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A bill to be entitled An act relating to the Florida Virtual School; amending s. 121.091, F.S.; authorizing the board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School to reemploy retirees for specified positions within the school; providing requirements for the rehiring of such persons; authorizing certain personnel employed by the board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School to participate in DROP for a specified period; creating s. 1008.213, F.S.; defining the term "a student residing outside of the state"; authorizing a student residing outside of the state to request certain flexibility in the administration of specified assessments through the Florida Virtual School; providing a process for such request; requiring the Commissioner of Education to approve or deny such requests; providing requirements for the administration of such assessments at the station duty location for such students; providing Florida Virtual School reporting requirements; requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules; amending s. 1008.22, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 1011.61, F.S.; revising the definition of "full-time equivalent student" to revise the requirements for funding certain Florida Virtual

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School students; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) and paragraph (b) of subsection (13) of section 121.091, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

121.091 Benefits payable under the system.—Benefits may not be paid under this section unless the member has terminated employment as provided in s. 121.021(39)(a) or begun participation in the Deferred Retirement Option Program as provided in subsection (13), and a proper application has been filed in the manner prescribed by the department. The department may cancel an application for retirement benefits when the member or beneficiary fails to timely provide the information and documents required by this chapter and the department's rules. The department shall adopt rules establishing procedures for application for retirement benefits and for the cancellation of such application when the required information or documents are not received.

- (9) EMPLOYMENT AFTER RETIREMENT; LIMITATION. -
- (b) Any person whose retirement is effective before July 1, 2010, or whose participation in the Deferred Retirement Option Program terminates before July 1, 2010, except under the disability retirement provisions of subsection (4) or as

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provided in s. 121.053, may be reemployed by an employer that participates in a state-administered retirement system and receive retirement benefits and compensation from that employer, except that the person may not be reemployed by an employer participating in the Florida Retirement System before meeting the definition of termination in s. 121.021 and may not receive both a salary from the employer and retirement benefits for 12 calendar months immediately subsequent to the date of retirement. However, a DROP participant shall continue employment and receive a salary during the period of participation in the Deferred Retirement Option Program, as provided in subsection (13).

1. A retiree who violates such reemployment limitation before completion of the 12-month limitation period must give timely notice of this fact in writing to the employer and to the Division of Retirement or the state board and shall have his or her retirement benefits suspended for the months employed or the balance of the 12-month limitation period as required in subsubparagraphs b. and c. A retiree employed in violation of this paragraph and an employer who employs or appoints such person are jointly and severally liable for reimbursement to the retirement trust fund, including the Florida Retirement System Trust Fund and the Florida Retirement System Investment Plan Trust Fund, from which the benefits were paid. The employer must have a written statement from the retiree that he or she is not

retired from a state-administered retirement system. Retirement benefits shall remain suspended until repayment has been made. Benefits suspended beyond the reemployment limitation shall apply toward repayment of benefits received in violation of the reemployment limitation.

- a. A district school board may reemploy a retiree as a substitute or hourly teacher, education paraprofessional, transportation assistant, bus driver, or food service worker on a noncontractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. A district school board may reemploy a retiree as instructional personnel, as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a), on an annual contractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. Any member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month after retirement shall void his or her application for retirement benefits. District school boards reemploying such teachers, education paraprofessionals, transportation assistants, bus drivers, or food service workers are subject to the retirement contribution required by subparagraph 2.
- b. A Florida College System institution board of trustees may reemploy a retiree as an adjunct instructor or as a participant in a phased retirement program within the Florida College System, after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. A member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month after retirement shall void his or her application for retirement benefits. Boards of trustees reemploying such instructors are

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subject to the retirement contribution required in subparagraph 2. A retiree may be reemployed as an adjunct instructor for no more than 780 hours during the first 12 months of retirement. A retiree reemployed for more than 780 hours during the first 12 months of retirement must give timely notice in writing to the employer and to the Division of Retirement or the state board of the date he or she will exceed the limitation. The division shall suspend his or her retirement benefits for the remainder of the 12 months of retirement. Any retiree employed in violation of this sub-subparagraph and any employer who employs or appoints such person without notifying the division to suspend retirement benefits are jointly and severally liable for any benefits paid during the reemployment limitation period. The employer must have a written statement from the retiree that he or she is not retired from a state-administered retirement system. Any retirement benefits received by the retiree while reemployed in excess of 780 hours during the first 12 months of retirement must be repaid to the Florida Retirement System Trust Fund, and retirement benefits shall remain suspended until repayment is made. Benefits suspended beyond the end of the retiree's first 12 months of retirement shall apply toward repayment of benefits received in violation of the 780-hour reemployment limitation.

