813</b> | <b>43,666,437</b> |                  |

2/18/26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

TAB 1

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Devette McLain

Phone

(904) 703 3238

Address

10305 DePaul Dr.  
Street

Email

devette35@yahoo.com

City

Jacksonville FL 32218

State

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

# APPEARANCE RECORD

TAB 1

2/18/26

Meeting Date

App. Comm Budget

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Crystal Etienne

Phone

305-496-0398

Address

14082 SW 176<sup>th</sup> TER

Email

CrystalEtienne

Street

Miami

FL

33177

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

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

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

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BILL: CS/CS/SB 1062

INTRODUCER: Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education, 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>Fav/CS</u> |
| 3. | _____           | _____          | <u>FP</u>  | _____         |

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**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**  
COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

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**I. Summary:**

CS/CS/SB 1062 addresses speech and debate in Florida schools by:

- Designating the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI), Inc. as the state’s nonprofit statewide speech and debate organization and outlines requirements, authorized expenditures, and reporting requirements of the organization while allowing schools, districts and students to participate in outside organizations.
- Requiring the FDI to work in alignment with and support of the Florida Civics and Debate Initiative (FCDI) within the Department of Education (DOE) and requiring the two organizations to jointly host and operate the National Civic and Debate Championship.
- Requiring the FCDI to lead specific events including FCDI Day at the Capitol.
- 
- Designating February 1 through 7 as “Florida Speech and Debate Week” and describes the purposes of the week.

The bill appropriates \$2.4 million in recurring funds from the General Revenue Fund to implement these provisions in Fiscal Year 2026-2027. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2026.

## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>

#### *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.<sup>3</sup>
- 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> 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).

<sup>3</sup> 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).

territories following the Mexican War and would have a profound effect on the future of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

- 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.<sup>5</sup>

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

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

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

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.<sup>10</sup> In 2020 the Governor announced the establishment of the FCDI along with funding from the Marcus foundation for

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>9</sup> Specific Appropriation 106, Ch. 2025-198, Laws of Fla.

<sup>10</sup> Executive Order 19-32 (2019)

elevating civic knowledge, civic skills and civic disposition for middle and high school students. The Marcus Foundation<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup>

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.<sup>13</sup>

### **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.<sup>14</sup> Florida Law designates the following example observances:

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

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

<sup>12</sup> 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).

<sup>13</sup> Florida Civics & Debate Initiative Handbook, at 5 (2025-2026), available at [https://5400622c-3214-4001-887b-8a6328c71885.filesusr.com/ugd/ab06c2\\_3136dad194a64b39abf6fedbc941d5a2.pdf](https://5400622c-3214-4001-887b-8a6328c71885.filesusr.com/ugd/ab06c2_3136dad194a64b39abf6fedbc941d5a2.pdf) (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

<sup>14</sup> Chapter 683, F.S.

<sup>15</sup> Section 683.1455, F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Section 683.196, F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Section 683.3341, F.S.

<sup>18</sup> Section 683.333, F.S.

<sup>19</sup> Section 683.332, F.S.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill creates s. 1000.09, F.S., to:

- Specify the creation, designation, and responsibilities for competitive speech and debate.
- 

The section designates the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI) as the state's nonprofit statewide speech and debate organization that manages, develops, and expands K-20 civics, speech, and debate programs, however districts, schools, and students are permitted to participate in speech activities outside of the FDI. The FDI shall support and expand access to statewide civic literacy and speech debate by:

- 
- Educating and training coaches and students.
- Training judges and volunteers.
- Promoting educational competition opportunities.
- Leading training and leadership development experiences.
- Establishing competition standards.
- Maintaining statewide data reporting.
- Assisting the Florida Civics and Debate Initiative (FCDI) in civics-focused education, training, and programming initiatives.

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.

- 

Requires the FCDI and FDI to jointly host and operate the annual National Civics and Debate Championship known as The Great Debate. In addition, the FCDI shall lead specific civics immersion events including FCDI Day at the Capitol and the Great American Civics Challenge.

The FDI is required to 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.

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 including local, state, and national travel to competitions hosted by FDI, FCIDI, or other civics, speech, and debate organizations.
- 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 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 FCIDI is required to provide the FDI data needed for its annual reporting by November 1 of each year to account for joint programming between the two organizations.

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 allows public schools, state agencies and other entities to observe Florida Speech and Debate Week.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

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

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

None.

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

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

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

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The bill provides an appropriation of \$2.4 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.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

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

**IX. Additional Information:**

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS for CS by Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education on February 18, 2026:**

The committee substitute removes from the bill:

- Designation of the Florida Speech and Debate Education Act.
- Creation of the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.
- Certified teacher endorsement in speech and debate.
- Creation of regional debate teams.
- Creation of the Debate Across the Curriculum Pilot Program.
- Requirement for the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI) to establish and operate a charter school named the Florida Speech and Debate Academy.
- School district reporting requirements.
- Requirement for the Florida Virtual School to establish the Institute for Speech and Debate Innovation.
- Requirement of one-half credit in speech and debate as a graduation requirement.
- Requirement for the Board of Governors and the State Board of Education to develop speech and debate training pathways.
- Requirement for the Department of Education (DOE) to approve courses for inclusion in dual enrollment programs.

The committee substitute maintains the following provisions of the bill:

- Designation of February 1 through 7 as “Florida Speech and Debate Week” and the purposes of the week.
- Designation of the Florida Debate Initiative (FDI), Inc. as the state’s nonprofit speech and debate organization responsible for speech and debate programs and the requirements of the organization.
- Authorization for participation in non-FDI organizations and for FDI partnerships, and adds the Florida Civics and Debate Initiative (FCDI) as a collaborative partner.
- Specifies civics and debate events to be held by the FCDI, FDI, or jointly.
- Authorized use of funding by the FDI but specifies that expenses could be for local, state, and national travel to competitions hosted by the FDI, FCDI and other debate organizations.
- Reporting requirements for the FDI but defines the reporting requirements and adds requirements for the FDCI to provide data to FDI.

The amendment changes the effective date of the bill to July 1, 2026.

The amendment maintains the \$2.4 million in recurring funds for the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., but removes all other appropriations from 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.



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| Senate     | . | House |
|------------|---|-------|
| Comm: RCS  | . |       |
| 02/20/2026 | . |       |
|            | . |       |
|            | . |       |
|            | . |       |

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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



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11 all of the following purposes:

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

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

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

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

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

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

24 1000.09 Competitive speech and debate.-

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

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

35 a. Educating and training coaches and students.

36 b. Training judges and volunteers.

37 c. Promoting educational competition opportunities.

38 d. Leading training and leadership development experiences.

39 e. Establishing competition standards.



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40 f. Maintaining statewide data reporting.  
41 g. Assisting the FCDI, upon its request, in civics-focused  
42 education, training, and programming initiatives.  
43 2. This paragraph may not be construed to prohibit schools,  
44 districts, or students from participating in civics, speech and  
45 debate activities, leagues, or competitions not operated or  
46 supervised by FDI.  
47 (b) FDI may establish and maintain partnerships with school  
48 districts, charter schools, state agencies, postsecondary  
49 institutions, nonprofit organizations, private entities, and  
50 national or international organizations to achieve the purposes  
51 of this section, including collaborative efforts with FCDI. In  
52 such collaboration:  
53 1. FCDI and FDI shall jointly host and operate the annual  
54 National Civics and Debate Championship known as The Great  
55 Debate, a nationally recognized synthesis of civics education  
56 and debate competition that challenges students' civic  
57 knowledge, debate skills, and endurance through multi-day,  
58 multi-event competition.  
59 2. FCDI shall lead specific civics immersion events,  
60 including FCDI Day at the Capitol and the Great American Civics  
61 Challenge, which includes the Ronald Reagan Presidential Debates  
62 and the We The People Civics Showdown.  
63 3. FDI shall provide logistical support, debate tournament  
64 operations support, and tournament coordination support for The  
65 Great Debate and other collaborative initiatives to advance  
66 statewide speech and debate opportunities.  
67 (2) AUTHORIZED USES OF FUNDS.—FDI may expend program funds  
68 on all of the following:



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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98           (d) A categorized summary of all expenditures.

