A bill to be entitled
An act relating to education; amending s. 1002.394, F.S.; revising initial scholarship eligibility criteria for the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program, beginning with a specified school year; providing that participation in certain virtual schools, correspondence schools, or distance learning programs does not make a student ineligible for a scholarship under the program in certain circumstances; amending s. 1002.395, F.S.; revising eligibility criteria for the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program and applying the criteria only to initial eligibility; requiring that priority be given to students whose household incomes do not exceed a specified amount; amending s. 1004.04, F.S.; requiring that the rules to establish uniform core curricula for each state-approved teacher preparation program include evidence-based reading instructional strategies and mental health strategies and support; requiring state-approved teacher preparation programs include opportunities to complete endorsements and complete training required of instructional personnel; removing admission requirements, and deleting a provision allowing teacher preparation programs to waive admission requirements for up to 10 percent of the students admitted; requiring an assessment of student proficiency is employer surveys; amending s. 1004.85, F.S.; expanding requirements for the certification program of a postsecondary educator.
preparation institute to be approved by the Department of Education; amending s. 1011.61, F.S.; providing that a certain scholarship award is not subject to the maximum value for funding a student under the Florida Education Finance Program; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; providing that for a subject requiring only a baccalaureate degree, a baccalaureate degree with a major in the subject area, conferred within the last 10 years, is an acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of subject area knowledge; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.; specifying that teachers may earn inservice points only once during a certain time period for any mandatory training topic not linked to student learning or professional growth; amending s. 1012.79, F.S.; directing the Commissioner of Education, with the advice and consent of the chair of the Education Practices Commission, to appoint an executive director who is exempt from career service and may be removed by the commissioner; specifying that the executive director will have administrative duties, as determined by the commissioner; making a technical change; amending s. 1012.98, F.S.; requiring district school boards to calculate a proportionate share of professional development funds for each classroom teacher; authorizing classroom teachers to use up to a certain amount of such funds for certain purposes; requiring the Department of Education to identify professional development opportunities for classroom teachers to demonstrate proficiency in a
specific classroom practice; requiring the department
to create and develop a model annual and 5-year
calendar of professional development by a specified
date; requiring school districts to develop annual and
5-year calendars of professional development for
inclusion in the department’s professional development
system by a specified date; requiring the department
to maintain a statewide registry of approved
professional development providers and professional
development activities for use by teachers; requiring
professional development providers to be approved by
the department; specifying requirements for
professional development providers; requiring the
department to review professional development provider
applications for compliance and to approve or deny an
application within a certain timeframe; providing for
provider reapplication; requiring each school district
to accept an approved professional development
activity for a certain purpose; requiring the
department to determine the number of inservice hours
to be awarded for completion of an activity; creating
the Professional Development Choice Pilot Program to
be administered by the department for a specified
period; providing the pilot program’s purpose;
authorizing the use of pilot program grants for
specified purposes; providing requirements for the use
of such grants; providing eligibility requirements for
receiving pilot program grants; providing requirements
and limits for grant disbursements; providing certain
duties of each school district; requiring the department to maintain a registry of approved provider and professional development activities; requiring the department to establish an application form by a specified date; creating s. 1012.981, F.S.; creating the Professional Education Excellence Resources (PEER) Pilot Program in specified counties; authorizing school districts implementing the pilot program to engage in certain activities; authorizing school districts to use program funds for certain purposes; requiring school districts participating in the program to collaborate with the department and other entities to develop high-quality online professional development opportunities accessible to instructional personnel statewide; providing requirements for such professional online development opportunities; authorizing participating school districts to use program funds to establish a master teacher program; providing requirements for the master teacher program; requiring participating school districts to collaborate with the department and the University of Florida Lastinger Center to develop a master teacher academy; providing duties for the master teacher academy; requiring each school district participating in the PEER Pilot Program to report annually to the Governor, the Legislature, and the department on the performance of the pilot program; requiring the annual report to contain certain information; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules; specifying
that the pilot program be implemented only to the extent specifically funded and authorized by law;
amending s. 1012.586, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (3) and subsection (5) of section 1002.394, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1002.394 The Family Empowerment Scholarship Program.—
(3) INITIAL SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY.—A student is eligible for a Family Empowerment Scholarship under this section if the student meets the following criteria:

(b)1. The student is eligible to enroll in kindergarten or has spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school; or

2. Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, the student received a scholarship pursuant to s. 1002.395 during the previous school year and, before initial receipt of such scholarship, spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school.

