

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education Pre-K -12

BILL: SB 1590

INTRODUCER: Senator Burgess

SUBJECT: Educator Preparation

DATE: March 28, 2025

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Jahnke	Bouck	ED	Pre-meeting
2.			AED	
3.			FP	

I. Summary:

SB 1590 establishes the Task Force for Educator Preparation to review and make recommendations for revising Florida’s teacher training, certification, and professional learning systems. The intent of the task force is to modernize these systems by 2028 in order to better prepare educators for the challenges of 21st-century classrooms.

The task force will include representatives from state universities, private colleges, educator preparation institutes (EPIs), school districts, charter schools, and the Department of Education (DOE). It is charged with evaluating the effectiveness of teacher training programs, including alternative certification pathways and teacher apprenticeship models; analyzing current certification standards and procedures; and reviewing ongoing professional learning, including mentorship and collaboration with preparation programs.

The DOE is required to provide administrative support to the task force, which must submit a final report with recommendations to the Governor and legislative leaders by December 1, 2025, after which the task force will expire.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

II. Present Situation:

Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher preparation programs are accountable for producing individuals with the competencies and skills necessary to achieve the state education goals.¹ State-approved teacher preparation programs are offered by Florida public and private postsecondary institutions, public school

¹ Section 1004.04(1)(b), F.S.

districts, and private providers by which candidates for educator certification can, depending on the type of program, demonstrate mastery of general knowledge, professional preparation and education competence, and/or subject area knowledge for purposes of attaining an educator certificate.²

There are various state-approved teacher preparation programs that individuals may use to receive the training needed to attain an educator certificate, including:³

- Initial Teacher Preparation programs in public and private colleges and universities requiring candidates to demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge in one or more specific subject areas(s), mastery of general knowledge, and mastery of professional preparation and education competence. Program completers qualify for a professional educator certificate.⁴
- Educator Preparation Institutes (EPIs) offering alternative certification programs by postsecondary institutions and qualified private providers for baccalaureate degree holders. These programs provide professional preparation for career-changers and recent college graduates who do not already possess a Professional Educator Certificate and require mastery of general knowledge, mastery of subject area knowledge, and mastery of professional preparation and education competence.
- District professional learning certification and education competency programs. Such programs are cohesive competency-based professional preparation certification programs offered by school districts, charter schools, and charter management districts by which the instructional staff can satisfy the mastery of professional preparation and education competence requirements.⁵ In addition to completing the district program, candidates must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge⁶ and subject area knowledge.⁷

Teacher preparation program courses are prohibited from distorting significant historical events or including a curriculum or instruction that teaches identity politics, violates the Florida Educational Equity Act,⁸ or is based on theories that systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege are inherent in the institutions of the United States and were created to maintain social, political, and economic inequities. Teacher Preparation courses must afford candidates the opportunity to think critically, achieve mastery of academic program content, learn instructional strategies, and demonstrate competence.⁹

² See Florida Department of Education, *Florida's Coordinated System of Professional Learning*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-dev/> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025). See also Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.; ss. 1004.04(3)(a) and 1004.85(1), F.S.

³ Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025). See also Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

⁴ Rule 6A-5.066(1)(r), F.A.C.

⁵ Section 1012.56(8)(a), F.S. Florida Department of Education. *State-Approved Educator Preparation Programs, Approved Add-on Programs*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation/initial-teacher-preparation-programs/approved-teacher-edu-programs.shtml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁶ See Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/general-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁷ Florida Department of Education, *Subject Area Knowledge*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/subject-area-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁸ Section 1000.05, F.S.

⁹ Section 1004.04(2)(e), F.S.

