

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 1035 Personalized Education
SPONSOR(S): Sullivan
TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 968

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee	11 Y, 0 N	Healy	Healy
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

In 2016, the Legislature created the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program within the Department of Education (DOE) to provide an educational environment that allows students to progress based upon the mastery of concepts and skills. The Commissioner of Education was authorized to waive State Board of Education rules relating to pupil progression and the awarding of credit. Applications to participate were limited to the P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School and the Lake, Palm Beach, Seminole, and Pinellas County school districts.

The bill:

- Renames the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program to the Mastery-Based Education Pilot Program.
- Allows any district in the state to submit an application to DOE to participate.
- Authorizes districts participating in the pilot program to use an alternative interpretation of letter grades to measure student success in grades 6-12. The alternate system must meet specific requirements and be approved by the district school board.
- Allows districts to determine and award one full credit toward high school graduation based on the student's mastery of core content and skills without meeting the current minimum requirement of 135 or 120 hours of bona fide instruction to award one full credit.
- Requires the statewide articulation agreement to ensure fair and equitable access for high school graduates with mastery-based, nontraditional diplomas and transcripts.

There is no fiscal impact to the state.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2018.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

In 2016, the Legislature created the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program within the Department of Education (DOE) to provide an educational environment that allows students to progress based upon the mastery of concepts and skills. The purpose of the program is to provide an educational environment that allows students to advance to higher levels of learning upon the mastery of concepts and skills.¹ Participation was limited to the P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School and the Lake, Palm Beach, and Pinellas County school districts.²

The Department of Education was required to:

- Develop an application
- Compile student and staff schedules of participating schools before and after program implementation.
- Provide participants access to statewide, standardized assessments.
- Provide an annual report to the Legislature and the Governor, by June 1, summarizing the accomplishments of the program and recommendations for statutory revisions.
- Adopt rules to administer this program.³

In order to facilitate innovative practices, and to allow local selection of educational methods, the Commissioner of Education has the authority to waive, upon district request, provisions relating to district school instruction.⁴ Additionally, for districts participating in the competency-based pilot program, the State Board of Education may authorize the Commissioner of Education to grant an additional waiver of rules relating to student progression and the awarding of credits.⁵

Four of the five eligible districts chose to participate in the 2016-2017 school year, and one district chose to use 2016-2017 as a planning year. Districts reported varying levels of progress across the following components:

- Communication plans
- Professional Development
- Student Progression
- Digital and Blended Learning
- Allocation of Resources

Across four districts, components of the pilot program were implemented in 67 elementary schools, eight middle schools, nine high schools, and one K-12 school.⁶

Awarding of Credit

Current law defines, for purposes of high school graduation requirements, one full credit as a minimum of 135 hours of bona fide instruction in a designated course of study that contains student performance standards, except as otherwise provided through CAP. For districts that have been authorized to

¹ Section 1003.4996(1), F.S.

² Section 1003.4996(2), F.S.

³ Section 1003.4996(2)(b)&(5), F.S.

⁴ Section 1001.10(3), F.S.

⁵ Section 1003.4996(3), F.S.

⁶ Competency-Based Education Pilot Program, 2016-2017 Annual Report.

implement block scheduling, one full credit means a minimum of 120 hours of bona fide instruction in a designated course of study that contains student performance standards. The State Board of Education determines the number of postsecondary credit hours earned through dual enrollment that equal one full credit of the equivalent high school course.⁷

In awarding credit for high school graduation, each district school board must maintain a one-half credit earned system that includes courses provided on a full-year basis. A student enrolled in a full-year course must receive one-half credit if the student successfully completes either the first half or the second half of a full-year course but fails to complete the other half of the course.⁸

Middle and High School Grading System

Under current law, the grading system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses is as follows:

- Grade “A” equals 90%-100%, has a grade point average value of 4, and is defined as “outstanding progress.”
- Grade “B” equals 80%-89%, has a grade point average value of 3, and is defined as “above average progress.”
- Grade “C” equals 70%-79%, has a grade point average value of 2, and is defined as “average progress.”
- Grade “D” equals 60%-69%, has a grade point average value of 1, and is defined as “lowest acceptable progress.”
- Grade “F” equals 50%-59%, 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.”⁹

For purposes of class ranking, districts are authorized to exercise a weighted grading system in accordance with the weighted provisions allowed in dual enrollment courses.¹⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill renames the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program to the Mastery-Based Education Pilot Program and allows any district in the state to apply to the DOE for participation. The pilot program is for five years.

The bill provides that school districts participating in the Mastery-Based Education Pilot Program may award credit as a student demonstrates mastery of the core content and skills, consistent with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, rather than awarding credit only if the student receives 135 or 120 hours of instruction. Participating districts may also use an alternative interpretation of letter grades to measure student success in grades 6 – 12.

One form of alternative grading system is a standards-based grading system which is used in conjunction with standards-based instruction, assessments, and academic reporting. The standards-based systems are based on students demonstrating understanding or mastery of the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn as they progress through their education. In most high schools, students typically earn credit for passing a course, but a passing grade may be an A or it may be a D, suggesting that the awarded credit is based on a spectrum of learning expectations—with some students learning more and others learning less—rather than on the same learning standards being applied to all students equally. And because grades may be calculated differently from school to school

⁷ Section 1003.436(1)(a), F.S.

⁸ Section 1003.436(2), F.S.

⁹ Section 1003.437, F.S.

¹⁰ *Id.*

or teacher to teacher, and they may be based on different learning expectations (for example, some courses may be “harder” and others “easier”), students may pass their courses, earn the required number of credits, and receive a diploma without acquiring the most essential knowledge and skills described in standards. The following is an example of a standards-based report card:¹¹

Grade 3

Student Name: Teacher:

School:

Grading Key

- 4 Exceeds expectations
- 3 Meets expectations
- 2 Progressing toward expectations
- 1 Not meeting expectations
- X Skill/concept not introduced or tested

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

READING				
Understands what is read				
Uses comprehension strategies				
Understands/applies new words				
Reads fluently				
Selects materials/reads independently				
EFFORT				

At least one of the current participants is transitioning to a standards-based grading system to provide parents, students and teachers with more accurate information about students’ progress toward meeting content and skill standards. Students receive a separate designation of progress for each subject within a course which allows for better support to students with goal-setting and overall achievement of the academic standards by clearly communicating progress in a subject (rather than an entire course). Student progress is reported as a level of proficiency, i.e., *Expert, Proficient, Approaching Proficiency, Not Meeting, and Insufficient Evidence*.¹²

Beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, districts currently participating in the program may amend their application to include alternatives for awarding credit and alternatives for the interpretation of middle and high school grades. Applications that are amended must be approved by the district school board. Districts applying for the first time would include these requests in their initial application.

Alternatives to awarding credit must include a verification of the student’s mastery of the applicable course content using rigorous scoring rubrics to evaluate the student’s work.

The bill also requires the statewide articulation agreement to ensure fair and equitable access for high school graduates with mastery-based, nontraditional diplomas and transcripts.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 1003.436, F.S., relating to definition of “credit.”

¹¹ Education Reform, *Standards-Based*, at <http://edglossary.org/standards-based/>

¹² Standards-Based Grading, *What is Standards-Based Grading*, at <https://pk Yonge.ufl.edu/academics/standards-based-grading/>

Section 2. Amends s. 1003.437, F.S., relating to middle and high school grading system.

Section 3. Amends s. 1003.4996, F.S., relating to the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program.

Section 4. Amends s. 1007.23, F.S., relating to the statewide articulation agreement.

Section 5. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2018.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. 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:

None.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.