For purposes of this paragraph, the term “prior school year in attendance” means that the student was enrolled and reported by a school district for funding during the preceding October and February Florida Education Finance Program surveys in kindergarten through grade 12, which includes time spent in a Department of Juvenile Justice commitment program if funded under the Florida Education Finance Program. However, a
 dependent child of a member of the United States Armed Forces who transfers to a school in this state from out of state or from a foreign country due to a parent’s permanent change of station orders or a foster child is exempt from the prior public school attendance requirement under this paragraph, but must meet the other eligibility requirements specified under this section to participate in the program.

(5) SCHOLARSHIP PROHIBITIONS.—A student is not eligible for a Family Empowerment Scholarship while he or she is:

(a) Enrolled in a public school, including, but not limited to, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, the College-Preparatory Boarding Academy, a developmental research school authorized under s. 1002.32, or a charter school authorized under this chapter;

(b) Enrolled in a school operating for the purpose of providing educational services to youth in a Department of Juvenile Justice commitment program;

(c) Receiving any other educational scholarship pursuant to this chapter;

(d) Participating in a home education program as defined in s. 1002.01(1);

(e) Participating in a private tutoring program pursuant to s. 1002.43; or

(f) Participating in a virtual school, correspondence school, or distance learning program that receives state funding pursuant to the student’s participation, unless the participation is limited to no more than two courses per school year.

Section 2. Subsection (3) and paragraph (e) of subsection
(6) of section 1002.395, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1002.395 Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program.—

(3) PROGRAM; INITIAL SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY.—

(a) The Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program is established.

(b) A student is eligible for a Florida tax credit scholarship under this section if the student meets one or more of the following criteria:

1. The student is on the direct certification list or the student’s household income level does not exceed 300 percent of the federal poverty level; or

2. The student is currently placed, or during the previous state fiscal year was placed, in foster care or in out-of-home care as defined in s. 39.01.

3. The student’s household income level is greater than 185 percent of the federal poverty level but does not exceed 260 percent of the federal poverty level.

Priority must be given to students whose household income levels do not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level or who are in foster care or out-of-home care. A student who initially receives a scholarship based on eligibility under this paragraph subparagraph (b)2. remains eligible to participate until he or she the student graduates from high school or attains the age of 21 years, whichever occurs first, regardless of the student’s household income level. A student who initially received a scholarship based on income eligibility before the 2019-2020 school year remains eligible to participate until he or she graduates from high school, attains the age of 21 years, or the
student’s household income level exceeds 260 percent of the federal poverty level, whichever occurs first. A sibling of a student who is participating in the scholarship program under this subsection is eligible for a scholarship if the student resides in the same household as the sibling.

(6) OBLIGATIONS OF ELIGIBLE NONPROFIT SCHOLARSHIP-FUNDING ORGANIZATIONS.—An eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization:

(e) Must give first priority to eligible students who received a scholarship from an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization or from the State of Florida during the previous school year. Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization shall give priority to new applicants whose household income levels do not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level or who are in foster care or out-of-home care.

Information and documentation provided to the Department of Education and the Auditor General relating to the identity of a taxpayer that provides an eligible contribution under this section shall remain confidential at all times in accordance with s. 213.053.

Section 3. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section 1004.04, Florida Statutes, is amended, paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of that section is amended, paragraphs (d) and (e) of subsection (3) of that section are added, and subsection (4) of that section is amended, to read:

1004.04 Public accountability and state approval for teacher preparation programs.—
(2) UNIFORM CORE CURRICULA AND CANDIDATE ASSESSMENT.—

(b) The rules to establish uniform core curricula for each state-approved teacher preparation program must include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Candidate instruction and assessment in the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices across content areas.