Initial Teacher Preparation Program

Each candidate enrolled in a teacher preparation program must receive instruction and be assessed on the uniform core curricula in his or her area of program concentration during course work and field experiences. A candidate for certification in a coverage area that includes reading instruction or interventions in kindergarten through grade six must successfully complete all competencies for a reading endorsement.¹⁰

The SBE must establish, in rule, uniform core curricula for each state-approved teacher preparation program including, but not limited to:¹¹

- Candidate instruction and assessment in the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAP)¹² across content areas;
- The use of state-adopted content standards to guide curricula and instruction;¹³
- Scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instructional strategies that improve reading performance for all students;¹⁴
- Content literacy and mathematical practices;
- Strategies appropriate for instruction of English language learners;
- Strategies appropriate for instruction of students with disabilities;
- Strategies to differentiate instruction based on student needs;
- Strategies and practices to support evidence-based content aligned to state standards and grading practices;
- Strategies appropriate for the early identification of students in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge and the referral of such student to a mental health professional for support;
- Strategies to support the use of technology in education and distance learning; and
- Strategies and practices to support effective, research-based assessment and grading practices aligned to the state's academic standards.

In addition, before program completion, each candidate must demonstrate his or her ability to positively impact student learning growth in the candidate's area(s) of program concentration during a prekindergarten through grade 12 field experience and must pass each portion of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination required for a professional certificate in the area(s) of program concentration.¹⁵

¹⁰ Section 1004.04(2)(c), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1004.04(2)(b)1.-10., F.S.

¹² Florida Department of Education, *Professional Development The Florida Educator Accomplished Practices (FEAP)*, <https://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-dev/the-fl-educator-accomplished-practices.stml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

¹³ The State Board of Education has adopted the state academic standards, which establish the core content of the curricula taught in the state and specify the core content knowledge and skills that K -12 public school students are expected to acquire. Rule 6A-1.09401(1), F.A.C.; s. 1003.41(1), F.S.

¹⁴ The Just Read, Florida! Office must assist teacher preparation programs and EPIs with this requirement. Section 1001.215(11), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1004.04(2)(d), F.S.

Educator Preparation Institutes

Postsecondary institutions that are accredited or approved by the Department of Education (DOE) to award degrees and credits for educator certification may seek approval from the DOE to create EPIs for the purpose of providing all or any of the following:¹⁶

- Professional development instruction to assist teachers in improving classroom instruction and in meeting certification or recertification requirements;
- Instruction to assist potential and existing substitute teachers in performing their duties;
- Instruction to assist paraprofessionals in meeting education and training requirements;
- Instruction for noneducation baccalaureate degree holders to become certified teachers in order to increase routes to the classroom for mid-career professionals; and
- Instruction and professional development for part-time and full-time non-degreed teachers of career programs.

A private provider that has a proven history of delivering high-quality educator preparation may also seek approval to offer a competency-based certification program. The DOE approval must be based upon evidence provided from other state recipients of the provider's services and data showing the successful performance of completers based upon student achievement.¹⁷

EPIs may offer competency-based certification programs specifically designed for non-education major baccalaureate degree holders to enable program participants to meet educator certification. The DOE must approve a certification program if the EPI provides evidence of the EPI's capacity to implement a competency-based program that includes each of the following:¹⁸

- Participant instruction and assessment in the FEAP across content areas.
- The use of state-adopted student content standards to guide curriculum and instruction.
- Scientifically researched and evidence-based reading instructional strategies that improve reading performance for all students, including explicit, systematic, and sequential approaches to teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and text comprehension and multisensory intervention strategies.
- Content literacy and mathematical practices.
- Strategies appropriate for instruction of English language learners.
- Strategies appropriate for instruction of students with disabilities.
- Strategies to differentiate instruction based on student needs.
- Strategies and practices to support evidence-based content aligned to state standards and grading practices.
- Strategies appropriate for the early identification of a student in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge and the referral of such student to a mental health professional for support.
- Strategies to support the use of technology in education and distance learning.
- An educational plan for each participant to meet certification requirements and demonstrate his or her ability to teach the subject area for which the participant is seeking certification, which is based on an assessment of his or her competency in specified areas.

¹⁶ Section 1004.85(2)(a), F.S.

¹⁷ Section 1004.85(2)(b), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1004.85(3), F.S. *See also* s. 1004.04(2), F.S.