99

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

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

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

112

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

114 And the title is amended as follows:

115           Delete everything before the enacting clause  
116 and insert:

117                                   A bill to be entitled  
118           An act relating to speech and debate education;  
119           creating s. 683.221, F.S.; designating Florida Speech  
120           and Debate Week annually in February; providing  
121           purposes for the annual observance; authorizing  
122           specified entities to observe Florida Speech and  
123           Debate Week; creating s. 1000.09, F.S.; establishing  
124           the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as a  
125           statewide speech and debate organization that performs  
126           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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1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to speech and debate education;  
3       providing a short title; creating s. 265.0042, F.S.;  
4       creating the Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame;  
5       requiring the Department of Management Services to set  
6       aside an area on a specified level in the Capitol  
7       Building; requiring the department to consult with the  
8       Florida Education Foundation and the Commissioner of  
9       Education for a certain purpose; providing the duties  
10      of the hall of fame; requiring the hall of fame to  
11      convene a committee for specified purposes; requiring  
12      the committee to include at least one member or his or  
13      her designee from the Florida Debate Initiative, Inc;  
14      creating s. 683.221, F.S.; designating Florida Speech  
15      and Debate Week annually in February; providing  
16      purposes for the annual observance; authorizing  
17      specified entities to observe Florida Speech and  
18      Debate Week; creating s. 1000.09, F.S.; providing  
19      legislative findings and intent; designating the  
20      Florida Debate Initiative, Inc., (FDI) as the official  
21      statewide speech and debate organization; providing  
22      the duties of FDI; providing construction; authorizing  
23      FDI to establish and maintain certain partnerships;  
24      requiring FDI to implement and maintain specified  
25      statewide programs; providing authorized uses of funds  
26      for FDI; requiring FDI to publish online and submit  
27      annually by a specified date to the Department of  
28      Education a specified report; specifying requirements  
29      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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59 of Governors of the State University System and the  
60 State Board of Education to develop specified  
61 undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates,  
62 and micro-credentials; authorizing the Board of  
63 Governors and the State Board of Education to  
64 collaborate with FDI to develop coursework; requiring  
65 the department to approve specified dual enrollment  
66 courses; providing appropriations; providing an  
67 effective date.

68  
69 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

70  
71 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Florida Speech and  
72 Debate Education Act."

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

75 265.0042 Florida Speech and Debate Hall of Fame.-

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

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

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

86 (b) Preserve the history, impact, and cultural significance  
87 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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20261062c1

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

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

239 1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The  
240 district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all  
241 powers and perform all duties listed below:

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

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

247 (b) Student participation rates.

248 (c) Competitive performance and public service engagement.

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

251 (e) Resources needed to expand the program.

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

255 1002.37 The Florida Virtual School.—

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

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

261 (b) Create artificial intelligence-based coaching tools,

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262 digital judging tutorials, and analytics dashboards.

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

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

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

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

273 1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

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

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

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

283 1004.0983 Speech and debate training pathways.—The Board of  
284 Governors and the State Board of Education shall develop  
285 undergraduate and graduate coursework, certificates, and micro-  
286 credentials in speech and debate education, coaching, and  
287 tournament operations.

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

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

290 (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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20261062c1

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; Osgood; Massullo; (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.

02/19/26 S Now in Fiscal Policy; On Committee agenda-- Fiscal Policy, 02/24/26, 9:00 am, 412 Knott Building ; CS/CS by Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education read 1st time

H01059

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

# APPEARANCE RECORD

2-18-2026

Meeting Date

K-12 Senate Education

Committee

SB 1062

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Amanda Lesly Miranda

Phone 352-421-1440

Address 5069 NE 121st Avenue  
Street

Email am24bj@fsu.edu

Oxford  
City

FL  
State

34484  
Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf](#) [flsenate.gov](#)

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The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

2/18/2026

Meeting Date

1062

Bill Number or Topic

senate K-12 education appropriations

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Mackenzie Fulton

Phone 850-756-4420

Address 2268 upland way

Email Mackenzie.Fulton72@gmail.com

Street

Tallahassee FL 32311

City

State

Zip

Speaking: [X] For [ ] Against [ ] Information OR Waive Speaking: [ ] In Support [ ] Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

[X] I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

[ ] I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

[ ] I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

2-18-26

1662

Meeting Date

Bill Number or Topic

Senate K-12 Education Appropriations  
Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Katsiaryna Chernik

Phone 718 213 5070

Address 20415 NW 113<sup>th</sup> Way  
Street

Email kchernik@gmail.com

Alachua  
City

FL  
State

32615  
Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

02/18/26  
Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

1062  
Bill Number or Topic

Appropriation PreK-12  
Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
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Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name JASON LEANFORD CRAWFORD Phone 813-789-5773

Address 313 Ortega Dr Email jason@flhcf.org  
Street

Tallahassee FL 32312  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

Home Education Foundation

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

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The Florida Senate  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

2/18/2026  
Meeting Date

SB 1062  
Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Senate Pre K-12 Approps.  
Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Abraham Lopez

Phone 201-

Address 87 Geneva Dr.  
Street

Email A Lopez @ Florida Debate, org

Duval FL 32765  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

2-18-26

Meeting Date

1062

Bill Number or Topic

Senate K-12 education Appropriations

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Stephanie Salavei

Phone 929-407-0045

Address 20415 NW 113th Way  
Street

Email ssalavey@gmail.com

Alachua  
City

Florida  
State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

02/18/26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 106Z

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

pre K-12 Appropriations

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Zahra Kekahuna-Samadi

Phone 407-894-7497

Address 1775 Fruitville Rd

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Street

Sarasota

FL

34236

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
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02/18/2026

Meeting Date

SB 1062

Bill Number or Topic

Pre K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Luis Feliciano

Phone 321-745-9300

Address 115 Redwing Ct

Street

Email luisjfeliciano232@gmail.com

Poinciana

City

Florida

State

34759

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Feb 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Meeting Date

SB 1062

Bill Number or Topic

Pre-K-12 Appropriations

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Gavin Reynolds

Phone 934 298 0016

Address 9312 NW 54<sup>th</sup> St.

Email gavinreynolds@outlook.com

Street

City Sunrise

State FL

Zip 33351

Speaking:  For  Against  Information OR Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

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2.18.26

Meeting Date

CS/SB 1062

Bill Number or Topic

APPROPRIATIONS

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name JENNIFER HOPKINS

Phone 321.266.3560

Address 1675 S FISKE BLVD #H230  
Street

Email jennifer-hopkins@live.com

ROCKLEDGE  
City

FL  
State

32955  
Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

PH  
[Handwritten initials]

I am appearing without  
compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist,  
representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received  
something of value for my appearance  
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),  
sponsored by:

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2/18/26

Meeting Date

PT-11

Committee

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
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1062

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Mikyle Suvu

Phone 786-559-1462

Address 8201 NW 36th St  
Street

Email msuvu@outlook.com

Sunrise  
City

FL  
State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

CS / SB ~~1026~~ 1026

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

02/18/2026

Meeting Date

Pre-K-12

Committee

Name

Niya Bobban

Phone

(941)-999-3589

Address

7956 Megan Hammock Way

Email

niyabobban@gmail.com

Street

Sarasota

City

FL

State

34240

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/18/26

Meeting Date

1026

Bill Number or Topic

pre K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Julia Cohen-Pinsky

Phone (321) 693-3630

Address 211 12<sup>th</sup> Terrace

Email Julia.CohenPinsky@gmail.com

Street

Indianapolis FL

32903

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

OR

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/18/20

Meeting Date

1062

Bill Number or Topic

Proc 4-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

TAVON BROWN

Phone

954-497-0129

Address

1306 AVON Ln

Street

Email

north lauderdale

City

State

33068

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

OR

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

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

---

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        | <b>Favorable</b>   |
| 2. | Gray    | Elwell         | AED       | <b>Pre-meeting</b> |
| 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.<sup>1</sup>

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 knowledge<sup>2</sup> in one or more specific subject areas, mastery of general knowledge,<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

### ***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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

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

<sup>4</sup> 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,<sup>5</sup> the General Knowledge Test, and the subject area examination for the subject area certification, as required by the State Board of Education (SBE) rule.<sup>6</sup>

### **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.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel to “possess the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools.”<sup>8</sup>

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;<sup>9</sup>
- Submit to fingerprinting and background screening and not have a criminal history that requires the applicant’s disqualification from certification or employment;
- Be of good moral character; and
- Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Temporary Educator Certificate***

A temporary teaching certificate is valid for five school years and is nonrenewable.<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup>

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

- Meets the basic eligibility requirements for certification:<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> 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.

<sup>6</sup> Section 1004.85(3)(b), F.S.

<sup>7</sup> Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.

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

<sup>9</sup> Rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C.