2. The use of state-adopted content standards to guide curricula and instruction.

3. Evidence-based 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.

4. Content literacy and mathematics practices.

5. Strategies appropriate for the instruction of English language learners.

6. Strategies appropriate for the instruction of students with disabilities.

7. Strategies to differentiate instruction based on student needs.

8. The use of character-based classroom management.

9. Mental health strategies and support.

(3) INITIAL STATE PROGRAM APPROVAL.—

(b) Each teacher preparation program approved by the Department of Education, as provided for by this section, shall require students, at a minimum, to meet, at a minimum, the following as prerequisites for admission into the program:

1. Have a grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0
scale for the general education component of undergraduate studies or have completed the requirements for a baccalaureate degree with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale from any college or university accredited by a regional accrediting association as defined by State Board of Education rule or any college or university otherwise approved pursuant to State Board of Education rule.

2. Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge sufficient for entry into the program, including the ability to read, write, and perform in mathematics, by passing the General Knowledge Test of the Florida Teacher Certification Examination or, for a graduate level program, obtain a baccalaureate degree from an institution that is accredited or approved pursuant to the rules of the State Board of Education.

Each teacher preparation program may waive these admissions requirements for up to 10 percent of the students admitted. Programs shall implement strategies to ensure that students admitted under a waiver receive assistance to demonstrate competencies to successfully meet requirements for certification and shall annually report to the Department of Education the status of each candidate admitted under such a waiver.

(d) Each program must include the opportunity for the candidate to complete coursework to obtain a required endorsement in the candidate’s chosen teaching field.

(e) Each program must include, in addition to the core standards for effective education, instruction in the training required of certified instructional personnel, including, but not limited to:
1. Identification, intervention, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect;
2. Integration of technology into classroom teaching;
3. Management, assessment, and monitoring of student learning and performance;
4. Skills in classroom management, violence prevention, conflict resolution, and related areas;
5. Developmental disabilities pursuant to s. 1012.582;
6. Youth suicide awareness and prevention pursuant to s. 1012.583; and
7. Youth mental health awareness and assistance pursuant to s. 1012.584.

(4) CONTINUED PROGRAM APPROVAL.—Continued approval of a teacher preparation program shall be based upon evidence that the program continues to implement the requirements for initial approval and upon significant, objective, and quantifiable measures of the program and the performance of the program completers.

(a) The criteria for continued approval must include each of the following:

1. Documentation from the program that each program candidate met the admission requirements provided in subsection (3).

2. Documentation from the program that the program and each program completer have met the requirements provided in subsection (2).

3. Evidence of performance in each of the following areas:
a. Placement rate of program completers into instructional positions in Florida public schools and private schools, if
available.

b. Rate of retention for employed program completers in instructional positions in Florida public schools.

c. Performance of students in prekindergarten through grade 12 who are assigned to in-field program completers on statewide assessments using the results of the student learning growth formula adopted under s. 1012.34.

d. Performance of students in prekindergarten through grade 12 who are assigned to in-field program completers aggregated by student subgroup, as defined in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 20 U.S.C. s. 6311(b)(2)(C)(v)(II), as a measure of how well the program prepares teachers to work with a diverse population of students in a variety of settings in Florida public schools.

e. Results of program completers’ annual evaluations in accordance with the timeline as set forth in s. 1012.34.

f. Production of program completers in statewide critical teacher shortage areas as identified in s. 1012.07.

4. Results of the program completers’ survey measuring their satisfaction with preparation for the realities of the classroom.

5. Results of the employers’ survey measuring satisfaction with the program and the program’s responsiveness to local school districts. The survey must include the employer’s assessment of the student’s proficiency in the use of state-adopted content standards and general preparation for the classroom.

Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) and subsection (5) of section 1004.85, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
1004.85 Postsecondary educator preparation institutes.—

(3) Educator preparation institutes approved pursuant to this section may offer competency-based certification programs specifically designed for noneducation major baccalaureate degree holders to enable program participants to meet the educator certification requirements of s. 1012.56. An educator preparation institute choosing to offer a competency-based certification program pursuant to the provisions of this section must implement a program previously approved by the Department of Education for this purpose or a program developed by the institute and approved by the department for this purpose. Approved programs shall be available for use by other approved educator preparation institutes.