- Field experiences appropriate to the certification subject area.
- A certification ombudsman to facilitate the process and procedures required for participants who complete the program to meet any requirements related to the background screening and educator professional or temporary certification.

Requirements for Individuals Supervising or Directing Teacher Preparation Field Experiences

All school district personnel and instructional personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation program students during field experience courses or internships taking place in this state in which candidates demonstrate an impact on student learning growth must have:¹⁹

- Evidence of “clinical educator” training;
- A valid professional certificate;
- At least three years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12;
- Earned an effective or highly effective rating on the prior year’s performance evaluation or be a peer evaluator under the district’s evaluation system; and
- For all such personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation students during internships in kindergarten through grade three or who are enrolled in a teacher preparation program for a certificate area includes reading instruction or intervention for any students in kindergarten through grade six, a certificate or endorsement in reading.

Professional Learning Certification Programs

School districts, charter schools, and charter management organizations may offer a professional learning certification program that must be approved by the DOE. The program must include:²⁰

- A minimum period of initial preparation before becoming the teacher of record;
- An option to collaborate with other agencies or educational entities for implementation;
- A teacher mentorship and induction component;
- An assessment of teaching performance aligned with the district’s personnel evaluation system;
- Professional educational preparation content knowledge that must be included in the mentoring and induction activities;
- Required passing scores on the general knowledge, subject area, and the professional education competency test; and
- Completion of all competencies for a reading endorsement for all candidates for certification in coverage areas that include reading instruction or interventions in kindergarten through grade six.

As required by law, the DOE adopted standards for the approval of professional learning certification programs, including standards for the teacher mentorship and induction component.²¹ The standards for the teacher mentorship and induction component must include:²²

- Program administration and evaluation;

¹⁹ Section 1004.04(5)(b)1., F.S.

²⁰ Section 1012.56(8)(a)1.-7., F.S.

²¹ See Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

²² Section 1012.56(8)(c), F.S.

- Mentor roles, selection, and training;
- Beginning teacher assessment and professional development; and
- Teacher content knowledge and practices aligned to the FEAP.

To serve as a mentor in a professional learning certification program, an individual must:

- Hold a valid professional certificate;
- Have earned at least 3 years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12;
- Have completed training in clinical supervision and participate in ongoing mentor training provided through the coordinated system of professional learning;
- Have earned an effective or highly effective rating on the prior year's performance evaluation; and
- May be a peer evaluator under the district's evaluation system.²³

Educator Certification

In order for a person to serve as an educator in a traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, or other publicly operated school, the person must hold a certificate issued by the DOE.²⁴ Persons seeking employment at a public school as a school supervisor, principal, teacher, library media specialist, counselor, athletic coach, or in other instructional capacity must be certified.²⁵ The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel to “possess the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools.”²⁶

The DOE issues three main types of educator certificates:

- **Professional Certificate:** The professional certificate is Florida's highest type of full-time educator certification.²⁷ The professional certificate is valid for five years and is renewable.²⁸
- **Temporary Certificate:** The temporary certificate covers employment in full-time positions for which educator certification is required.²⁹ Generally, a temporary certificate is valid for five years and is nonrenewable.³⁰

²³ Section 1012.56(8)(a)2.a., F.S.

²⁴ Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.

²⁵ Sections 1002.33(12)(f) (charter school teachers) and 1012.55(1), F.S. District school boards and charter school governing boards are authorized to hire non-certified individuals who possess expertise in a given field to serve in an instructional capacity. Rule 6A-1.0502, F.A.C.; ss. 1002.33(12)(f) and 1012.55(1)(c), F.S. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and speech therapists are not required to be certified educators. Rule 6A-1.0502(10) and (11), F.A.C.

²⁶ Section 1012.54, F.S.; *see* Rule 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

²⁷ Rule 6A-4.004(5), F.A.C.

