

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2024 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Education Pre-K -12

CS/CS/HB 1285 — Education

by Education & Employment Committee; Choice & Innovation Subcommittee; and Rep. Canady and others (CS/CS/CS/SB 996 by Fiscal Policy Committee; Appropriations Committee on Education; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senator Burgess)

The bill makes a number of changes to Florida’s K-12 public schools and postsecondary institutions.

For Florida’s K-12 public schools, the bill:

- Clarifies the process for students enrolled in an approved virtual instruction program provider or virtual charter school to participate in statewide, standardized assessments and assessments in the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system.
- Clarifies that it not necessary to make an annual application for a tax exemption on property used to house a charter school.
- Defines a classical school and authorizes an enrollment preference at classical charter schools for students who were previously enrolled in a public school that implemented a classical school model.
- Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a specialized teaching certificate for educators who teach in a classical school.
- Provides additional student populations a charter school can target in its enrollment process relating to the employment location of the parent or guardian.
- Specifies the responsibilities of a school district and charter school in implementing a turnaround plan for a public school reopening as a charter school.
- Creates the Purple Star School District program for a district with a specified number of schools designated as Purple Star Campuses.
- Authorizes school districts to assign disruptive students to a disciplinary program or alternative-to-expulsion program.
- Authorizes alternate methods of communicating to parents regarding placement into a dropout prevention and academic intervention program.
- Prohibits school districts from identifying students as eligible to receive services through the dropout prevention and academic intervention program based solely on a student having a disability, and requires an academic intervention plan for each student enrolled in a dropout prevention and academic intervention program.
- Provides that, beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, any changes made by the SBE to components in the school grades model or to the school grading scale go into effect, at the earliest, in the following school year.
- Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to appoint and remove the executive director of the Education Practices Commission.
- Provides students in grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and consult with a military recruiter during the school day.

- Provides that a private school may use or purchase certain facilities under the facility's preexisting zoning and land use designations, and without having to implement any mitigation requirements or conditions, subject to specified limitations.
- Specifies that a resident in the county who is not the parent or guardian of a student with access to school district materials may object to no more than one material per month.
- Requires the Department of Education to provide a bonus of \$50 to compensate International Baccalaureate teachers for each student they teach who received a score of "C" or higher on an International Baccalaureate Theory of Knowledge subject examination.

For postsecondary institutions, the bill:

- Allows documentation of the homestead exemption as a single piece of evidence proving residency for tuition purposes.
- Requires that publishers make electronic versions of student editions of instructional materials available to teacher preparation programs and educator preparation institutes at a discount below publisher cost.
- Repeals the Florida College System's (FCS's) employment equity and accountability program.
- Requires that the development of dual enrollment articulation agreements include consideration of online courses.
- Specifies that a public postsecondary institution may not prohibit an applicant or student from being employed, subject to specified exceptions.
- Transitions the effective period for the amount paid by the Florida Prepaid College Board to state universities on behalf of qualified beneficiaries of advance payment contracts within the Prepaid Florida Program from 2009-2010 to 2022-2023.
- Creates a new associate in arts specialized transfer degree for students who need additional credit above the 60 hours in preparation for transfer to a baccalaureate degree program.
- Authorizes Miami Dade College, Polk State College, and Tallahassee Community College to charge an amount not to exceed \$290 per credit hour for nonresident tuition and fees for distance learning.
- Clarifies that members of an FCS institution or state university board of trustees are subject to Florida ethics laws for public officers with respect to business dealings with any institution under their purview while they are a member of the board of trustees.
- Creates the Office of the Ocean Economy within the State University System to be housed at Florida Atlantic University. The Office of the Ocean Economy is created to connect the state's ocean and coastal resources to economic development strategies that grow, enhance, or contribute to the ocean economy.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2024.

Vote: Senate 28-11; House 84-29