(a) Within 90 days after receipt of a request for approval, the Department of Education shall approve a preparation program pursuant to the requirements of this subsection or issue a statement of the deficiencies in the request for approval. The department shall approve a certification program if the institute provides evidence of the institute’s capacity to implement a competency-based program that includes each of the following:

1.a. Participant instruction and assessment in the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices across content areas.

b. The use of state-adopted student content standards to guide curriculum and instruction.

c. 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.

d. Content literacy and mathematical practices.
e. Strategies appropriate for instruction of English language learners.
f. Strategies appropriate for instruction of students with disabilities.
g. Strategies to differentiate instruction based on student needs.
h. The use of character-based classroom management.

2. 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 the areas listed in subparagraph 1.

3. Field experiences appropriate to the certification subject area specified in the educational plan with a diverse population of students in a variety of challenging environments, including, but not limited to, high-poverty schools, urban schools, and rural schools, under the supervision of qualified educators.

4. 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 pursuant to s. 1012.32 and educator professional or temporary certification pursuant to s. 1012.56.

5. The opportunity for a candidate to complete coursework to obtain a required endorsement in the candidate’s chosen teaching field.
6. In addition to the core standards for effective education, instruction in the training required of certified instructional personnel, including, but not limited to:
   a. Identification, intervention, and prevention of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect;
   b. Integration of technology into classroom teaching;
   c. Management, assessment, and monitoring of student learning and performance;
   d. Skills in classroom management, violence prevention, conflict resolution, and related areas;
   e. Developmental disabilities pursuant to s. 1012.582;
   f. Youth suicide awareness and prevention pursuant to s. 1012.583; and
   g. Youth mental health awareness and assistance pursuant to s. 1012.584.

(5) Each institute approved pursuant to this section shall submit to the Department of Education annual performance evaluations that measure the effectiveness of the programs, including the pass rates of participants on all examinations required for teacher certification, employment rates, longitudinal retention rates, and satisfaction surveys of employers and candidates. The satisfaction surveys must be designed to measure the sufficient preparation of the educator for the student’s proficiency in the use of state-adopted content standards, the realities of the classroom, and the institute’s responsiveness to local school districts. These evaluations shall be used by the Department of Education for purposes of continued approval of an educator preparation institute’s certification program.
Section 5. Subsection (4) of section 1011.61, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1011.61 Definitions.—Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 1000.21, the following terms are defined as follows for the purposes of the Florida Education Finance Program:

(4) The maximum value for funding a student in kindergarten through grade 12 or in a prekindergarten program for exceptional children as provided in s. 1003.21(1)(e) shall be the sum of the calculations in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) as calculated by the department.

(a) The sum of the student’s full-time equivalent student membership value for the school year or the equivalent derived from paragraphs (1)(a) and (b), subparagraph (1)(c)1., sub-subparagraphs (1)(c)2.b. and c., subparagraph (1)(c)3., and subsection (2). If the sum is greater than 1.0, the full-time equivalent student membership value for each program or course shall be reduced by an equal proportion so that the student’s total full-time equivalent student membership value is equal to 1.0.

(b) If the result in paragraph (a) is less than 1.0 full-time equivalent student and the student has full-time equivalent student enrollment pursuant to sub-sub-subparagraph (1)(c)1.b.(VIII), calculate an amount that is the lesser of the value in sub-sub-subparagraph (1)(c)1.b.(VIII) or the value of 1.0 less the value in paragraph (a).

(c) The full-time equivalent student enrollment value in sub-subparagraph (1)(c)2.a.

A scholarship award provided to a student enrolled in the John
Section 6. Subsection (5) of section 1012.56, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—
(5) MASTERY OF SUBJECT AREA KNOWLEDGE.—Acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of subject area knowledge are:

(a) For a subject requiring only a baccalaureate degree, a baccalaureate degree with a major in the subject area, conferred within the last 10 years from an accredited or approved institution as defined in rule 6A-4.003, Florida Administrative Code;

(b) For a subject requiring only a baccalaureate degree for which a Florida subject area examination has been developed, achievement of a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination specified in state board rule;

(c) For a subject for which a Florida subject area examination has not been developed, achievement of a passing score on a standardized examination specified in state board rule, including, but not limited to, passing scores on both the oral proficiency and written proficiency examinations administered by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages;