²⁸ Section 1012.56(7)(a), F.S.; *see* Rule 6A-4.0051(3)(d), F.A.C. (validity period is expressed as five years from July 1 of the school fiscal year). The DOE also issues a nonrenewable five-year professional certificate that allows an applicant with a bachelor's degree in the area of speech-language impairment to complete a master's degree in speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.004(6), F.A.C.

²⁹ Rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.

³⁰ Section 1012.56(7)(f), F.S. (validity period is expressed in school fiscal years); Rule 6A-4.004(1)(a), F.A.C. The veteran's pathway to educator certification authorizes a 5-year nonrenewable temporary certificate. Section 1012.56(7)(b)2., F.S. The DOE also issues a nonrenewable temporary certificate, which is valid for two years in the area of speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.

- **Athletic Coaching Certificate:** The athletic coaching certificate covers full-time and part-time employment as a public school's athletic coach.³¹ The DOE issues two types of athletic coaching certificates – one is valid for five years and may be issued for subsequent five-year periods while the other is valid for three years and may be issued only once.³² The five-year certificate requires satisfaction of certain specialization requirements established in rule.³³

Professional Certificate Requirements

To be eligible for a professional certificate, a person must:³⁴

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- Sign an affidavit attesting that the applicant will uphold the U.S. and State Constitutions;
- Earn a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning³⁵ or from a nonaccredited institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's or higher degree;³⁶
- Submit to fingerprinting and background screening and not have a criminal history that requires the applicant's disqualification from certification or employment;
- Be of good moral character;
- Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher;
- Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge;³⁷
- Demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge;³⁸ and
- Demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence, if the person serves as a classroom teacher or school administrator.³⁹

Demonstrating Mastery of General Knowledge

Mastery of general knowledge may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:

- Achieving a passing score on the General Knowledge Test;⁴⁰

³¹ Section 1012.55(2)(a), F.S.

³² Rule 6A-4.004(7), F.A.C. (validity periods expressed in school fiscal years).

³³ See Rule 6A-4.0282, F.A.C.

³⁴ Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(i), F.S.

³⁵ Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.003(1), F.A.C. (approved accrediting agencies); see also 34 C.F.R. ss. 602.1-602.50; U.S. Department of Education, *The Secretary's Recognition of Accrediting Agencies*, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-34/subtitle-B/chapter-VI/part-602> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

³⁶ Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C. (criteria for approval of nonaccredited institutions of higher learning). For initial certification, an applicant must attain at least a 2.5 overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the applicant's major field of study. Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.

³⁷ Section 1012.56(2)(g) and (3), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/general-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

³⁸ Section 1012.56(2)(h) and (5), F.S.

³⁹ Section 1012.56(2)(i) and (6), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/professional-preparation-education-competence.shtml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁴⁰ Section 1012.56(3)(a), F.S. The General Knowledge Test is part of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations and is administered as four subtests: Reading, English Language Skills, Essay, and Mathematics. Rule 6A-4.0021(7), F.A.C.; see also Florida Department of Education, *Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida*, s. 82 (27th ed., 2022), available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7479/urlt/FTCE27thEdition22Rule.pdf> (competencies and skills measured by General Knowledge Test).

- Achieving passing scores established in SBE rule on national or international examinations that test comparable content and relevant standards in verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning skills (*e.g.*, the verbal, analytical writing, and quantitative reasoning portions of the Graduate Record Examination);⁴¹
- Providing documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another U.S. state or territory,⁴² by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS),⁴³ or by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE);⁴⁴
- Completing two semesters of successful, part-time or full-time teaching in a Florida College System institution, state university, or private college or university that awards an associate or higher degree and is an accredited institution or an institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program;⁴⁵ and
- Documentation of receipt of a master's or higher degree from an accredited postsecondary institution that the DOE has identified as having a quality program resulting in a baccalaureate degree or higher.⁴⁶

Demonstrating Mastery of Subject Area Knowledge

Mastery of subject area knowledge may be demonstrated through any of the following methods:⁴⁷