<sup>10</sup> Section 1012.56(2), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1012.56(7), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Section 1012.56(1), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup>

### ***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.<sup>15</sup>

### ***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.<sup>16</sup> The requirements for reinstatement may not be satisfied by subject area exams or college credits completed for issuance of the expired certificate.<sup>17</sup>

### **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.<sup>18</sup>

## **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.

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<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> Section 1012.56(2), F.S.

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

<sup>17</sup> Section 1012.585, F.S.

<sup>18</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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,<sup>20</sup> 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.

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<sup>19</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

<sup>20</sup> *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.

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

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By Senator Calatayud

38-01409E-26

20261718\_\_

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2       An act relating to educator preparation and  
3       certification; amending s. 1004.85, F.S.; authorizing  
4       an educator preparation institute to allow certain  
5       program participants to enroll in introductory  
6       coursework; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; revising the  
7       criteria for the award of a temporary educator  
8       certification to include certain persons with expired  
9       professional certificates; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.;  
10      requiring that subject area coverages and endorsements  
11      for a certificateholder be reinstated with the  
12      certificateholder's professional certificate; revising  
13      requirements for reinstatement of a professional  
14      certificate; providing that certain requirements for  
15      reinstatement of a professional certificate may not be  
16      satisfied using specific inservice points; amending s.  
17      1012.981, F.S.; requiring the Florida Center for  
18      Teaching Excellence to collaborate with the David C.  
19      Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching for  
20      specified purposes; requiring, rather than  
21      authorizing, the center to submit a specified  
22      professional learning system for approval by the  
23      department; requiring the center to allow certain  
24      certified educators to use such professional learning  
25      system for specified purposes at no cost to the  
26      educator; requiring the center to submit inservice  
27      points for such educators to the department; requiring  
28      the center to provide information on certain school  
29      district professional learning systems to certain

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30 certified educators; providing an effective date.

31  
32 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

33  
34 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of section  
35 1004.85, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

36 1004.85 Postsecondary educator preparation institutes.—

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

48 (b) Each program participant must:

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

58 2. Demonstrate competency and participate in field

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

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

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

78 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

79 (7) TYPES AND TERMS OF CERTIFICATION.—

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

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

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88 specialization in state board rule;

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

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

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

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117  
118 At least 1 year before an individual's temporary certificate is  
119 set to expire, the department shall electronically notify the  
120 individual of the date on which his or her certificate will  
121 expire and provide a list of each method by which the  
122 qualifications for a professional certificate can be completed.

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

125 1012.585 Process for renewal or reinstatement of  
126 professional certificates.-

127 (5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to allow  
128 the reinstatement of expired professional certificates,  
129 including each subject area coverage and endorsement held by the  
130 certificateholder at the time of the certificate's expiration.

131 The department may reinstate an expired professional certificate  
132 if the certificateholder:

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

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

136 ~~(c)-(b)~~ Documents completion of 6 college credits during the  
137 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the expired  
138 certificate, completion of 120 inservice points, or a  
139 combination thereof, in an area specified in paragraph (3)(a) to  
140 include the credit required under paragraph (3)(e).

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

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146 ~~the reinstated certificate.~~

147

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

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

153 1012.981 The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

198 (3) The center:

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

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

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

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

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

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.

02/18/26 S Favorable by Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education; YEAS 9 NAYS 0

02/19/26 S Now in Rules; On Committee agenda-- Rules, 02/24/26, 12:00 pm, 412 Knott 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.

02/19/26 H Bill added to Special Order Calendar (2/25/2026)

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, CS/CS/H 01503, 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.

02/19/26 S On Committee agenda-- Rules, 02/24/26, 12:00 pm, 412 Knott Building

2/18/26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

1718

Bill Number or Topic

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

~~Minyle Sutto~~ Minyle Sutto

Phone

786-559-1462

Address

Street

Sunrise

City

FL

State

33351

Zip

Email

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without  
compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist,  
representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received  
something of value for my appearance  
(travel, meals, lodging, etc.),  
sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/18/26

Meeting Date

1718

Bill Number or Topic

App on PreK-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Zaire Kekahuna-Samede

Phone

Address 1775 Fruitville

Email

Street

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:



In Support

Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:



I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf](#) ([flsenate.gov](#))

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/18/26

Meeting Date

1718

Bill Number or Topic

Appropriations K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Miriam Wedderburn

Phone 786-253-3310

Address 3060 Elizabeth Street

Email mwedderburn@comcast.net

Street

Miami

City

FL

State

33133

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. § 11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf](#) [flsenate.gov](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

2/18/26

Meeting Date

1718

Bill Number or Topic

App. Comm. Pre-K-12 Ed

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Crystal Etienne

Phone 305-496-0398

Address 14022 SW 176th TER

Email crystaletienne29@aol.com

City Miami

State FL

Zip 33177

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

OR

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf flsenate.gov](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

2/18/26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 1718

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Appropriations Committee  
on PRK Education

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Kim Garman

Phone 850 324-5969

Address 470 Garman Rd

Email kag284@gmail.com

Street

Cantonment

FL

32533

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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2/18/26  
Meeting Date

The Florida Senate  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

SB 1718  
Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Committee  
Name Stephanie Eady

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address 660 Kirkland St.  
Street

Email eady-stephanie@yahoo.com

Bradley  
City

FL  
State

33835  
Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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2/18/26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 1718

Bill Number or Topic

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Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Laura Allgood

Phone (863) 669-3860

Address 3660 Wellington Place

Email lauraallgood@comcast.net

Street

Barrow

City

Fl.

State

33830

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

**APPEARANCE RECORD**

SB 1718

2/18/26

Meeting Date

Approps Committee on PreK-12 Education

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name **Stephanie Kunkel**

Phone **850-320-4208**

Address **213 S Adams Street**  
*Street*

Email **Stephanie.Kunkel@floridaea.org**

**Tallahassee**  
*City*

**FL**  
*State*

**32301**  
*Zip*

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

**Florida Education Association**

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

*While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1, [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)*

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

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2/18/24

Meeting Date

1718

Bill Number or Topic

Prek-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Jes Prichard with I Teach

Phone

850-508-9894

Address

Street

Email

j.fowler@strategusgroup.ca

Tallahassee FL

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing: *I Teach*

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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2-18-26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

SB 1718

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
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PK-12 Approps  
Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Nathan Hoffman

Phone 217-503-7368

Address 215 South Monroe  
Street

Email nathan@afloirida.promise.org

Tallahassee FL 32301  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:  
Foundation for Florida's Future

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

2/18/26

Meeting Date

# The Florida Senate APPEARANCE RECORD

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SB1718

Bill Number or Topic

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Julia Cohen-Pinsky

Phone (321) 693-3630

Address 211 12<sup>th</sup> Terrace  
Street

Email JuliaCohenpinsky@gmail.com

Indialantic FL 32903  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

2/18/26

Meeting Date

SB ~~10512~~ 1718

Bill Number or Topic

Senate Appropriations Pak-12

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Kellen Niles

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Street

Tallahassee

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

2/18/2026

Meeting Date

SB1718

Bill Number or Topic

Pre K-12

Committee

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Niya Bobban

(knee-yah)  
Niya Bobban

Phone

(941)-899-3587

Address

7956 Megan Hammock Way

Email

niyabobban@gmail.com

Street

Sarasota

State

FL

Zip

34240

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

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02/18/26

Meeting Date

Pre-H-12

Committee

SB1718

Bill Number or Topic

NA

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Kassandra Toussaint

Phone

954 892-3455

Address

4755 Chardonway Dr

Email

Kassie2499@gmail.com

Street

Coral Springs FL

33067

City

State

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

OR

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

**APPEARANCE RECORD**

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1/18/26

Meeting Date

SB 1718

Bill Number or Topic

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Jack Apotsos

Phone 321-946-0778

Address 203 Fir Ave

Email jackapotsos@gmail.com

Street

Melbourne Beach Florida 32951

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

**APPEARANCE RECORD**

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SB 1718  
Bill Number or Topic

2-18-26  
Meeting Date

Reh-12  
Committee

Amy Roub  
Name

321 848 4170  
Phone

440 Wilson Ave  
Address  
Street

Amy@Roub.net  
Email

Sat. Bch FL 32937  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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# APPEARANCE RECORD

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02/18/26

Meeting Date

SB 1718

Bill Number or Topic

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

Stanislav Kostromin

Phone

267-804-6924

Address

5832 Ocean Isle Dr

Email

chefboyyarde@gmail.com

Street

Nokomis

City

FL

State

34275

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

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**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

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

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

BILL: CS/SB 7038

INTRODUCER: Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 and Education Postsecondary Committee

SUBJECT: Education

DATE: February 20, 2026      REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

|    | ANALYST       | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE  | ACTION                                |
|----|---------------|----------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
|    | <u>Jahnke</u> | <u>Bouck</u>   |            | <b>HE Submitted as Comm. Bill/Fav</b> |
| 1. | <u>Gray</u>   | <u>Elwell</u>  | <u>AED</u> | <b>Fav/CS</b>                         |
| 2. | _____         | _____          | <u>RC</u>  | _____                                 |

**Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:**  
 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

**I. Summary:**

CS/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.
  - Expands resident tuition protections to individuals, and their dependent children, serving outside the state as active duty or civilian personnel.
  - Revises eligibility for the grandparent out-of-state fee waiver by removing the requirement that an eligible student must enroll full-time in the fall immediately after high school graduation.
  - 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.
    - Extends the timeline for institutions to seek accreditation from one year to three years following reaffirmation or a fifth-year review and removes the requirement that accreditation be sought from a regional accrediting agency.
    - Extends the sunset date for eligibility under the marriage and family therapist licensure pathway.
  - 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.
  - Revises the access rate performance metric to measure the percentage of first-year undergraduate students receiving a Pell Grant, rather than all undergraduate students enrolled.

