

Committee on Education Pre-K - 12

CS/HB 1035 — K-12 Teachers

by Civil Justice Subcommittee and Rep. Gonzalez Pittman and others (SB 244 by Senators Calatayud and Perry)

The bill (Chapter 2023-38, L.O.F.) expands opportunities for teacher recruitment and retention, and clarifies teachers' rights. Specifically in the areas of teacher recruitment and retention, the bill:

- Authorizes state-approved teacher preparation programs to be eligible for the “buy-one-get-one” tuition and fee waiver for qualified students.
- Establishes the Dual Enrollment Educator Scholarship Program to assist Florida public high school teachers in obtaining the graduate degree and credentials necessary to provide dual enrollment coursework on the high school campus.
- Establishes the Teacher Apprenticeship Program as an alternative pathway for individuals to enter the teaching profession, and authorizes a five-year temporary apprenticeship certificate.
- Waives teacher certification initial exam and certification fees for a specified retired first responder.
- Establishes the Heroes in the Classroom Bonus Program to provide a one-time sign-on bonus to retired first responders and veterans who become a full-time classroom teacher, with specified service duties.
- Requires the Commissioner of Education to conduct a comprehensive review of all federal, state, and local teacher training requirements by December 31, 2023, and provide recommendations to the Legislature.
- Requires a principal to impose consequences on a student only after determining the student has violated the student code of conduct, and requires the principal to notify the teacher of any action taken.

The bill creates ch. 1015, F.S., to catalog a number of teachers' rights that are currently guaranteed in law regarding employment, continuing education, controlling the classroom, directing classroom instruction, and receiving timely assessment data. The bill authorizes the Office of Inspector General to investigate allegations or reports of suspected violations of a student's, parent's, or teacher's rights.

In addition, the bill creates a new pathway via special magistrate for objections by teachers who believe the school district has directed him or her to violate state law or rule and provides a rebuttable presumption that a specified action by a teacher or other staff member was necessary to restore or maintain safety.

These provisions were approved by the Governor and take effect on July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 35-4; House 92-22