- Bachelor's Degree Level (for certification in a subject area for which SBE rule requires a bachelor's or higher degree):
 - If a Florida subject area examination has been developed, achieving a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination specified in SBE rule⁴⁸ or documentation of receipt of a master's or higher degree from an accredited postsecondary institution that the DOE has identified as having a quality program resulting in a baccalaureate degree or higher in the certificate subject area as identified in SBE rule.⁴⁹
 - If a Florida subject area examination has not been developed, achieving a passing score on a standardized examination specified in SBE rule, including passing scores on both the oral proficiency and written proficiency examinations administered by the American

⁴¹ Section 1012.56(3)(e), F.S. The passing scores to be identified in state board rule must be at approximately the same level of rigor as is required to pass the General Knowledge Test. Rule 6A-4.002(4), F.A.C.

⁴² Section 1012.56(3)(b), F.S.; *see* Rules 6A-4.002(1)(i) and 6A-4.003, F.A.C. (flush-left provisions following Rule 6A-4.003(2)(e), F.A.C.). Section 1012.56(3)(b), F.S. specifies that a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by *another state* is an acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general knowledge. The DOE also recognizes certificates issued by U.S. territories. *See* Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/general-knowledge.shtml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁴³ Section 1012.56(3)(c), F.S.; *see* Rule 6A-4.002(1)(j), F.A.C.; *see also* National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, <https://www.nbpts.org/> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁴⁴ Section 1012.56(3)(c), F.S.; *see* Rule 6A-4.002(1)(j), F.A.C.

⁴⁵ Section 1012.56(3)(d), F.S.; *see also* Rule 6A-4.003(1)-(2), F.A.C. (approval of accredited and nonaccredited institutions of higher learning).

⁴⁶ Section 1012.56(3)(f), F.S.

⁴⁷ Section 1012.56(5), F.S.

⁴⁸ Section 1012.56(5)(a), F.S. The Florida Teacher Certification Examinations include 39 subject area tests. Florida Department of Education, *Test Information Guides*, http://www.fl.nesinc.com/FL_TIGS.asp (last visited Mar. 27, 2025); *see also* Florida Department of Education, *Competencies and Skills Required for Teacher Certification in Florida*, ss. 1-63 (27th ed., 2022), available at <https://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7479/urlt/FTCE27thEdition22Rule.pdf>; *see also* Rule 6A-4.0021(9), F.A.C. (scoring of subject area tests).

⁴⁹ Section 1012.56(5)(i), F.S.

- Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages⁵⁰ or successful completion of a United States Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center program or a passing score on the Defense Language Proficiency Test.⁵¹
- For certification in any other subject area for which there is no Florida subject area test or standardized examination specified in state board rule (e.g., Dance), completing the required bachelor's or higher degree and content courses specified in SBE rule⁵² and verification of subject area competence by the district school superintendent or, for a state-supported or private school, the school's chief administrative officer.⁵³
 - Master's Degree Level (for certification in a subject area for which SBE rule requires a master's or higher degree): Completing the required master's or higher degree and content courses specified in SBE rule and achieving a passing score on the corresponding Florida-developed subject area test or standardized examination specified in SBE rule.⁵⁴
 - Out-of-State Certification: Providing documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued for a subject area by another U.S. state or territory or by NBPTS or ABCTE, if the certificate is comparable to the Florida professional certificate issued for the same subject area.⁵⁵

Demonstrating Mastery of Professional Preparation and Education Competence

Mastery of professional preparation and education competence may be demonstrated by:⁵⁶

- Successful completion of an approved teacher preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution within this state and achievement of a passing score on the professional education competency examination required by state board rule;
- Successful completion of a teacher preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution outside Florida and achievement of a passing score on the professional education competency examination required by state board rule;
- Documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another state;
- Documentation of a valid certificate issued by the NBPTS or a national educator credentialing board approved by the State Board of Education;
- Documentation of two semesters of successful, full-time or part-time teaching in a Florida College System institution, state university, or private college or university that awards an associate or higher degree and is an accredited institution or an institution of higher education identified by the DOE as having a quality program and achievement of a passing score on the professional education competency examination required by SBE rule;

⁵⁰ Section 1012.56(5)(b), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.0243(1)(e), F.A.C.; *see* American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), *Assessments*, <https://www.actfl.org/assessments> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025); Language Testing International (ACTFL Language Testing Office), *ACTFL*, <https://tms.languagetesting.com> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁵¹ Section 1012.56(5)(g)-(h), F.S.

