

**STORAGE NAME:** h0033.ed

**DATE:** April 3, 2000

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS  
ANALYSIS**

**BILL #:** HB 33

**RELATING TO:** Grade Forgiveness Policies

**SPONSOR(S):** Representative Wasserman Schultz

**TIED BILL(S):** None

**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:**

- (1) EDUCATION K-12 YEAS 7 NAYS 0
  - (2) EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS
  - (3)
  - (4)
  - (5)
- 

**I. SUMMARY:**

Current law requires school districts to adopt policies to assist students in meeting high school graduation requirements. These policies may include grade forgiveness policies.

HB 33 requires that beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, forgiveness policies be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F", or the equivalent, with a grade "C" or higher, or the equivalent, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. It requires that course grades for courses not replaced under the provisions of the forgiveness policy be included in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average (GPA) required for graduation.

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2000.

HB 33 will have a fiscal impact on school districts because a more stringent grade forgiveness policy will require some students to take a greater number of courses to meet the cumulative 2.0 GPA graduation requirement. However, no appropriation is required. Data is not available to estimate the increased cost.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. DOES THE BILL SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- |                                   |                              |                             |   |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. <u>Less Government</u>         | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. <u>Lower Taxes</u>             | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. <u>Individual Freedom</u>      | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. <u>Personal Responsibility</u> | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. <u>Family Empowerment</u>      | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

For any principle that received a "no" above, please explain:

B. PRESENT SITUATION:

**Courses Required for Graduation**

Section 232.246(1), F.S., outlines courses required for high school graduation. Graduation requires successful completion of either a minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 or an International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits are distributed as follows:

- Four credits in English.
- Three credits in mathematics (one of these credits must be Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics course).
- Three credits in science.
- One credit in American history.
- One credit in world history.
- One-half credit in economics.
- One-half credit in American government.
- One credit in practical arts career education/exploratory career education/performing fine arts.
- One-half credit in life management.
- One credit in physical education.
- Eight and one-half elective credits.

**Graduation Standards**

Section 232.246(5), F.S., requires that each district school board establish standards for graduation for its schools. These standards include:

- Earning passing scores on the high school competency test.
- Completion of all other applicable requirements prescribed by the district school board pursuant to s. 232.245, F.S.
- Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 1.5 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, for students entering 9th grade before the 1997-1998 school year; however, these students must earn a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in courses for graduation that are taken after July 1, 1997, or have an overall cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above.

- Achievement of a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, in courses required for graduation, for students entering 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and thereafter.

### **Grade Forgiveness Policies**

Section 232.246(5)(e)1., F.S., requires school districts to adopt policies designed to assist students in meeting the GPA requirements for graduation. These policies may include, but are not limited to: **forgiveness policies**, summer school attendance, special counseling, volunteer and/or peer tutors, school-sponsored help sessions, homework hotlines, and skills classes.

Currently, school district forgiveness policies include replacement of poor grades for elective courses with higher grades earned for unrelated elective courses, and forgiveness of elective course grades if they are earned for courses taken in excess of the 24 credit minimum.

#### **C. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:**

HB 33 requires that beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, forgiveness policies be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F", or the equivalent, with a grade "C" or higher, or the equivalent, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. It requires that course grades not replaced under the provisions of the forgiveness policy be included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA required for graduation.

#### **D. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:**

Section 1: Revises s. 232.246(5), F.S., to require that beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, forgiveness policies be limited to replacing a grade of "D" or "F", or the equivalent, with a grade "C" or higher, or the equivalent, earned subsequently in the same or comparable course. It requires that course grades not replaced under the provisions of the forgiveness policy be included in the calculation of the cumulative GPA required for graduation.

Section 2: Specifies an effective date of July 1, 2000.

### **III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:**

#### **A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:**

##### **1. Revenues:**

None.

##### **2. Expenditures:**

There will be an increased cost to school districts for additional courses taken by students in order to achieve the GPA required for graduation. This increased cost will be reflected in increased FTE; however, this cost does not require an appropriation. Data is not available to determine the additional cost.

**B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:**

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

There will be an increased cost to school districts for additional courses taken by students in order to achieve the GPA required for graduation. Data is not available to determine the additional cost.

**C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:**

None.

**D. FISCAL COMMENTS:**

See above.

**IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:**

**A. APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:**

The bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or take action requiring the expenditure of funds.

**B. REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:**

The bill does not reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

**C. REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:**

The bill does not reduce the percentage or a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

**V. COMMENTS:**

**A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:**

None.

**B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:**

None.

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C. OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

VI. AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:

None.

VII. SIGNATURES:

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION K-12:

Prepared by:

Sarah A. Clark

Staff Director:

Patricia W. Levesque

AS REVISED BY THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS:

Prepared by:

Mark Armstrong

Staff Director:

John Newman