

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/HB 803 Jump Start Literacy Pilot Project

SPONSOR(S): Lee, Jr.

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1034

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Choice & Innovation Subcommittee	12 Y, 0 N, As CS	Ammel	Fudge
2) Education Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill requires the Office of Early Learning (OEL) to establish a 5-year Literacy Jump Start Pilot Project in St. Lucie County to assist low-income, at-risk children in developing emergent literacy skills. The OEL, in consultation with the Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County shall select one or more municipalities to participate in the project. The OEL must seek partnerships with local nonprofit organizations and the business community to implement the project. The bill:

- Provides a definition for “emergent literacy”.
- Defines child eligibility.
- Requires OEL to establish performance standards and outcome measures that address the age-appropriate progress of children in developing emergent literacy behaviors and skills.
- Requires instructors in the project to complete an emergent literacy training course approved by OEL.
- Requires the instruction to be conducted in a subsidized housing unit to provide easy access for participating children and families.

This bill does not have a fiscal impact on state or local governments.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Florida's (OEL) is the lead agency for administration of the federal Child Care and Development fund, 45 C.F.R. parts 98 and 99 in Florida and must comply with the lead agency responsibilities under those sections.¹ The OEL is responsible for administering school readiness programs at the state level and must coordinate with the early learning coalitions in providing school readiness services on a full-day, full-year, full-choice basis to the extent possible in order to enable parents to work and be financially self-sufficient.²

The OEL provides funding and oversight to the School Readiness Program through the Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County. School Readiness services are offered by private schools, public schools, faith-based, profit and non-profit providers. The coalition determines a family's eligibility for School Readiness services, by considering several factors including verification of child age, residency, family income, purpose of care (work/education activities), whether children are at risk of abuse or neglect, and at risk of future school failure. OEL must follow specified criteria for prioritizing participants for the School Readiness Program.³ The coalition currently partners with local non-profits and private businesses to administer early learning programs. Some individuals representing these entities may serve on the early learning coalition board. The coalition also verifies required instructor credentials and training, and monitors early learning provider sites.⁴

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill requires the Office of Early Learning to:

- Establish the 5-year Jump Start Literacy Pilot Project in St. Lucie County.
- Seek partnerships with local nonprofit organizations and the business community in implementing the pilot project.
- Establish performance standards and outcome measures that address the age-appropriate progress of children in developing emergent literacy behaviors and skills.

Instructors in the pilot project must have successfully completed an emergent literacy training course approved by the office. The emergent literacy instruction must be conducted in a subsidized housing unit in order to provide easy access for participating children and families.

The bill requires the OEL in consultation with the Early Learning Coalition of St. Lucie County to select municipalities in St. Lucie County for implementation. A municipality within which locally or federally subsidized housing is located is eligible for participation in the pilot project.

To participate in the pilot project a child must be:

- Two or 3 years of age
- Eligible for a federally subsidized child care program
- A member of a family that is economically disadvantaged and reside in locally or federally subsidized housing.

The bill provides the following definitions:

¹ Section 411.01(4)(c), F.S.

² Section 411.01(4)(a), F.S.

³ Section 411.01(6), F.S.

⁴ Florida Department of Education 2013 Bill Analysis for HB 803

- “Economically disadvantaged” means having a family income that does not exceed 150 percent of the federal poverty level.
- “Emergent literacy” means a variety of early behaviors and skills associated with successful reading and writing development during the first 5 years of life that contribute to a child’s foundations for literacy and learning and future success in school and life.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Creates an unnumbered section of law; requiring the Office of Early Learning (OEL) to establish the pilot project in St. Lucie County to assist low-income, at-risk children in developing emergent literacy skills; providing eligibility requirements for participation; requiring OEL to establish performance standards and outcome measures for participating children; requiring emergent literacy training for instructors; requiring the office to allocate funds for the pilot project.

Section 2. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2013.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

This bill does not appear to require a city or county to expend funds or to take any action requiring the expenditure of funds.

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

This bill does not appear to reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On March 20, 2013, the Choice & Innovation Subcommittee reported HB 803 favorably as a committee substitute. There was one amendment to the bill that:

- clarified that the statewide Office of Early Learning was required to administer the program, not the Office of Early Learning within the Department of Education, and
- renamed the program to Literacy Jump Start so it is not confused with the national Jumpstart Program.

The analysis is drafted to the committee substitute.