(d) For a subject for which a Florida subject area examination has not been developed or a standardized examination has not been specified in state board rule, completion of the subject area specialization requirements specified in state
board rule and verification of the attainment of the essential
subject matter competencies by the district school
superintendent of the employing school district or chief
administrative officer of the employing state-supported or
private school;
   (e) For a subject requiring a master’s or higher degree,
completion of the subject area specialization requirements
specified in state board rule and achievement of a passing score
on the Florida-developed subject area examination or a
standardized examination specified in state board rule;
   (f) Documentation of a valid professional standard
teaching certificate issued by another state;
   (g) Documentation of a valid certificate issued by the
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or a national
educator credentialing board approved by the State Board of
Education;
   (h) Documentation of successful completion of a United
States Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center
program; or
   (i) Documentation of a passing score on the Defense
Language Proficiency Test (DLPT).

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

Section 7. Paragraph (g) is added to subsection (3) of
section 1012.585, Florida Statutes, to read:

1012.585 Process for renewal of professional certificates.
(3) For the renewal of a professional certificate, the following requirements must be met:

(g) A teacher may earn inservice points only once during each 5-year validity period for any mandatory training topic that is not linked to student learning or professional growth.

Section 8. Subsections (5), (6), and (9) of section 1012.79, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1012.79 Education Practices Commission; organization.—

(5) The Commissioner of Education, with the advice and consent of the commission chair, is responsible for appointing, and may remove, commission, by a vote of three-fourths of the membership, shall employ an executive director, who shall be exempt from career service. The executive director shall have administrative duties, as determined by the Commissioner of Education. The executive director may not impact or influence decisions of the commission. The executive director may be dismissed by a majority vote of the membership.

(6)(a) The commission shall be assigned to the Department of Education for administrative and fiscal accountability purposes. The commission, in the performance of its powers and duties, shall not be subject to control, supervision, or direction by the Department of Education.

(b) The property, personnel, and appropriations related to the specified authority, powers, duties, and responsibilities of the commission shall be provided to the commission by the Department of Education.

(9) The commission shall make such expenditures as may be necessary in exercising its authority and powers and carrying out its duties and responsibilities, including expenditures for
personal services, legal services of general counsel or access to counsel, and rent at the seat of government and elsewhere; for books of reference, periodicals, furniture, equipment, and supplies; and for printing and binding. The expenditures of the commission shall be subject to the powers and duties of the Department of Financial Services as provided in s. 17.03.

Section 9. Subsection (5) of section 1012.98, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsections (13), (14), and (15) are added to that section, to read:

1012.98 School Community Professional Development Act.—
(5) Each district school board shall provide funding for the professional development system as required by s. 1011.62 and the General Appropriations Act, and shall direct expenditures from other funding sources to continuously strengthen the system in order to increase student achievement and support instructional staff in enhancing rigor and relevance in the classroom. Each district school board shall calculate a proportionate share of professional development funds for each classroom teacher and allow each classroom teacher to use up to 25 percent of the proportionate share on professional development that addresses the academic needs of students or an identified area of professional growth for the classroom teacher. The department shall identify professional development opportunities that require the classroom teacher to demonstrate proficiency in a specific classroom practice. A school district may coordinate its professional development program with that of another district, with an educational consortium, or with a Florida College System institution or university, especially in preparing and educating personnel. Each district school board
shall make available inservice activities to instructional personnel of nonpublic schools in the district and the state certified teachers who are not employed by the district school board on a fee basis not to exceed the cost of the activity per all participants.

(13) To assist school district planning for required teacher professional development, by August 1, 2020, the department shall develop a model annual and 5-year calendar that incorporates all state-required professional development. No later than January 1, 2021, school districts shall develop an annual and a 5-year calendar of professional development for inclusion in the professional development system approved by the department pursuant to subsection (4).

(14) The department shall develop and maintain a statewide registry of approved professional development providers and professional development activities for use by teachers in this state. The registry is intended to provide educators with high-quality professional development opportunities in addition to those offered by an entity specified in subsection (1).

(a) Any professional development provider seeking to be added to the registry must complete an application developed by the department. Approved providers are responsible for notifying the department of any changes to the provider or approved activities using an update form developed by the department. The approval form must include, but is not limited to, requirements that the provider specify:

1. Compliance with this section.
2. The alignment of professional development activities with professional development standards adopted by the state.
board in rule and standards adopted by the National Staff Development Council.

