

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to K-12 classroom teachers;
3 establishing the Blue Ribbon Panel Task Force on
4 Teacher Recruitment, Certification, and Retention
5 within the Department of Education; providing purpose,
6 membership, and meeting requirements of the task
7 force; providing staff and support for the task force;
8 providing that task force members serve without
9 compensation and are entitled to per diem; providing
10 the duties and responsibilities of the task force;
11 requiring a report to the Governor, the Commissioner
12 of Education, and the Legislature by a specified date;
13 providing report requirements; providing that the
14 department publish the report on its website;
15 providing for the termination of the task force;
16 amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; providing that the Graduate
17 Management Admissions Test and a Graduate Record
18 Examination subject area test may be used to meet
19 certain educator certification requirements; requiring
20 certain educator certification examinations be
21 published on the department's website by a specified
22 date; providing requirements for the publication of
23 such examinations; providing that certain examination
24 instruments are confidential and exempt for a
25 specified period, rather than indefinitely; amending

26 s. 1012.59, F.S.; providing that certain application
 27 fees and examination fees relating to educator
 28 certification are waived for certain individuals;
 29 providing an effective date.
 30

31 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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33 Section 1. Blue Ribbon Panel Task Force on Teacher
 34 Recruitment, Certification, and Retention.—

35 (1) The Blue Ribbon Panel Task Force is established within
 36 the Department of Education to investigate and provide
 37 recommendations for the modification of administrative policies
 38 and procedures and for legislative action regarding K-12 teacher
 39 recruitment, certification, and retention.

40 (2) The Task Force shall consist of 13 members, to be
 41 selected as follows:

42 (a) The Chancellor, K-12 Public Schools, or his or her
 43 designee.

44 (b) The Chancellor of Florida Colleges, or his or her
 45 designee.

46 (c) The Chancellor of the State University System, or his
 47 or her designee.

48 (d) One member who is appointed by the President of the
 49 Florida School Board Association.

50 (e) One member who is appointed by the Chief Executive

51 Officer of the Florida Association of District School
52 Superintendents.

53 (f) The 2019 Florida Teacher of the Year.

54 (g) The 2017-2018 recipient of the Principal Achievement
55 Award for Outstanding Leadership.

56 (h) One member who is appointed by the President of the
57 Florida Education Association.

58 (i) One member who is appointed by the President of the
59 Florida Chamber of Commerce.

60 (j) One member who is appointed by the President of the
61 Florida Congress of Parents and Teachers.

62 (k) One member appointed by the President of the NAACP
63 Florida State Conference.

64 (l) One member appointed by the State Director of LULAC
65 Florida.

66 (m) One member appointed by the President of the Florida
67 Retired Educators Association.

68 (3) (a) The appointments to the Task Force must be
69 completed by August 1, 2018. The Task Force shall hold its
70 initial meeting by September 1, 2018, and shall meet at least
71 monthly until the submission of its final report. Meetings may
72 be conducted by conference call, teleconferencing, or similar
73 technology.

74 (b) The Task Force shall elect a chair and vice chair. A
75 vacancy in the office of chair or vice chair shall be filled by

76 | a vote of the remaining members.

77 | (c) The department shall provide staff and administrative
78 | support to the Task Force.

79 | (d) Members of the Task Force shall serve without
80 | compensation. Members are entitled to reimbursement for per diem
81 | and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

82 | (4) The Task Force may consider issues including, but not
83 | limited to:

84 | (a) Teacher compensation.

85 | (b) Targeted financial incentives for prospective teacher
86 | candidates, including, but not limited to, tuition remission,
87 | loan forgiveness, and scholarships.

88 | (c) Expedited pathways for substitute teachers and
89 | paraprofessionals to obtain teacher certifications.

90 | (d) Incentives for retired teachers to return to the
91 | classroom or serve as mentors.

92 | (e) Teacher workforce diversity.

93 | (f) Teacher certification requirements and costs.

94 | (g) The effectiveness of teacher induction, mentoring, and
95 | residency programs.

96 | (h) The validity and reliability of current methods of
97 | evaluating the performance of teachers and of candidates for
98 | teacher certification.

99 | (i) The consideration of other states' best practices for
100 | teacher recruitment, certification, and retention.

101 (5) (a) By January 31, 2019, the Task Force shall submit a
102 final report to the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the
103 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
104 Representatives. The report must include recommendations by the
105 Task Force for administrative and legislative action relating to
106 K-12 teacher recruitment, certification, and retention. The
107 department shall publish the Task Force's final report on its
108 website.