c. The State University System may reemploy a retiree as an adjunct faculty member or as a participant in a phased

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retirement program within the State University System after the retiree has been retired for 1 calendar month. A member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month after retirement shall void his or her application for retirement benefits. The State University System is subject to the retired contribution required in subparagraph 2., as appropriate. A retiree may be reemployed as an adjunct faculty member or a participant in a phased retirement program for no more than 780 hours during the first 12 months of his or her retirement. A retiree reemployed for more than 780 hours during the first 12 months of retirement must give timely notice in writing to the employer and to the Division of Retirement or the state board of the date he or she will exceed the limitation. The division shall suspend his or her retirement benefits for the remainder of the 12 months. Any retiree employed in violation of this sub-subparagraph and any employer who employs or appoints such person without notifying the division to suspend retirement benefits are jointly and severally liable for any benefits paid during the reemployment limitation period. The employer must have a written statement from the retiree that he or she is not retired from a stateadministered retirement system. Any retirement benefits received by the retiree while reemployed in excess of 780 hours during the first 12 months of retirement must be repaid to the Florida Retirement System Trust Fund, and retirement benefits shall remain suspended until repayment is made. Benefits suspended

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beyond the end of the retiree's first 12 months of retirement shall apply toward repayment of benefits received in violation of the 780-hour reemployment limitation.

- d. The Board of Trustees of the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind may reemploy a retiree as a substitute teacher, substitute residential instructor, or substitute nurse on a noncontractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. Any member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month after retirement shall void his or her application for retirement benefits. The Board of Trustees of the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind reemploying such teachers, residential instructors, or nurses is subject to the retirement contribution required by subparagraph 2.
- e. A developmental research school may reemploy a retiree as a substitute or hourly teacher or an education paraprofessional as defined in s. 1012.01(2) on a noncontractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. A developmental research school may reemploy a retiree as instructional personnel, as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a), on an annual contractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month after retirement. Any member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month voids his or her application for retirement benefits. A developmental research school that reemploys retired teachers and education paraprofessionals is subject to the retirement contribution required by subparagraph

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- f. A charter school may reemploy a retiree as a substitute or hourly teacher on a noncontractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. A charter school may reemploy a retired member as instructional personnel, as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a), on an annual contractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month after retirement. Any member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month voids his or her application for retirement benefits. A charter school that reemploys such teachers is subject to the retirement contribution required by subparagraph 2.
- g. The board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School may reemploy a retiree as a substitute or hourly teacher, education paraprofessional, administrative personnel, or support personnel on a noncontractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month. The board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School may reemploy a retiree as a substitute or hourly teacher, education paraprofessional, administrative personnel, or support personnel on an annual contractual basis after he or she has been retired for 1 calendar month after retirement. The reemployed person may receive retirement benefits and compensation from the board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School. Any member who is reemployed within 1 calendar month after retirement voids his or her application for retirement benefits. The board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School

reemploying such teachers, education paraprofessionals,
administrative personnel, and support personnel is subject to
the retirement contribution required by subparagraph 2.

- 2. The employment of a retiree or DROP participant of a state-administered retirement system does not affect the average final compensation or years of creditable service of the retiree or DROP participant. Before July 1, 1991, upon employment of any person, other than an elected officer as provided in s. 121.053, who is retired under a state-administered retirement program, the employer shall pay retirement contributions in an amount equal to the unfunded actuarial liability portion of the employer contribution which would be required for regular members of the Florida Retirement System. Effective July 1, 1991, contributions shall be made as provided in s. 121.122 for retirees who have renewed membership or, as provided in subsection (13), for DROP participants.
- 3. Any person who is holding an elective public office which is covered by the Florida Retirement System and who is concurrently employed in nonelected covered employment may elect to retire while continuing employment in the elective public office if he or she terminates his or her nonelected covered employment. Such person shall receive his or her retirement benefits in addition to the compensation of the elective office without regard to the time limitations otherwise provided in this subsection. A person who seeks to exercise the provisions

of this subparagraph as they existed before May 3, 1984, may not be deemed to be retired under those provisions, unless such person is eligible to retire under this subparagraph, as amended by chapter 84-11, Laws of Florida.