3. Professional development activities offered by the provider.

4. Qualifications of instructors for the professional development activities to be approved.

(b) Providers specified in subsection (1), as well as providers approved by such entities, are not required to seek department approval to offer professional development activities and are not required to be added to the registry. However, such providers that wish to offer statewide professional development opportunities may seek department approval and be added to the registry.

(c) Providers approved by the department must maintain information that includes, but is not limited to, the professional development activity, date of the activity, hours of instruction, and instructor, if applicable. The approved provider must provide such information to each participant.

(d) The department shall review the professional development provider application for compliance with requirements. The department must inform the provider in writing within 90 days after submission of an application regarding the approval or denial of the provider. The approval is valid for a period not to exceed 5 years, after which the provider must reapply.

1. Each school district shall accept an approved professional development activity on the registry toward meeting the requirements of s. 1002.385(3).

2. The department shall determine the number of inservice
hours to be awarded for completion of each specified professional development activity.

(15) There is created the Professional Development Choice Pilot Program to be administered by the department for a period of 3 years, subject to legislative appropriation. The purpose of the pilot program is to provide grants to eligible teachers to select professional learning opportunities that best meet each teacher’s individual needs.

(a) A teacher may use a pilot program grant for professional development approved by a school district or by a provider approved by the department pursuant to subsection (14).

1. Professional development must be aligned with the standards adopted by the state board in rule and standards adopted by the National Staff Development Council.

2. Training completed under this subsection must comply with and satisfy the requirements of s. 1012.585(3).

3. Professional learning activities may include, but are not limited to, in-person or online training; travel and registration for conferences or workshops; college credit courses; and district professional development certification and education competency programs.

(b) To be eligible for a pilot program grant, an individual must:

1. Hold a professional certificate issued pursuant to s. 1012.56(7)(a);

2. Be employed as a classroom teacher, as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a), excluding substitute teachers, by a district school board or by a charter school; and

3. Apply for a grant in a format determined by the
department. The application must require an applicant to
describe how the professional development activity relates to
and will improve instruction in the classroom.

(c) Each classroom teacher eligible under paragraph (b) may
receive a reimbursement for training pursuant to paragraph (a).
The reimbursement for each teacher participating in the pilot
program may not exceed $500 per school year. Each classroom
teacher is eligible for one grant per school year. The pilot
program grants must be awarded on a first-come, first-served
basis.

(d) Each school district shall:
1. Review a proposed professional development activity to
determine alignment with district and individual professional
development plans and determine the number of inservice credit
hours to be awarded; and
2. Approve any professional development opportunity
included on the department’s registry pursuant to subsection
(13).

(e) The department shall:
1. Maintain a registry of approved providers and
professional development activities pursuant to subsection (14).
2. Establish, no later than August 1, 2020, a grant
application form.

Section 10. Section 1012.981, Florida Statutes, is created
to read:

1012.981 Professional Education Excellence Resources Pilot
Program.—

(1) There is established the Professional Education
Excellence Resources (PEER) Pilot Program, administered by the
department, to provide school district flexibility to increase opportunities for professional learning, collaboration with teachers and leaders, and teacher leadership.

(2) The PEER Pilot Program is established in Clay, Pinellas, and Walton Counties.

(3) Participating school districts implementing the PEER Pilot Program may:

(a) Extend the contract day or the contract year, or both, for participating teachers for professional development, collaboration with colleagues, or instructional coaching. A participating school district that chooses to extend the contract day or year must, before the start of the 2020-2021 school year, negotiate with the certified collective bargaining unit for instructional personnel a memorandum of understanding that addresses the additional duty hours in a week or duty days in a school year and additional payments based on the salary scale of the district to teachers who participate in the pilot program.

(b) Use program funds to:

1. Compensate teachers who are assigned to an extended school day or school year pursuant to paragraph (a).

2. Hire additional instructional personnel to provide teachers with additional planning periods or other release time to complete professional development, collaborate with colleagues, or perform other appropriate activities.