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.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Section 1009.21, F.S.

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

<sup>3</sup> Section 1009.21(2)(a), F.S.

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.
- 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.<sup>4</sup>

#### 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Section 1009.21(3), F.S.

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

<sup>6</sup> 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).

### ***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.

The bill expands protection of residency status for members of the armed forces serving outside of Florida to include individuals, and their dependent children, serving outside the state as civilian personnel in the United States Department of State, Department of Defense, or teaching at a Department of Defense Dependent School.

### **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.<sup>7</sup> 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.<sup>8</sup>

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.<sup>9</sup> When combined with required fees, the SUS average undergraduate tuition and fees total is \$200.08 per credit hour.<sup>10</sup>

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.<sup>11</sup>

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

#### **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

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<sup>7</sup> Section 1009.01(1), F.S.

<sup>8</sup> Sections 1009.23 and 1009.24, F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1009.24(4)(a), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> 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).

<sup>11</sup> Section 1009.23(3), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> 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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

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.<sup>14</sup>

#### 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.<sup>15</sup> Institutions may continue to charge non-waivable fees, such as laboratory or materials fees, as authorized elsewhere in statute.<sup>16</sup>

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.

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.<sup>17</sup>

#### Florida State Guard

The Florida State Guard (FSG) was created in 2022<sup>18</sup> as a component of the state's organized guard and operates separately from the Florida National Guard.<sup>19</sup> The FSG is a state-funded volunteer force that supports disaster-response and humanitarian efforts during state activations.<sup>20</sup>

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.<sup>21</sup> The FSG may also provide support to other states under the Emergency Management Assistance compact.<sup>22</sup> The Division of the State Guard within the Department of Military Affairs is responsible for administering and managing the FSG.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> Section 1009.265(1), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Sections 1009.23(12) and 1009.24(14), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Section 1009.265, F.S.

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

<sup>19</sup> Section 251.001(1), F.S.

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

<sup>21</sup> Section 251.001(2), F.S.

<sup>22</sup> Section 251.001(8)(a), F.S.

<sup>23</sup> Section 251.001(3), F.S.

### *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 remove the requirement that an eligible student enroll full-time in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation. Therefore, university students who enroll prior to the creation of the waiver and transfer students may be eligible for the grandparent waiver.

#### 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-direction as possible.<sup>24</sup> 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.<sup>25</sup>

#### *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

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

<sup>25</sup> Section 413.011(1), F.S.

- 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 State Board 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 1973<sup>26</sup> 2 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)<sup>27</sup> and provides federal funding to states to operate vocational rehabilitation (VR) programs within a statewide workforce development system.<sup>28</sup>

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

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.<sup>30</sup>

### ***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

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

<sup>27</sup> Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Pub. L. 113-128.

<sup>28</sup> 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).

<sup>29</sup> Part I and Part II, ch. 413, F.S.

<sup>30</sup> Section 413.208(1), F.S.

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.<sup>31</sup> Under current law, any college, school, or course that is licensed or approved for establishment and operation by another state agency is not under the jurisdiction of the CIE and is not required to obtain CIE licensure.<sup>32</sup>

### ***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.<sup>33</sup>

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

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

<sup>32</sup> 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.

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

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.<sup>34</sup>

### ***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:

- 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.”<sup>35</sup>

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.<sup>36</sup>

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

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<sup>34</sup> *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.stml> (last visited Feb. 11, 2026).

<sup>35</sup> Section 1003.437, F.S.

<sup>36</sup> Section 1007.271(18), F.S.

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.<sup>37</sup> 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 about student education options that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.<sup>38</sup>

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.<sup>39</sup> 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.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Section 1007.271(1), F.S.

<sup>38</sup> Section 1007.271(18), F.S.

<sup>39</sup> Section 1011.62(1)(i), F.S.

<sup>40</sup> Section 1009.30, F.S.

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.<sup>41</sup> 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.<sup>42</sup>

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.<sup>43</sup> Reimbursement amounts vary by institution type and are based on statutorily established tuition rates, with instructional materials costs reimbursed separately.<sup>44</sup>

### ***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.<sup>45</sup>

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.<sup>46</sup>

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

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<sup>41</sup> Section 1007.271(21)(n)1., F.S.

<sup>42</sup> Section 1009.30, F.S.

<sup>43</sup> Section 1009.30(5) and (7), F.S.

<sup>44</sup> Section 1009.30(6), F.S.

<sup>45</sup> Section 1008.30(1) and (2), F.S.

<sup>46</sup> Rule 6A-10.0315, F.A.C.

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.<sup>47</sup>

FCS institutions are required to implement the developmental education strategies defined in statute<sup>48</sup> and SBE rule.<sup>49</sup> 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.<sup>50</sup>

### *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

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<sup>47</sup> Section 1008.30(3), F.S.

<sup>48</sup> Section 1008.02, F.S.

<sup>49</sup> Rule 6A-10.0315, F.A.C.

<sup>50</sup> Section 1008.30(4), F.S.

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 certificates and certifications<sup>51</sup> to certifications identified in the Master Credentials List<sup>52</sup> 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.<sup>53</sup>

#### ***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,<sup>54</sup> recognizes high school students who earn postsecondary credit through CAPE industry certifications that articulate for college credit.<sup>55</sup> To be eligible for the award, a student must meet the general eligibility requirements for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program,<sup>56</sup> 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.<sup>57</sup> 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.<sup>58</sup>

#### ***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

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<sup>51</sup> Section 1003.4203, F.S.

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

<sup>53</sup> Section 1008.44(1), F.S.

<sup>54</sup> Section 1009.53, F.S.

<sup>55</sup> Section 1009.536, F.S.

<sup>56</sup> See Section 1009.531, F.S.

<sup>57</sup> Section 1009.536(2), F.S.

<sup>58</sup> Section 1009.536(5), F.S.

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.

### **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.<sup>59</sup>

#### ***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.

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<sup>59</sup> Section 1009.893, F.S.

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.

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.<sup>60</sup>

### *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.<sup>61</sup> 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.<sup>62</sup>

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.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Section 1009.983, F.S.

<sup>61</sup> Section 1009.986(1), F.S.

<sup>62</sup> Section 1009.986(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>63</sup> Section 1009.986(3)(d), F.S.

### *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.

### **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.<sup>64</sup> For the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the total Academic Acceleration Options Supplement is \$596.8 million.<sup>65</sup>

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.

<sup>64</sup> Section 1011.62(17)(a), F.S.

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

- 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.<sup>66</sup>

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.<sup>67</sup>

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.<sup>68</sup>

### ***Florida Advanced Courses and Tests***

In 2023,<sup>69</sup> 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.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Section 1011.62(17)(b)-(f) and (h), F.S.

<sup>67</sup> Section 1011.62(17)(c)-(g), F.S.

<sup>68</sup> Section 1011.62(17)(b)-(f) and (h), F.S.

<sup>69</sup> Chapter 2023-39, s. 18, Laws of Fla.

<sup>70</sup> 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).

### ***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:

- Awards additional FEFP 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.<sup>71</sup>

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

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<sup>71</sup> Section 1011.84(1), F.S.

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.<sup>72</sup>

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 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.<sup>73</sup>

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.<sup>74</sup>

### ***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.

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<sup>72</sup> Section 1011.84(3), F.S.

