

By Senator Taddeo

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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; specifying the  
6       purpose of the task force; providing requirements for  
7       the membership and meetings of 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 that the task force issue a report to the  
12      Governor, the Commissioner of Education, and the  
13      Legislature by a specified date; providing report  
14      requirements; requiring that the department publish  
15      the report on its website; providing for the  
16      termination of the task force; amending s. 1012.56,  
17      F.S.; providing that the Graduate Management  
18      Admissions Test and a Graduate Record Examination  
19      subject area test may be used to meet certain educator  
20      certification requirements; requiring certain educator  
21      certification examinations be published on the  
22      department's website by a specified date; providing  
23      requirements for the publication of such examinations;  
24      providing that certain examination instruments are  
25      confidential and exempt for a specified period, rather  
26      than indefinitely; amending s. 1012.59, F.S.; waiving  
27      certain application and examination fees relating to  
28      educator certification for certain individuals, as of  
29      a specified fiscal year; providing an effective date.

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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 Boards 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

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59 Florida Chamber of Commerce.

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

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

64 (l) One member appointed by the director of LULAC Florida.

65 (m) One member appointed by the president of the Florida  
66 Retired Educators Association.

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

72 (b) The task force shall elect a chair and vice chair. A  
73 vacancy in the office of chair or vice chair must be filled by a  
74 vote of the remaining members.

75 (c) The department shall provide staff and administrative  
76 support to the task force.

77 (d) Members of the task force shall serve without  
78 compensation. Members are entitled to reimbursement for per diem  
79 and travel expenses as provided in s. 112.061, Florida Statutes.

80 (4) The task force may consider issues, including, but not  
81 limited to:

82 (a) Teacher compensation.

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

86 (c) Expedited pathways for substitute teachers and  
87 paraprofessionals to obtain teacher certifications.

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88 (d) Incentives for retired teachers to return to the  
89 classroom or serve as mentors.

90 (e) Teacher workforce diversity.

91 (f) Teacher certification requirements and costs.

92 (g) The effectiveness of teacher induction, mentoring, and  
93 residency programs.

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

97 (i) The consideration of other states' best practices for  
98 teacher recruitment, certification, and retention.

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

107 (b) The task force terminates upon submission of the  
108 report.

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

115 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

116 (3) MASTERY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.—Acceptable means of

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117 demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

118 (e) Effective July 1, 2015, achievement of passing scores,  
119 identified in state board rule, on national or international  
120 examinations that test comparable content and relevant standards  
121 in verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning  
122 skills, including, but not limited to, the verbal, analytical  
123 writing, and quantitative reasoning portions of the Graduate  
124 Record Examination or the Graduate Management Admissions Test.  
125 Passing scores identified in state board rule must be at  
126 approximately the same level of rigor as is required to pass the  
127 general knowledge examinations.

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

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

133 (h) Documentation of a passing score on the Defense  
134 Language Proficiency Test (DLPT); ~~or~~

135 (i) Documentation of a passing score on a Graduate Record  
136 Examination subject area test.

137  
138 School districts are encouraged to provide mechanisms for middle  
139 grades teachers holding only a K-6 teaching certificate to  
140 obtain a subject area coverage for middle grades through  
141 postsecondary coursework or district add-on certification.

142 (9) EXAMINATIONS.—

143 (e) For any examination developed by this state, the  
144 Department of Education and the State Board of Education shall  
145 maintain confidentiality of the examination, developmental

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146 materials, and workpapers, which shall be ~~are~~ exempt from s.  
147 119.07(1) for a period of 3 years.

148 (f)1. To promote transparency in the educator certification  
149 process and no later than the 2020-2021 school year, and every 3  
150 years thereafter, the Commissioner of Education shall publish on  
151 the department's website a previously administered general  
152 knowledge examination and a previously administered Florida  
153 subject area examination for each subject area.

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

157 3. The department must provide materials on its website to  
158 help the public interpret the teacher certification  
159 examinations.

160 (h) ~~(g)~~ All examination instruments, including developmental  
161 materials and workpapers directly related thereto, which are  
162 prepared, prescribed, or administered pursuant to this section  
163 shall be confidential and exempt from the provisions of s.  
164 119.07(1) and from s. 1001.52 for a period of 3 years.

165 Provisions governing access to, maintenance of, and destruction  
166 of such instruments and related materials shall be prescribed by  
167 rules of the State Board of Education.

168 Section 3. Section 1012.59, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
169 read:

170 1012.59 Certification fees.—

171 (1) The State Board of Education, by rule, shall establish  
172 separate fees for applications, examinations, certification,  
173 certification renewal, late renewal, recordmaking, and  
174 recordkeeping, and may establish procedures for scheduling and

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

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

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

193  
194 If an applicant does not pass an examination on his or her first  
195 attempt, he or she is responsible for all costs associated with  
196 retaking the examination.

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