⁵² *See, e.g.*, Rule 6A-4.0123, F.A.C. (specialization requirements for certification in dance); *see also* Florida Department of Education, *Florida Certificate Subjects*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/certificate-subjects/> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁵³ Section 1012.56(5)(c), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.002(4), F.A.C.

⁵⁴ Section 1012.56(5)(d), F.S.; *see* Florida Department of Education, *Florida Certificate Subjects*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/certificate-subjects/> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁵⁵ Section 1012.56(5)(e), F.S., and (f), F.S.; Rule 6A-4.002(1)(i)-(j), F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, *NBPTS Certificate Subjects and Corresponding Subjects in Florida*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/pathways-routes/nbpts-certificate-subjects-correspondi.stml> (last visited Mar. 27, 2025).

⁵⁶ Section 1012.56(6), F.S.

- Successful completion of professional preparation courses as specified in state board rule, successful completion of a professional education competence program, and documentation of 3 years of being rated effective or highly effective while holding a temporary certificate;
- Successful completion of a professional learning certification program; or
- Successful completion of a competency-based certification program and achievement of a passing score on the professional education competency examination required by rule of the SBE.

Professional Education Competency Program

School districts must and private schools or state-supported public schools, including a charter school, may develop and maintain a system by which members of the instructional staff may demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence as required by law. Each program must:

- Be based on classroom application of the FEAP and instructional performance; and,
- For public schools, must be aligned with the district's or state-supported public school's evaluation system.⁵⁷

The Commissioner of Education must determine the continued approval of programs, based upon the department's review of performance data. The department must review the performance data as a part of the periodic review of each school district's professional learning system.⁵⁸

Teacher Apprenticeship Program

In 2023, the Legislature created the Teacher Apprenticeship Program (TAP).⁵⁹ The TAP was created as an alternative pathway for an individual to enter the teaching profession. The DOE is required to administer the program in accordance with legislative intent regarding apprenticeship training⁶⁰ provided for in law.

To meet the minimum eligibility requirements to participate in the TAP, a candidate must have:⁶¹

- Received an associate degree from an accredited postsecondary institution.
- Earned a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 in that degree program.
- Successfully passed a background screening pursuant to law.
- Received a temporary apprenticeship certificate.

As a condition of participating in the TAP, an apprentice teacher must be appointed by the district school board as an education paraprofessional and must commit to spending the first two years in the classroom of a mentor teacher using team teaching strategies as specified in law⁶²

⁵⁷ Section 1012.56(9)(a), F.S.

⁵⁸ Section 1012.56(9)(b), F.S.

⁵⁹ Ch. 2023-38, s. 6, Law of Fla., *codified at* s. 1012.555, F.S.; *see also* Rule 6A-5.067, F.A.C.

⁶⁰ Section 446.011, F.S. provides that it is the intent of the State of Florida to provide educational opportunities for its residents so that they can be trained for trades, occupations, and professions suited to their abilities; to promote the mode of training known as apprenticeship in occupations throughout industry in the state that require physical manipulative skills.

⁶¹ Section 1012.555(2)(a)1.-4., F.S.

⁶² "Team teaching" or "co-teaching" means two or more teachers are assigned to a group of students, and each teacher is responsible for all of the students during the entire class period. Section 1003.03(5)(c), F.S.

and fulfilling the on-the-job training component of the registered apprenticeship and its associated standards.⁶³

A teacher who serves as a mentor in the TAP must:⁶⁴

- Have at least five years of teaching experience in this state.
- Be rated as highly effective in the three most recent value-added model (VAM) scores or on the three most recent available performance evaluations if the teacher does not generate a state VAM score.
- Satisfy any other requirements established by the DOE.