<sup>73</sup> *Id.*

<sup>74</sup> Sections 1011.84(3) and 1011.84(5), F.S.

## **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,<sup>75</sup> while an institution with a final FTE enrollment of 15,000 or greater must maintain a minimum carry forward balance of at least 7 percent.<sup>76</sup> 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),<sup>77</sup> and an institution with 15,000 or more FTE must submit a plan to the SBE to attain the required balance.<sup>78</sup> 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.<sup>79</sup>

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.<sup>80</sup>

### ***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.

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<sup>75</sup> Section 1013.841(2)(a), F.S.

<sup>76</sup> Section 1013.841(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>77</sup> Section 1013.841(2)(a), F.S.

<sup>78</sup> Section 1013.841(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>79</sup> Section 1013.841(2)(b) and (3)(b), F.S.

<sup>80</sup> Section 1013.841(4), F.S.

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.

## **State University System Performance-Based Incentive Funding**

### ***Present Situation***

Performance funding for the State University System (SUS) is intended to provide funding based on indicators of system and institutional attainment of performance expectations.<sup>81</sup> The Board of Governors (BOG) Performance Funding Model contains ten performance metrics that evaluate each state university on the following:<sup>82</sup>

- The 4-year graduation rate for first-time-in-college students;
- Beginning in fiscal year 2022-2023, the 3-year graduation rate for associate in arts transfer students;
- Retention rates;
- Postgraduation education rates;
- Degree production;
- Affordability;
- Postgraduation employment and salaries, including wage thresholds that reflect the added value of a baccalaureate degree;
- Access rate, based on the percentage of undergraduate students enrolled during the fall term who received a Pell Grant during the fall term;
- Beginning in fiscal year 2021-2022, the 6-year graduation rate for students who are awarded a Pell Grant in their first year; and
- Board of Trustees Choice<sup>83</sup>

Institutions receive scores for each metric based on both excellence and improvement. The higher of the two scores for each metric is applied to the overall score for each institution. Any institution that fails to meet the BOG's minimum performance funding threshold (a total score of less than 60 points) will not be eligible for the state's investment, will have a portion of its institutional investment withheld, and is required to submit an improvement plan that specifies the activities and strategies for improving its performance.<sup>84</sup>

### ***Effect of Proposed Changes***

The bill amends s. 1001.92, F.S., by revising the access rate metric to measure the percentage of first-year undergraduate students receiving a Pell Grant, rather than all undergraduate students.

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<sup>81</sup> Section 1001.905, F.S.

<sup>82</sup> Section 1001.92, F.S.; Board of Governors Regulation 5.001.

<sup>83</sup> Each Board of Trustees selects a metric from the University Work Plan that is applicable to the mission of the university and has not been previously chosen for the model. See Florida Board of Governors, *Performance Funding Model Overview*, available at <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Overview-Doc-Performance-Funding-10-Metric-Model-Condensed-Version-2025.pdf> (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

<sup>84</sup> Section 1001.92(3)(a), F.S.; See also Florida Board of Governors, *Performance Funding Model Overview*, available at <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Overview-Doc-Performance-Funding-10-Metric-Model-Condensed-Version-2025.pdf> (last visited Feb. 19, 2026).

## Accreditation

### *Present Situation*

Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities are required to be accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the United States Department of Education and the State Board of Education (SBE) or the Board of Governors (BOG), respectively. In the year following reaffirmation or fifth-year review by its accreditor, each state college or university must seek and obtain accreditation before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date and is limited to a one-time change in accreditors. These requirements do not apply to professional, graduate, departmental, or certificate programs that have specific accreditation requirements or best practices, including, but not limited to, law, pharmacy, engineering, or other similarly situated educational programs.<sup>85</sup>

The FCS institution or state university is required to seek accreditation from a regional accreditor approved by the SBE or BOG, as applicable, and provide quarterly reports of its progress toward accreditation to the SBE or BOG, as applicable.<sup>86</sup> Accrediting agencies and associations are prohibited from compelling state colleges and universities to violate state law.<sup>87</sup>

In 2025, the BOG approved the creation of the Commission for Public Higher Education (CPHE), a nonprofit corporation that will serve as a higher education accreditor. A non-paid Board of Directors (BOD) is responsible for the administration and oversight of CPHE's affairs. The higher education systems from Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas A&M, and Tennessee (Founding University Systems) are represented on the BOD by a designated director selected by each state, who together comprise the initial six members of the BOD.<sup>88</sup>

The BOD establishes accreditation standards, policies, and procedures and takes accreditation actions (e.g., approval of institutional accreditation applications). CPHE's mission is to advance the quality and improvement of higher education by accrediting state public colleges and universities that are incorporated, chartered, licensed, or authorized in the United States. CPHE serves as an institutional accrediting agency for state public colleges and universities that award associate, bachelor's, or higher degrees.<sup>89</sup>

### *Effect of Proposed Changes*

The bill amends s. 1008.47, F.S., by requiring institutions to seek accreditation within three years following reaffirmation or a fifth-year review, rather than in the year following such review. The bill removes the requirement that accreditation be sought specifically from a regional accrediting agency. Additionally, the bill removes obsolete language relating to the identification of accrediting agencies. The changes in the bill will enable an institution to choose to pursue

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<sup>85</sup> Section [1008.47\(2\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>86</sup> Section [1008.47\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>87</sup> Section [1008.47\(3\), F.S.](#)

<sup>88</sup> Florida Board of Governors, *Board of Governors Approves Creation of the Commission for Public Higher Education*, <https://www.flbog.edu/2025/07/11/board-of-governors-approves-creation-of-the-commission-for-public-higher-education/> (last visited Feb. 16, 2026).

<sup>89</sup> Florida Board of Governors, *Commission for Public Higher Education Business Plan*, available at, <https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Business-Plan-updated-July-1-1.pdf>.

accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission, which is a regional accrediting agency, or the newly created Commission for Public Higher Education, once the commission receives United States Department of Education approval.

## **Marriage and Family Therapy Licensure**

### ***Present Situation***

Licensure by examination as a marriage and family therapist requires an applicant to submit an application and fee, complete background screening, satisfy specified education and supervised clinical experience requirements, pass a theory and practice examination, and demonstrate knowledge of the laws and rules governing the profession.<sup>90</sup>

An applicant must hold a master's degree in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field and meet one of three educational pathways:<sup>91</sup>

- A master's degree in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE);
- 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 (CACREP), with graduate coursework approved by the board; or
- A master's degree with an emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, with a degree conferred before September 1, 2027, from an institutionally accredited college or university, and graduate coursework approved by the board.

The third pathway was created in 2022 to allow graduates of new marriage and family therapy programs time to obtain programmatic accreditation while still enabling graduates to pursue licensure. This pathway applies only to degrees conferred before September 1, 2027.<sup>92</sup>

### ***Effect of Proposed Changes***

The bill amends s. 491.005, F.S., by extending the sunset date from September 1, 2027, to September 1, 2032, for the requirement that a qualifying master's degree be conferred under one of the marriage and family therapist licensure pathways. This extension provides additional time for new marriage and family therapy graduate programs, such as Florida State University's new program, to complete the COAMFTE accreditation process while ensuring graduates remain eligible for licensure.

The bill is effective July 1, 2026.

## **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

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

None.

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<sup>90</sup> Section 491.005(3), F.S.

<sup>91</sup> Section 491.005(3)(c), F.S.

<sup>92</sup> Ch. 2022-71, s. 1, Laws of Fla.

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. In addition, the expansion of the Armed Forces resident tuition protections, could have an indeterminate fiscal impact on institutions.

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.

Amending the performance funding for the State University System (SUS) would only have a fiscal impact to state revenue and expenditures, if more funds are appropriated for this performance fund.

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, 419.005, 1001.92, 1003.437, 1005.06, 1007.25, 1007.271, 1008.30, 1008.44, 1008.47, 1009.21, 1009.26, 1009.30, 1009.536, 1009.893, 1009.983, 1009.986, 1011.62, 1011.84, and 1013.841.

This bill creates section 413.0114 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes**

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

**CS by Appropriations Committee on Pre-K-12 Education on February 18, 2026:**

The committee substitute maintains the provisions of the bill and makes the following modifications:

- Modifies the grandparent out-of-state fee waiver provisions by retaining the Classical Learning Test as a qualifying option and removing the requirement that an eligible student enroll full-time in the fall immediately after high school graduation.
- Includes a technical clarification to the consumer disclosure for blind-related services provisions by clarifying that the State Board of Education may adopt rules instead of the Department of Education.