3. Provide content area specialists to provide support for teachers’ individual needs and professional growth.

4. Provide instructional coaches for participating teachers.
5. Provide professional development opportunities.

(4) School districts participating in the pilot program must collaborate with the department, postsecondary educational institutions, regional education consortia, the University of Florida Lastinger Center, or other appropriate organizations to develop high-quality online professional development opportunities accessible to instructional personnel statewide. Such online professional development must:

(a) Be self-paced and available to teachers at any time.

(b) Align with standards for professional development as described in state board rule.

(c) Protect the private information of participants.

(d) Satisfy requirements for renewal of an educator certificate.

(e) Include online assessments with timely feedback to evaluate participant learning measured against program goals.

(5) Participating school districts may use program funds to establish a master teacher program. The master teacher program provides accomplished teachers the opportunity to innovate and improve classroom practices, facilitate improved professional development, and improve instructional quality through collaboration with teachers and leaders. School districts shall determine the specific roles assigned to a master teacher.

(a) Each master teacher program must include, but is not limited to:

1. Providing release time for planning and meeting with teachers and leaders;

2. Additional professional development opportunities, to include participation in local and national conferences or
payments for college credit courses to increase skills or obtain a higher university degree; and

3. Monetary compensation.

(b) School districts may select for the master teacher program teachers who were rated highly effective in the previous school year and may determine other selection criteria, which may include, but are not limited to, information in performance evaluations, peer reviews, demonstration of content expertise, principal recommendation, or candidate interviews.

(c) Each participating school district must collaborate with the department and with the University of Florida Lastinger Center to develop a master teacher academy to support instructional personnel statewide. The master teacher academy must:

1. Provide recommendations for the selection, training, and support of district master teachers.

2. Create a bank of online professional development tools that serve as exemplars for instructional best practices. Such content may include pedagogy, instructional delivery, professional learning communities, collaboration, personalized learning, teacher and student or parent conferencing, positive behavior supports, and using data to improve instruction.

3. Provide instructional coaching for school-based leaders and principal supervisors. The content must focus on providing teachers with actionable feedback on performance.

(6) Each school district participating in the PEER Pilot Program must annually, by August 1, report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the department on the performance of the
pilot program. Each report must include, but is not limited to:

(a) The use of the pilot program funds.
(b) The impact of the pilot program on student achievement.
(c) The impact of the pilot program on teacher annual evaluations.
(d) The results of satisfaction surveys given to pilot program participants.
(e) Recommendations for continuation of the pilot program and for scaling the pilot program for statewide implementation.

(7) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to administer this section.

(8) This section shall be implemented only to the extent specifically funded and authorized by law.

Section 11. Subsection (1) of section 1012.586, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1012.586 Additions or changes to certificates; duplicate certificates.—A school district may process via a Department of Education website certificates for the following applications of public school employees:

(1) Addition of a subject coverage or endorsement to a valid Florida certificate on the basis of the completion of the appropriate subject area testing requirements of s. 1012.56(5)(a) or the completion of the requirements of an approved school district program or the inservice components for an endorsement.

(a) To reduce duplication, the department may recommend the consolidation of endorsement areas and requirements to the State Board of Education.

(b) By July 1, 2018, and at least once every 5 years
thereafter, the department shall conduct a review of existing subject coverage or endorsement requirements in the elementary, reading, and exceptional student educational areas. The review must include reciprocity requirements for out-of-state certificates and requirements for demonstrating competency in the reading instruction professional development topics listed in s. 1012.98(4)(b)11. The review must also consider the award of an endorsement to an individual who holds a certificate issued by an internationally recognized organization that establishes standards for providing evidence-based interventions to struggling readers or who completes a postsecondary program that is accredited by such organization. Any such certificate or program must require an individual who completes the certificate or program to demonstrate competence in reading intervention strategies through clinical experience. At the conclusion of each review, the department shall recommend to the state board changes to the subject coverage or endorsement requirements based upon any identified instruction or intervention strategies proven to improve student reading performance. This paragraph does not authorize the state board to establish any new certification subject coverage.

The employing school district shall charge the employee a fee not to exceed the amount charged by the Department of Education for such services. Each district school board shall retain a portion of the fee as defined in the rules of the State Board of Education. The portion sent to the department shall be used for maintenance of the technology system, the web application, and posting and mailing of the certificate.
Section 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.