Mentors for Individuals with a Temporary Certificate

A person who is issued a temporary certificate must be assigned a teacher mentor for a minimum of two school years after commencing employment. Each teacher mentor must:⁶⁵

- hold a valid professional certificate;
- have earned at least three years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12; and
- have earned an effective or highly effective rating on the prior year's performance evaluation.

Professional Learning Systems

Current law requires school districts to develop a professional learning system in consultation with classroom teachers, state colleges and universities, business and community representatives, and local education foundations, consortia, and professional organizations.⁶⁶ The system must be initially reviewed and approved by the DOE and subsequently reviewed and approved every five years thereafter.⁶⁷ Among other things, the professional learning system must:⁶⁸

- Support and increase the success of educators through collaboratively developed school improvement plans;
- Assist the school community in providing stimulating, scientific research-based educational activities that encourage and motivate students to achieve at the highest levels, and that prepare students for success at subsequent educational levels and the workforce;
- Provide continuous support for all education professionals as well as temporary intervention for education professionals who need improvement in knowledge, skills, and performance; and
- Provide training to teacher mentors as part of professional development certification and education competency programs.

An organization of private schools or consortium of charter schools which has no fewer than 10-member schools in this state, which publishes and files with the DOE copies of its standards, and the member schools comply with compulsory school attendance, or a public or private college or

⁶³ Section 1012.555(2)(c) and (d), F.S.

⁶⁴ Section 1012.555(3), F.S.

⁶⁵ Section 1012.56(7)(e), F.S.

⁶⁶ Section 1012.98(5)(b), F.S.

⁶⁷ Section 1012.98(5)(b)1., F.S.

⁶⁸ See s. 1012.98(5)(b)1.-11., F.S.

university with a teacher preparation program, may also develop a professional learning system. The system and in-service catalog must be submitted to the commissioner for approval.⁶⁹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1590 establishes the Task Force for Educator Preparation to review and make recommendations for revising Florida's teacher training, certification, and professional learning systems. The intent of the task force is to modernize these systems by 2028 in order to better prepare educators for the challenges of 21st-century classrooms.

The bill specifies that the task force is composed of the following members:

- Two members from a state university's initial teacher preparation program, appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- Two members from private postsecondary institution initial teacher preparation programs, appointed by the Governor and the President of the Senate.
- Two members from a Florida College System institution initial teacher preparation program or educator preparation institute (EPI), appointed by the Governor and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- Two school district representatives responsible for district alternative certification programs, appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- Three actively certified teachers, including at least one from a charter school and at least one who has served as a mentor; the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each appoint one teacher.
- Two district school superintendents, appointed by the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.
- One Department of Education (DOE) representative with expertise in educator quality, appointed by the Governor.

The DOE is required to provide administrative support to the task force, including coordination of meetings, report development, and communication among members.

The bill directs the task force to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher training programs, including:

- The uniform core curricula in initial teacher preparation programs, including evidence-based practices in mathematics and literacy instruction, classroom management, and the use of data to analyze student performance for personalized instruction.
- Preparation under school district alternative certification pathways or EPIs.
- The effectiveness of teacher apprenticeship programs.
- Improvements to field experiences for student teachers.

The bill requires the task force to analyze Florida's current teacher certification standards and procedures, focusing on:

- Gaps or inefficiencies in current certification pathways.
- Appropriate educator certification for elementary, middle, and secondary school grades.

⁶⁹ Section 1012.98(7), F.S.

- The effectiveness of certification exams and alternatives to ensure teachers meet competency standards.

The task force is also required to evaluate educator professional learning, including:

- Ongoing professional learning requirements for teachers.
- Mentor teachers and teaching coaches.
- Collaboration with teacher preparation programs.

The task force must issue a report with recommendations for improvements to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives no later than December 1, 2025, at which time the task force expires.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

This bill could have an indeterminate, yet insignificant, fiscal impact on the Department of Education to provide administrative support to the task force.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates an undesignated section of Florida law.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.