The committee substitute adds the following provisions:

- Revises the access rate performance metric to measure the percentage of first-year undergraduate students receiving a Pell Grant, rather than all undergraduate students enrolled.
- Extends the timeline for institutions to seek accreditation from one year to three years following reaffirmation or a fifth-year review and removes the requirement that institutions seek accreditation specifically from a regional accrediting agency.
- Expands the Armed Forces resident tuition protections to include individuals, and their dependent children, serving outside the state as a civilian personnel on assignment for the United States Department of State, Department of Defense, or teaching at Department of Defense Dependent School.
- Extends the sunset date from September 1, 2027, to September 1, 2032, for eligibility under the marriage and family therapist licensure pathway.

**B. Amendments:**

None.



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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| Senate     | . | House |
|------------|---|-------|
| Comm: RCS  | . |       |
| 02/20/2026 | . |       |
|            | . |       |
|            | . |       |
|            | . |       |

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

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

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

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

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



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40 Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section  
41 491.005, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

42 491.005 Licensure by examination.—

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

48 (c)1. Attained one of the following:

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

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

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

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



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

96  
97 For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license



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

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

103 1001.92 State University System Performance-Based  
104 Incentive.—

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

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

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

117 (c) Retention rates;

118 (d) Postgraduation education rates;

119 (e) Degree production;

120 (f) Affordability;

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

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



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

130  
131 The Board of Governors may approve other metrics in a publicly  
132 noticed meeting. The board shall adopt benchmarks to evaluate  
133 each state university's performance on the metrics to measure  
134 the state university's achievement of institutional excellence  
135 or need for improvement and minimum requirements for eligibility  
136 to receive performance funding. Benchmarks and metrics may not  
137 be adjusted after university performance data has been received  
138 by the Board of Governors.

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

141 1003.437 Middle and high school grading system.—The grading  
142 system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure  
143 student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses for students  
144 in public schools shall be as follows:

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

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

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

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



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156 acceptable progress.”

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

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

161  
162 The State Board of Education must establish a statewide uniform  
163 weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated  
164 acceleration mechanisms identified in s. 1007.27. For the  
165 purposes of class ranking, District school boards shall use the  
166 may exercise a weighted grading system to calculate weighted  
167 high school grade point averages pursuant to s. 1007.271.

168 Section 8. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
169 1005.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

170 1005.06 Institutions not under the jurisdiction or purview  
171 of the commission.—

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

175 (b) Any college or, school, ~~or course~~ licensed or approved  
176 as an institution for establishment and operation by another  
177 state agency. A college or school, or any of its programs or  
178 courses, does not qualify for exemption from the commission’s  
179 jurisdiction under this paragraph solely because another state  
180 agency licenses or approves one or more of its programs or  
181 courses for establishment and operation under part I of chapter  
182 464, chapter 466, or chapter 475, or any other chapter of the  
183 Florida Statutes requiring licensing or approval as defined in  
184 this chapter.



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185 Section 9. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section  
186 1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

187 1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites;  
188 other degree requirements.—

189 (9)

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

237 f. Responses to the comments received under subparagraph 2.

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

240 1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

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



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243 student in this state in a postsecondary course creditable  
244 toward high school completion and a career certificate or an  
245 associate or baccalaureate degree. Postsecondary institutions  
246 that are eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program  
247 are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-  
248 for-profit independent colleges and universities pursuant to s.  
249 1011.62(1)(i). A student ~~who is~~ enrolled in postsecondary  
250 instruction that is not creditable toward a high school diploma  
251 may not be classified as a dual enrollment student.

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

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

259 1008.30 Assessing college-level communication and  
260 computation skills for public postsecondary education.—

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



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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

329 1008.44 CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.-



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

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

342 1008.47 Postsecondary education institution accreditation.-

343 (2) ACCREDITATION.-

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



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

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

380 (c) This subsection expires December 31, 2032.

381 Section 14. Present subsections (4) through (13) of section  
382 1009.21, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (5)  
383 through (14), respectively, a new subsection (4) is added to  
384 that section, and present subsection (7) of that section is  
385 amended, to read:

386 1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition  
387 purposes.—Students shall be classified as residents or



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

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

397 (8)(7) A person may ~~shall~~ not lose his or her resident  
398 status for tuition purposes solely by reason of his or her  
399 -serving, or, if such person is a dependent child, by reason of  
400 his or her parent's or parents' serving outside this state as  
401 active duty or civilian personnel:

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

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

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

406 Section 15. Paragraph (a) of subsection (20) of section  
407 1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

408 1009.26 Fee waivers.—

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

435  
436 ===== T I T L E   A M E N D M E N T =====

437 And the title is amended as follows:

438           Delete lines 11 - 54

439 and insert:

440           for the disclosure; authorizing the State Board of  
441 Education to adopt rules; amending s. 413.208, F.S.;

442           requiring certain service providers to apply to,  
443 rather than register with, the Division of Vocational  
444 Rehabilitation; requiring the division to establish  
445 minimum qualifications for service providers;



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446 requiring the division to establish an annual  
447 application period; authorizing the division to  
448 approve or deny any service provider application;  
449 providing that, as of a specified date, only certain  
450 service providers may participate in the vocational  
451 rehabilitation program; requiring the division to  
452 develop and make publicly available a certain annual  
453 report; requiring service providers to meet certain  
454 standards to maintain approved status; requiring that  
455 the rates for vocational rehabilitation services meet  
456 certain criteria; amending s. 491.005, F.S.; revising  
457 the date for a requirement to obtain a license as a  
458 marriage and family therapist; amending s. 1001.92,  
459 F.S.; revising access rate performance-based metric;  
460 amending s. 1003.437, F.S.; requiring the State Board  
461 of Education to establish a statewide uniform weighted  
462 grading system for specified courses and articulated  
463 acceleration mechanisms; requiring district school  
464 boards to use the system for a specified purpose;  
465 amending s. 1005.06, F.S.; revising the list of  
466 institutions that are not under the jurisdiction of  
467 the Commission for Independent Education; amending s.  
468 1007.25, F.S.; revising the timeframe for Florida  
469 College System institutions and state universities to  
470 submit comments in response to a specified notice of  
471 intent; amending s. 1007.271, F.S.; revising the list  
472 of postsecondary institutions that are eligible to  
473 participate in a dual enrollment program; amending s.  
474 1008.30, F.S.; deleting a requirement for the State



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

By the Committee on Education Postsecondary

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

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30 and articulated acceleration mechanisms; requiring  
31 district school boards to use such system for a  
32 specified purpose; amending s. 1005.06, F.S.; revising  
33 the list of institutions that are not under the  
34 jurisdiction of the Commission for Independent  
35 Education; amending s. 1007.25, F.S.; revising the  
36 timeframe for Florida College System institutions and  
37 state universities to submit comments in response to a  
38 specified notice of intent; amending s. 1007.271,  
39 F.S.; revising the list of postsecondary institutions  
40 that are eligible to participate in a dual enrollment  
41 program; amending s. 1008.30, F.S.; deleting a  
42 requirement for the State Board of Education to adopt  
43 rules; authorizing school district career centers to  
44 use alternative methods adopted by the board in lieu  
45 of common placement tests to assess students in basic  
46 communication and computation skills; authorizing  
47 Florida College System institutions to request  
48 approval of institution-specific alternative methods;  
49 making conforming changes; amending s. 1008.44, F.S.;  
50 deleting a provision limiting how supplemental funding  
51 may be earned for the CAPE Industry Certification  
52 Funding List; amending s. 1009.21, F.S.; providing  
53 that a person may not lose his or her resident status  
54 for tuition purposes due to incarceration; amending s.  
55 1009.26, F.S.; providing that a fee waiver only  
56 applies to a full-time undergraduate student,  
57 beginning with a specified academic year; revising  
58 requirements for a fee waiver; amending s. 1009.30,

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59 F.S.; requiring that certain postsecondary  
60 institutions be reimbursed for public school students  
61 under the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program;  
62 amending s. 1009.536, F.S.; revising student  
63 eligibility requirements for the Florida Gold Seal  
64 Vocational Scholars and Florida Gold Seal CAPE  
65 Scholars awards; authorizing a student to apply for  
66 the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award within a  
67 specified timeframe; amending s. 1009.893, F.S.;  
68 authorizing a student to defer an award under the  
69 Benacquisto Scholarship Program; amending s. 1009.983,  
70 F.S.; authorizing a specified designee with certain  
71 credentials to serve as director of the direct-support  
72 organization for the Florida Prepaid College  
73 Foundation, Inc.; amending s. 1009.986, F.S.; revising  
74 the membership of the board of directors of Florida  
75 ABLE, Inc.; amending s. 1011.62, F.S.; revising the  
76 academic acceleration options supplement in the  
77 Florida Education Finance Program to include a method  
78 for calculating additional full-time equivalent  
79 membership based on a specified course and test score;  
80 providing specified bonuses; amending s. 1011.84,  
81 F.S.; revising the components to be considered by the  
82 Legislature in determining an apportionment of state  
83 funds to a Florida College System institution;  
84 deleting obsolete provisions; amending s. 1013.841,  
85 F.S.; requiring all Florida College System  
86 institutions, rather than only certain institutions,  
87 to maintain a specified carry forward balance;