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- DEFERRED RETIREMENT OPTION PROGRAM.—In general, and (13)subject to this section, the Deferred Retirement Option Program, hereinafter referred to as DROP, is a program under which an eligible member of the Florida Retirement System may elect to participate, deferring receipt of retirement benefits while continuing employment with his or her Florida Retirement System employer. The deferred monthly benefits shall accrue in the Florida Retirement System on behalf of the member, plus interest compounded monthly, for the specified period of the DROP participation, as provided in paragraph (c). Upon termination of employment, the member shall receive the total DROP benefits and begin to receive the previously determined normal retirement benefits. Participation in the DROP does not guarantee employment for the specified period of DROP. Participation in DROP by an eligible member beyond the initial 60-month period as authorized in this subsection shall be on an annual contractual basis for all participants.
- (b) Participation in DROP.—Except as provided in this paragraph, an eligible member may elect to participate in DROP for a period not to exceed a maximum of 60 calendar months.
 - 1.a. Members who are instructional personnel employed by

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the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and authorized by the Board of Trustees of the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, who are instructional personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a)-(d) in grades K-12 and authorized by the district school superintendent, who are instructional, administrative, or support personnel employed and authorized by the board of trustees of the Florida Virtual School, or who are instructional personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a) employed by a developmental research school and authorized by the school's director, or if the school has no director, by the school's principal, may participate in DROP for up to 36 calendar months beyond the 60-month period. Effective July 1, 2018, instructional personnel who are authorized to extend DROP participation beyond the 60-month period must have a termination date that is the last day of the last calendar month of the school year within the DROP extension granted by the employer. If, on July 1, 2018, the member's DROP participation has already been extended for the maximum 36 calendar months and the extension period concludes before the end of the school year, the member's DROP participation may be extended through the last day of the last calendar month of that school year. The employer shall notify the division of the change in termination date and the additional period of DROP participation for the affected instructional personnel.

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b. Administrative personnel in grades K-12, as defined in

s. 1012.01(3), who have a DROP termination date on or after July 1, 2018, may be authorized to extend DROP participation beyond the initial 60 calendar month period if the administrative personnel's termination date is before the end of the school year. Such administrative personnel may have DROP participation extended until the last day of the last calendar month of the school year in which their original DROP termination date occurred if a date other than the last day of the last calendar month of the school year is designated. The employer shall notify the division of the change in termination date and the additional period of DROP participation for the affected administrative personnel.

- c. Effective July 1, 2022, a member of the Special Risk Class who is a law enforcement officer who meets the criteria in s. 121.0515(3)(a) and who is a DROP participant on or after July 1, 2022, may participate in DROP for up to 36 calendar months beyond the 60-month period if he or she enters DROP on or before June 30, 2028.
- 2. Upon deciding to participate in DROP, the member shall submit, on forms required by the division:
 - a. A written election to participate in DROP;
- b. Selection of DROP participation and termination dates that satisfy the limitations stated in paragraph (a) and subparagraph 1. The termination date must be in a binding letter of resignation to the employer establishing a deferred

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termination date. The member may change the termination date within the limitations of subparagraph 1., but only with the written approval of the employer;

- c. A properly completed DROP application for service retirement as provided in this section; and
 - d. Any other information required by the division.
- 3. The DROP participant is a retiree under the Florida Retirement System for all purposes, except for paragraph (5)(f) and subsection (9) and ss. 112.3173, 112.363, 121.053, and 121.122. DROP participation is final and may not be canceled by the participant after the first payment is credited during the DROP participation period. However, participation in DROP does not alter the participant's employment status, and the member is not deemed retired from employment until his or her deferred resignation is effective and termination occurs as defined in s. 121.021.
- 4. Elected officers are eligible to participate in DROP subject to the following:
- a. An elected officer who reaches normal retirement date during a term of office may defer the election to participate until the next succeeding term in that office. An elected officer who exercises this option may participate in DROP for up to 60 calendar months or no longer than the succeeding term of office, whichever is less.
 - b. An elected or a nonelected participant may run for a

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term of office while participating in DROP and, if elected, extend the DROP termination date accordingly; however, if such additional term of office exceeds the 60-month limitation established in subparagraph 1., and the officer does not resign from office within such 60-month limitation, the retirement and the participant's DROP is null and void as provided in subsubparagraph (c)5.d.