109 (b) The Task Force terminates upon submission of the
110 report.

111 Section 2. Paragraph (e) of subsection (3), paragraphs (g)
112 and (h) of subsection (5), and paragraphs (e) and (g) of
113 subsection (9) of section 1012.56, Florida Statutes, are
114 amended, paragraph (i) is added to subsection (5), and a new
115 paragraph (f) is added to subsection (9) of that section, to
116 read:

117 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

118 (3) MASTERY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.—Acceptable means of
119 demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

120 (e) Effective July 1, 2015, achievement of passing scores,
121 identified in state board rule, on national or international
122 examinations that test comparable content and relevant standards
123 in verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning
124 skills, including, but not limited to, the verbal, analytical
125 writing, and quantitative reasoning portions of the Graduate

126 | Record Examination or the Graduate Management Admissions Test.
 127 | Passing scores identified in state board rule must be at
 128 | approximately the same level of rigor as is required to pass the
 129 | general knowledge examinations.

130 | (5) MASTERY OF SUBJECT AREA KNOWLEDGE.—Acceptable means of
 131 | demonstrating mastery of subject area knowledge are:

132 | (g) Documentation of successful completion of a United
 133 | States Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
 134 | program; ~~or~~

135 | (h) Documentation of a passing score on the Defense
 136 | Language Proficiency Test (DLPT); or—

137 | (i) Documentation of a passing score on a Graduate Record
 138 | Examination subject area test.

139 |
 140 | School districts are encouraged to provide mechanisms for middle
 141 | grades teachers holding only a K-6 teaching certificate to
 142 | obtain a subject area coverage for middle grades through
 143 | postsecondary coursework or district add-on certification.

144 | (9) EXAMINATIONS.—

145 | (e) For any examination developed by this state, the
 146 | Department of Education and the State Board of Education shall
 147 | maintain confidentiality of the examination, developmental
 148 | materials, and workpapers, which shall be ~~are~~ exempt from s.
 149 | 119.07(1) for a period of 3 years.

150 | (f)1. To promote transparency in the educator

151 certification process and no later than the 2020-2021 school
152 year, and every 3 years thereafter, the Commissioner of
153 Education shall publish on the department's website a previously
154 administered general knowledge examination and a previously
155 administered Florida subject area examination for each subject
156 area.

157 2. The commissioner shall establish a schedule for the
158 release of each examination; however, the initial publication of
159 the examinations must occur by June 30, 2021.

160 3. The department must provide materials on its website to
161 help the public interpret the teacher certification
162 examinations.

163 (h) ~~(g)~~ All examination instruments, including
164 developmental materials and workpapers directly related thereto,
165 which are prepared, prescribed, or administered pursuant to this
166 section shall be confidential and exempt from the provisions of
167 s. 119.07(1) and from s. 1001.52 for a period of 3 years.
168 Provisions governing access to, maintenance of, and destruction
169 of such instruments and related materials shall be prescribed by
170 rules of the State Board of Education.

171 Section 3. Section 1012.59, Florida Statutes, is amended
172 to read:

173 1012.59 Certification fees.—

174 (1) The State Board of Education, by rule, shall establish
175 separate fees for applications, examinations, certification,

176 certification renewal, late renewal, recordmaking, and
177 recordkeeping, and may establish procedures for scheduling and
178 administering an examination upon an applicant's request. Each
179 fee shall be based on department estimates of the revenue
180 required to implement the provisions of law with respect to
181 certification of school personnel. The application fee shall be
182 nonrefundable. Each examination fee shall be sufficient to cover
183 the actual cost of developing and administering the examination.
184 However, beginning in the 2018-2019 fiscal year and each year
185 thereafter, the application fee and the examination fees for the
186 following applicants and certificate holders shall be waived:

187 (a) For an applicant seeking initial certification, the
188 application fee and the examination fees for the general
189 knowledge examination, the examination used to demonstrate
190 professional education competence, and one subject area
191 knowledge examination.

192 (b) For a licensed educator employed at a public school in
193 this state seeking to renew his or her Florida educator's
194 certificate, the fees associated with the renewal of his or her
195 certification.

196
197 If an applicant does not pass an examination on his or her first
198 attempt, he or she is responsible for all costs associated with
199 retaking the examination.

200 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018.