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

95

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

97

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

100 251.001 Florida State Guard Act.—

101 (9) REIMBURSEMENT, BENEFIT, AND COMPENSATION.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

121 413.0114 Consumer disclosure for blind-related services.-

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

128 (2) The written disclosure must:

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

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

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

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

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

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

142 413.208 Service providers; quality assurance; fitness for  
143 responsibilities; background screening.-

144 (1) Service providers must apply to ~~register with~~ the  
145 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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175 1003.437 Middle and high school grading system.—The grading  
176 system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure  
177 student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses for students  
178 in public schools shall be as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

195

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

202 Section 5. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section  
203 1005.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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204 1005.06 Institutions not under the jurisdiction or purview  
205 of the commission.-

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

209 (b) Any college or, school, ~~or course~~ licensed or approved,  
210 as an institution, for establishment and operation by another  
211 state agency. A college or school, or any of its programs or  
212 courses, does not qualify for exemption from the commission's  
213 jurisdiction under this paragraph solely because another state  
214 agency licenses or approves one or more of its programs or  
215 courses for establishment and operation under part I of chapter  
216 464, chapter 466, or chapter 475, or any other chapter of the  
217 Florida Statutes requiring licensing or approval as defined in  
218 this chapter.

219 Section 6. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section  
220 1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

221 1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites;  
222 other degree requirements.-

223 (9)

224 (b) An associate in arts specialized transfer degree must  
225 include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and  
226 require 60 semester hours or more of college credit. Specialized  
227 transfer degrees are designed for Florida College System  
228 institution students who need supplemental lower-level  
229 coursework in preparation for transfer to another institution.  
230 The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for the  
231 review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees. The  
232 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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262 d. Justification for the program length if it exceeds 60  
263 credit hours, including references to the common prerequisite  
264 manual or other requirements for the baccalaureate degree. This  
265 includes documentation of alignment between the exit  
266 requirements of a Florida College System institution and the  
267 admissions requirements of a baccalaureate program at a state  
268 university to which students would typically transfer.

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

271 f. Responses to the comments received under subparagraph 2.

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

274 1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

275 (1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an  
276 eligible secondary student in this state or home education  
277 student in this state in a postsecondary course creditable  
278 toward high school completion and a career certificate or an  
279 associate or baccalaureate degree. Postsecondary institutions  
280 that are eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program  
281 are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-  
282 for-profit independent colleges and universities pursuant to s.  
283 1011.62(1)(i). A student ~~who is~~ enrolled in postsecondary  
284 instruction that is not creditable toward a high school diploma  
285 may not be classified as a dual enrollment student.

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

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

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

293 1008.30 Assessing college-level communication and  
294 computation skills for public postsecondary education.—

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

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

312 (a) A student who ~~entered 9th grade in a Florida public~~  
313 ~~school in the 2003-2004 school year, or any year thereafter, and~~  
314 earned a Florida standard high school diploma and who  
315 demonstrated readiness for college-level communication and  
316 computation skills by any of the approved common placement tests  
317 or alternative methods pursuant to this section or a student who  
318 is serving as an active duty member of any branch of the United  
319 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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349 education strategies defined in s. 1008.02 and rules established  
350 by the State Board of Education.

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

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

363 1008.44 CAPE Industry Certification Funding List.—

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

374 Section 10. Present subsections (4) through (13) of section  
375 1009.21, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as subsections (5)  
376 through (14), respectively, and a new subsection (4) is added to  
377 that section, to read:

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378 1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition  
379 purposes.—Students shall be classified as residents or  
380 nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in  
381 postsecondary educational programs offered by charter technical  
382 career centers or career centers operated by school districts,  
383 in Florida College System institutions, and in state  
384 universities.

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

388 Section 11. Paragraph (a) of subsection (20) of section  
389 1009.26, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

390 1009.26 Fee waivers.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

419 1009.30 Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program.—

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

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

426 2. Home education program secondary students; or

427 3. Personalized education program secondary students.

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

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

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436 during the summer term.

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

440 1009.536 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and Florida  
441 Gold Seal CAPE Scholars awards.—The Florida Gold Seal Vocational  
442 Scholars award and the Florida Gold Seal CAPE Scholars award are  
443 created within the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to  
444 recognize and reward academic achievement and career preparation  
445 by high school students who wish to continue their education.

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

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

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

457 (c) Completes at least 30 hours of volunteer service, or 75  
458 hours of volunteer service for students entering grade 9 in the  
459 2024-2025 school year and thereafter, or 100 hours of paid work,  
460 approved by the district school board, the administrators of a  
461 nonpublic school, or the Department of Education for home  
462 education program students, or 100 hours of a combination of  
463 both. The student may identify a social or civic issue or a  
464 professional area that interests him or her and develop a plan

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

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

479 Section 14. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section  
480 1009.893, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

481 1009.893 Benacquisto Scholarship Program.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

506 1009.983 Direct-support organization; authority.—

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

514 Section 16. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section  
515 1009.986, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

516 1009.986 Florida ABLE program.—

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

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

520 a. The chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board, ~~or a his~~  
521 ~~or her~~ designee who possesses knowledge, skill, and experience  
522 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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639 to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

656 g. ~~Comparable wage factor.~~

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

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

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

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

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

685 Section 19. Subsections (2), (3), and (4) of section  
686 1013.841, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

687 1013.841 End of year balance of Florida College System  
688 institution funds.-

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

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697 notification to the State Board of Education.

698 (b) Each Florida College System institution ~~with a final~~  
699 ~~FTE less than 15,000 for the prior year~~ that retains a state  
700 operating fund carry forward balance in excess of the 7 5  
701 percent minimum shall submit a spending plan for its excess  
702 carry forward balance. The spending plan must ~~shall~~ include all  
703 excess carry forward funds from state operating funds. The  
704 spending plan must ~~shall~~ be submitted to the Florida College  
705 System institution's board of trustees for approval by September  
706 30 of each year, 2020, and each September 30 thereafter. The  
707 State Board of Education shall review and publish each Florida  
708 College System institution's carry forward spending plan by  
709 November 15 of each year, 2020, and each November 15 thereafter.

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

717 (b) ~~Each Florida College System institution with a final~~  
718 ~~FTE of 15,000 or greater for the prior year that retains a state~~  
719 ~~operating fund carry forward balance in excess of the 7 percent~~  
720 ~~minimum shall submit a spending plan for its excess carry~~  
721 ~~forward balance. The spending plan shall include all excess~~  
722 ~~carry forward funds from state operating funds. The spending~~  
723 ~~plan shall be submitted to the Florida College System~~  
724 ~~institution's board of trustees for approval by September 30,~~  
725 ~~2020, and each September 30 thereafter. The State Board of~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

753 (g) A commitment of funds to a contingency reserve for  
754 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.

