

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

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

BILL: CS/SB 1602

SPONSOR: Senator Campbell

SUBJECT: High School Grades

DATE: April 13, 1999 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>White</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill changes the high school grading scale defined in law. The changes will take effect for students entering the ninth grade in 1999 - 2000.

The bill amends section 232.2463 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

The 1987 Legislature established a statewide grading scale for high school courses. The scale provided the equivalent to a letter grade in numeric percentages and grade points. The purpose of having grade equivalents the same statewide was to counter a perception that it was easier for students to make good grades in one school district than another, because some school districts established equivalents and some did not. In one district, an "A" might equal 90 percent to 100 percent, but in another it would be 94 percent to 100 percent.

Numeric percentage equivalents are not used in making decisions about admitting students to postsecondary education or awarding them scholarships. Grade point averages are important, however, because they are used to determine student eligibility to play sports, to graduate with a regular diploma, and to be admitted to college and earn scholarships.

The 1997 Legislature made adjustments in the grade scale, but only to the numeric percentages that are equivalent to letter grades and grade points. The relationship of letter grades to grade points has stayed the same.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The legislation under consideration will change the grading scale for grades A, B, and C, beginning in 1999-2000 and affecting only the ninth grade in that year. Each year, the new grading

scale will be in effect for another class, and the entire high school will not be included in the new values until 2002-2003. The values are shown in the table below.

	1987-1997		1997-1999		1999-2000 Ninth Grade		1999-2000 Grades 10-12	
<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Point</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Point</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Point</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Point</i>
A	94 - 100	4.0	Unchanged		90 - 100	4.0	94 - 100	4.0
B	85 - 93	3.0	Unchanged		80 - 89	3.0	85 - 93	3.0
C	75 - 84	2.0	77 - 84	2.0	70 - 79	2.0	77 - 84	2.0
D	65 - 74	1.0	70 - 76	1.0	65 - 69	1.0	70 - 76	1.0
F	0 - 64	0	0 - 69	0	0 - 64	0	0 - 69	0

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The school districts will incur the expense of re-programming their computers to reflect the new grading scale along with the previous ones. School districts estimate from 120 to 545 hours of programming. Teachers will have additional work to calculate different grades for students in the same course but different classes.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

According to the Education Commission of the States, very few states establish in law the numeric equivalents for letter grades.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