- c. An elected officer who is dually employed and elects to participate in DROP must terminate all employment relationships as provided in s. 121.021(39) for the nonelected position within the original 60-month period or maximum participation period as provided in subparagraph 1. For DROP participation ending:
- (I) Before July 1, 2010, the officer may continue employment as an elected officer as provided in s. 121.053. The elected officer shall be enrolled as a renewed member in the Elected Officers' Class or the Regular Class, as provided in ss. 121.053 and 121.122, on the first day of the month after termination of employment in the nonelected position and termination of DROP. Distribution of the DROP benefits shall be made as provided in paragraph (c).
- (II) On or after July 1, 2010, the officer may continue employment as an elected officer but must defer termination as provided in s. 121.053.
- Section 2. Section 1008.213, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

1008.213 Florida Virtual School students of military families residing outside of Florida; flexible assessment administration.—

- (1) For purposes of this section, the term "a student residing outside of the state" means a student who is enrolled full-time in the Florida Virtual School and who resides outside of the state with his or her parent who is an active duty service member in the United States military stationed at a station duty location outside of the state.
- (2) A student residing outside of the state who is unable to complete a required statewide standardized assessment, end-of-course assessment, or the Florida Alternate Assessment under s. 1008.22 in a secure and proctored setting that is located in the state and provided by the Florida Virtual School may apply to the Florida Virtual School to allow a certified educator in the state in which the student resides or an Education Service Officer for the United States Armed Forces administer the assessment at the station duty location to which the student's parent is assigned.
- (3) (a) To apply for flexibility with the administration of an assessment, a student's parent shall submit to Florida

 Virtual School, in a format prescribed by the school, a written request for flexibility with the administration of the assessment. The request must be submitted at least 60 days before the administration of the assessment and must include

376	written, official documentation of the parent's orders
377	stationing him or her outside of the state.
378	(b) Upon receipt of such request, the Florida Virtual
379	School shall review such request and provide the request and a
380	recommendation for approval or denial to the Commissioner of
381	Education. Within 30 days after receiving the request and
382	recommendation, the commissioner shall verify the information
383	documented, make a determination, and notify the Florida Virtual
384	School of his or her determination. The Florida Virtual School
385	shall notify the student's parent of the commissioner's
386	determination.
387	(c) If the commissioner grants the request, the student's
388	assessment shall be proctored by a certified educator or
389	Education Service Officer in accordance with ss. 1008.22,
390	1008.23, and 1008.24.
391	(4) Beginning June 30, 2024, and each June 30 thereafter,
392	the Florida Virtual School shall submit to the President of the
393	Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives the
394	number of requests for flexibility in the administration of
395	assessments made under this section and the number of requests
396	for such flexibility that were granted.
397	(5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
398	administer this section.
399	Section 3. Subsections (11) through (14) of section
100	1008.22, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (12)

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CODING: Words $\frac{\text{stricken}}{\text{stricken}}$ are deletions; words $\frac{\text{underlined}}{\text{ore additions}}$.

101	through (15), respectively, and a new subsection (11) is added
102	to that section, to read:
103	1008.22 Student assessment program for public schools.—
104	(11) FLORIDA VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO RESIDE OUTSIDE OF
105	THE STATE.—Pursuant to s. 1008.213, a student who is enrolled
106	full-time in the Florida Virtual School and who resides outside
107	of the state with his or her parent who is an active duty
804	service member in the United States military stationed at a
109	station duty location outside of the state who is unable to
10	complete an assessment required under this section in a secure
11	and proctored setting that is located in the state and provided
12	by the Florida Virtual School may apply to the Florida Virtual
13	School to allow a certified educator in the state in which the
114	student resides or an Education Service Officer for the United
15	States Armed Forces administer the assessment at the station
116	duty location to which the student's parent is assigned.
17	Pursuant to s. 1008.213, the parents of such student must submit
118	a written request for such flexibility to the Florida Virtual
19	School and the Commissioner of Education must approve the
120	request. An assessment administered pursuant to s. 1008.213 must
121	be administered in accordance with this section and ss. 1008.23
122	and 1008.24.
123	Section 4. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section
124	1011.61, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
125	1011.61 DefinitionsNotwithstanding the provisions of s.