02/19/26 S Now in Rules; On Committee agenda-- Rules, 02/24/26, 12:00 pm, 412 Knott Building ;  
CS by Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education read 1st time

S01052

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

2/18/2026

The Florida Senate  
**APPEARANCE RECORD**

SB 7038

Meeting Date  
Appropriation K-12

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Bill Number or Topic

Committee  
Name Sidrah Tufail

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)  
Phone 407 810 2619

Address 12013 Royal wulf LN

Email

Street

Orlando

FL

32817

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf](#) [flsenate.gov](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/18/26

Meeting Date

SB 7038

Bill Number or Topic

Appropriations K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Riley Blum

Phone 321 499 0757

Address 919 Central Blvd

Street

Email rblum43@gmail.com

Melbourne

City

FL

State

32901

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information OR Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

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The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

02/18/26  
Meeting Date

SB 7038  
Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Appropriations K-12  
Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Elyse Wolverton Phone 269 414 0199

Address Arden Villas apt. 3 Email e1121264@ucf.edu  
Street

Orlando FL 32817  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

**PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

*While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf](#) [flsenate.gov](#)*

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The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

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2/18/26

Meeting Date

SB7038

Bill Number or Topic

Appropriation K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Mona N. Ahmed

Phone 407-300-4513

Address 12013 Royal Wulff Lane

Street

Email

Orlando

City

FL

State

32817

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information OR Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

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I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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# APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

02/18/26

Meeting Date

SB 7038

Bill Number or Topic

Appropriations k-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Alexander Vallejos

Phone 561 255 5712

Address 4245 Cortona Cove  
Street

Email VallejosAlex70@gmail.com

Oviedo  
City

FL  
State

32765  
Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information **OR** Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

2/18/26

Meeting Date

SB 7038

Bill Number or Topic

Appropriations K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Farah Aljallad

Phone 4076072245

Address 2750 Chaddsford Circle

Email

Street

Oviedo

City

FL

State

32765

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information OR Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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The Florida Senate

# APPEARANCE RECORD

7038

Bill Number or Topic

2/18/26

Meeting Date

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Appropriations Committee on PK-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name

KEITH PLATT

Phone

732-503-3368

Address

16871 SW 1st St.

Email

kplatt2010@gmail.com

Street

Pembroke Pines

City

FL

State

33027

Zip

Speaking:

For

Against

Information

**OR**

Waive Speaking:

In Support

Against

### PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Feb. 18, 2026

SB 7038

Meeting Date

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to  
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Approp. Committee on Pre-K  
Education

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Joe Anne Hart

Phone 850.224.1089

Address 118 E. Jefferson St  
Street

Email jahart@floridadental.org

Tallahassee FL 32301  
City State Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information OR Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

Florida Dental Association

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf flsenate.gov](#)

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The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

2-18-24

Meeting Date

7038

Bill Number or Topic

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Appropriations K-12

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name BOB HARRIS

Phone (850) 222-0720

Address 2018 Centennial Place

Street

Email bharris@lawfla.com

Tallahassee FL 32308

City

State

Zip

Speaking:  For  Against  Information OR Waive Speaking:  In Support  Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

Brittin Dental Assisting

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022JointRules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

# CourtSmart Tag Report

**Room:** SB 37  
**Caption:** Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education

**Case No.:**

**Type:**  
**Judge:**

**Started:** 2/18/2026 8:32:33 AM

**Ends:** 2/18/2026 9:49:03 AM

**Length:** 01:16:31

8:32:36 AM Called to Order by Chair Burgess  
8:32:39 AM Roll Call  
8:33:04 AM Chair Burgess  
8:33:43 AM Tab 2 - SB1062  
8:33:51 AM Sen. Brodeur  
8:36:15 AM Amendment 543898  
8:36:20 AM Sen. Brodeur  
8:37:32 AM Sen. Osgood  
8:39:24 AM Vote on Amendment  
8:39:33 AM SB1062 (Cont.)  
8:39:48 AM Mackenzie Fulton  
8:41:51 AM Amanda Lesly Miranda  
8:44:50 AM Stephanie Salavei  
8:46:56 AM Abraham Lopez  
8:51:20 AM Jason Crawford (Waives in Support)  
8:51:25 AM Katsiaryna Chernik (Waives in Support)  
8:51:42 AM Sen. Jones  
8:53:14 AM Sen. Massullo  
8:54:05 AM Chair Burgess  
8:55:24 AM Zaine Kekahuna-Samadi (Waives in Support)  
8:55:36 AM Luis Feliciano  
8:56:51 AM Gavin Renolds  
8:58:17 AM Sen. Osgood  
8:58:27 AM Mr. Reynolds  
8:58:43 AM Jennifer Hopkins  
8:59:47 AM Mikyle Sukow  
9:01:58 AM Julia Cohen-Pinsky  
9:01:59 AM Tavon Brown (Waives in Support)  
9:02:03 AM Niya Bobban  
9:02:19 AM Sen. Brodeur  
9:03:41 AM Roll Call on SB1062  
9:04:23 AM Tab 3 - SB1718  
9:04:41 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:05:48 AM Stanislav Kostromin  
9:07:23 AM Amy Roub  
9:08:20 AM Jack Apotsos  
9:08:59 AM Kassandra Joussaint  
9:10:05 AM Julia Cohen-Pinsky  
9:11:04 AM Niya Bobban  
9:12:07 AM Kallen Niles  
9:13:03 AM Nathan Hoffman (Waives in Support)  
9:13:04 AM Kim Garman (Waives in Support)  
9:13:07 AM Stephanie Eady (Waives in Support)  
9:13:10 AM Laura Allgood (Waives in Support)  
9:13:13 AM Stephanie Kunkel (Waives in Support)  
9:13:16 AM Jes Prichard, ITeach (Waives in Support)  
9:13:19 AM Crystal Etienne (Waives in Support)  
9:13:23 AM Uhriam Wedderlaurn (Waives in Support)  
9:13:26 AM Zaire Kekahuna-Semedi (Waives in Support)  
9:13:49 AM Roll Call on SB1718  
9:14:16 AM Mikyle Sukoo (Waives in Support)  
9:14:39 AM Tab 4- SB7038

9:14:45 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:15:43 AM Amendment 941220  
9:16:00 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:17:00 AM Sen. Bradley  
9:17:10 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:18:02 AM Sen. Jones  
9:18:19 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:19:48 AM Sen. Jones  
9:20:08 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:20:47 AM Vote on Amendment  
9:21:02 AM SB7038  
9:21:06 AM Bob Harris, Brittin Dental Assisting  
9:23:05 AM Chair to Sen. Simon  
9:25:19 AM Chair to Sen. Burgess  
9:26:22 AM JoeAnne Hart, Florida Dental Association  
9:27:30 AM Keith Platt (Waives in Support)  
9:27:32 AM Farah AlJallad (Waives Against)  
9:27:35 AM Alexander Vallejos (Waives in Support)  
9:27:39 AM Elyse Wolverton (Waives Against)  
9:27:43 AM Mona Ahmed (Waives Against)  
9:27:45 AM Riley Blum (Waives Against)  
9:27:48 AM Sidrah Tufail (Waives Against)  
9:27:58 AM Sen. Jones  
9:28:07 AM Sen. Calatayud  
9:29:04 AM Roll Call on SB7038  
9:29:30 AM Tab 1 - Budget FY26-27  
9:29:54 AM Chair Burgess  
9:33:04 AM Sen. Jones  
9:34:19 AM Chair Burgess  
9:34:45 AM Sen. Jones  
9:35:08 AM Chair Burgess  
9:35:39 AM Sen. Jones  
9:36:10 AM Chair Burgess  
9:37:04 AM Sen. Jones  
9:37:45 AM Chair Burgess  
9:38:21 AM Sen. Osgood  
9:39:07 AM Chair Burgess  
9:39:21 AM Sen. Osgood  
9:39:37 AM Chair Burgess  
9:39:46 AM Sen. Osgood  
9:40:43 AM Chair Burgess  
9:41:42 AM Crystal Etieyne  
9:45:01 AM Devette McCain  
9:48:06 AM Chair Burgess  
9:48:57 AM Adjournment on Motion by Sen. Gaetz

# THE FLORIDA SENATE

## SENATOR JASON W.B. PIZZO

### **DISTRICT OFFICE:**

3475 Sheridan Street  
Suite 211  
Hollywood, FL 33021  
Phone: 954.893.5045  
[pizzo.jason@flsenate.gov](mailto:pizzo.jason@flsenate.gov)

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304 Senate Office Building  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
Phone: 850.487.5037

### **STAFF:**

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*Chief Legislative Aide*  
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Jo Anne Alvarez  
*District Legislative Aide*  
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Taylor Morancy  
*Legislative Aide*  
[morancy.taylor@flsenate.gov](mailto:morancy.taylor@flsenate.gov)

### **COMMITTEES:**

Appropriations Committee  
on Pre-K-12 Education,  
*Vice Chair*

Regulated Industries,  
*Vice Chair*

Appropriations

Appropriations Committee  
on Agriculture,  
Environment, and General  
Government

Banking and Insurance

Community Affairs

Criminal Justice

Rules

Joint Legislative Auditing  
Committee

### **BEN ALBRITTON**

*President of the Senate*

### **JASON BRODEUR**

*President Pro Tempore*

February 18, 2026

The Honorable Senator Burgess  
Chairman, Approps Pre-K - 12  
201 The Capitol  
404 South Monroe  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Chair Burgess,

I respectfully request to be excused from today's Appropriations Committee on Pre-K – 12 Education meeting. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jason Pizzo