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1000.21, the following terms are defined as follows for the purposes of the Florida Education Finance Program:

- (1) A "full-time equivalent student" in each program of the district is defined in terms of full-time students and part-time students as follows:
 - (c)1. A "full-time equivalent student" is:
- a. A full-time student in any one of the programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c); or
 - b. A combination of full-time or part-time students in any one of the programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c) which is the equivalent of one full-time student based on the following calculations:
 - (I) A full-time student in a combination of programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c) shall be a fraction of a full-time equivalent membership in each special program equal to the number of net hours per school year for which he or she is a member, divided by the appropriate number of hours set forth in subparagraph (a)1. The difference between that fraction or sum of fractions and the maximum value as set forth in subsection (4) for each full-time student is presumed to be the balance of the student's time not spent in a special program and shall be recorded as time in the appropriate basic program.
 - (II) A prekindergarten student with a disability shall meet the requirements specified for kindergarten students.
 - (III) A full-time equivalent student for students in

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kindergarten through grade 12 in a full-time virtual instruction program under s. 1002.45 or a virtual charter school under s. 1002.33 shall consist of six full-credit completions or the prescribed level of content that counts toward promotion to the next grade in programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c). Credit completions may be a combination of full-credit courses or half-credit courses.

- (IV) A full-time equivalent student for students in kindergarten through grade 12 in a part-time virtual instruction program under s. 1002.45 shall consist of six full-credit completions in programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c)1. and 3. Credit completions may be a combination of full-credit courses or half-credit courses.
- (V) A Florida Virtual School full-time equivalent student shall consist of six full-credit completions or the prescribed level of content that counts toward promotion to the next grade in the programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c)1. and 3. for students participating in kindergarten through grade 12 part-time virtual instruction and the programs listed in s. 1011.62(1)(c) for students participating in kindergarten through grade 12 full-time virtual instruction. However, the limitation of the number of credits the Florida Virtual School may receive funding for per student does not apply to students who are seeking accelerated access under s. 1002.37(1)(b). Credit completions may be a combination of full-credit courses or half-credit

courses. Students who have successful credit completions will be funded for each credit completion regardless of the number of surveys the student is reported in for the Florida Virtual School.

- (VI) Each successfully completed full-credit course earned through an online course delivered by a district other than the one in which the student resides shall be calculated as 1/6 FTE.
- (VII) A full-time equivalent student for courses requiring passage of a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment under s. 1003.4282 to earn a standard high school diploma shall be defined and reported based on the number of instructional hours as provided in this subsection.
- (VIII) For students enrolled in a school district as a full-time student, the district may report 1/6 FTE for each student who passes a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment without being enrolled in the corresponding course.
- 2. A student in membership in a program scheduled for more or less than 180 school days or the equivalent on an hourly basis as specified by rules of the State Board of Education is a fraction of a full-time equivalent membership equal to the number of instructional hours in membership divided by the appropriate number of hours set forth in subparagraph (a)1.; however, for the purposes of this subparagraph, membership in programs scheduled for more than 180 days is limited to students

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501 enrolled in:

- a. Juvenile justice education programs.
- b. The Florida Virtual School.
- c. Virtual instruction programs and virtual charter schools for the purpose of course completion and credit recovery pursuant to ss. 1002.45 and 1003.498. Course completion applies only to a student who is reported during the second or third membership surveys and who does not complete a virtual education course by the end of the regular school year. The course must be completed no later than the deadline for amending the final student enrollment survey for that year. Credit recovery applies only to a student who has unsuccessfully completed a traditional or virtual education course during the regular school year and must retake the course in order to be eligible to graduate with the student's class.

The full-time equivalent student enrollment calculated under this subsection is subject to the requirements in subsection (4).

The department shall determine and implement an equitable method of equivalent funding for schools operating under emergency conditions, which schools have been approved by the department to operate for less than the minimum term as provided in s. 1011.60(2).

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Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023. 526

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