

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **SB 46 — Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program** by Senator Stewart

The bill authorizes school districts participating in the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) tutoring program to offer the tutoring program after the school day and to provide a stipend to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors during after-school hours.

The bill limits to unpaid hours the tutoring hours that count towards meeting community service requirements for high school graduation, if locally required, and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 114-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **HB 523 — Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program**

by Reps. Canady, Black, and others (SB 694 by Senators Perry, Rouson, Burgess, Stewart, and Torres)

The bill establishes the Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program (program) to recognize high school graduates who have met specified criteria in fine arts by having an appropriate Seal of Fine Arts (seal) affixed to the student's high school diploma.

The bill establishes the program beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, sets course and experiential criteria for earning the seal, and requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer the program, which may include additional criteria for receipt of the seal.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) to prepare the seal and provide to school districts a rubric for implementation of the program. Each school district is required to maintain records to identify students earning the seal, report such data to the Commissioner, affix the seal to the student's diploma, and indicate on the student's transcript that the seal was earned by the student.

The bill prohibits fees associated with the seal.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 113-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/CS/HB 537 — Student Achievement**

by Education & Employment Committee; Education Quality Subcommittee; and Rep. Valdés and others (SB 590 by Senators Burgess and Perry)

The bill establishes the two-year Music-based Supplemental Content to Accelerate Learner Engagement and Success (mSCALES) Pilot Program (pilot program) within the Department of Education (DOE). The pilot program is intended to assist districts in adopting music-based supplemental materials that support STEM courses for middle school students.

School districts in Alachua, Marion, and Miami-Dade counties will each receive \$6 per student if the district is approved by the DOE for participation in the pilot program. Each school district must utilize the adopted music-based supplemental materials at least twice per week to supplement mathematics instruction by teachers who are certified to teach mathematics.

The bill requires the College of Education at the University of Florida to continuously evaluate the program's effectiveness and annually share the findings of its evaluations with the DOE and the Legislature. The University of Florida must submit a final report by October 1, 2026, to the DOE, the Legislature, and the Florida Center for Partnerships for Arts-Integrated Teaching.

The mSCALES Pilot Program is subject to legislative appropriation.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 111-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **SB 832 — Employment of Individuals with Disabilities**

by Senator Calatayud

The bill adds to the roles, responsibilities, and objectives of the interagency cooperative agreement that implements the Employment First Act to achieve better employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

The bill requires that the interagency cooperative agreement ensure that collaborative efforts between the agencies include the collection and sharing of data. The bill also requires that the accountability measures in the interagency cooperative agreement include, minimally, systemwide measures to:

- Increase the number of individuals working in competitive integrated employment;
- Decrease the number of individuals working in subminimum wage employment; and
- Decrease the number of individuals working in nonintegrated employment settings.

The bill also requires the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help to issue an annual statewide report by December 1 each year on the implementation of the Employment First Act and progress made on the accountability measures.

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

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 113-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/CS/HB 883 — Short-acting Bronchodilator Use in Public and Private Schools**

by Health & Human Services Committee; Choice & Innovation Subcommittee; and Rep. Koster and others (CS/CS/SB 962 by Rules Committee; Health Policy Committee; and Senator Hooper)

The bill provides a framework for public and private schools to treat students with asthma or who are otherwise in respiratory distress. The bill authorizes:

- Trained staff to administer short-acting bronchodilators to students in respiratory distress and includes civil immunity for good-faith administration.
- Schools to acquire and safely maintain a supply of bronchodilators.
- Allopathic and osteopathic physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses to prescribe bronchodilators and components issued in the name of a public or private school.
- Licensed pharmacists to dispense bronchodilators and components pursuant to a prescription issued in the name of a public or private school, and includes civil and criminal immunity for a healthcare practitioner or pharmacist that dispenses short-acting bronchodilators or components in good faith and with reasonable care.

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

*Vote: Senate 34-0; House 115-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/CS/HB 917 — Career and Technical Education**

by Education & Employment Committee; Choice & Innovation Subcommittee; and Rep. Snyder and others (CS/CS/CS/SB 460 by Fiscal Policy Committee; Appropriations Committee on Education; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senators Simon and Perry)

The bill authorizes minors aged 16 or 17 to work in residential construction if the minor:

- Has earned his or her Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10 certification;
- Is under the direct supervision of a person 21 years of age or older with at least two years of related experience and his or her OSHA 10 certification.
- Is not working on any scaffolding, roof, superstructure, or ladder above six feet.
- Is not in violation of any OSHA rule or federal law related to minors in the workplace.

The bill provides a uniform standard for counties and municipalities to issue a license to a journeyworker.

The bill authorizes district school boards, as an alternative to the required high school career fair, to consult with local workforce development boards, advisory committees, and business groups to determine free or cost-effective methods to provide other career and industry networking opportunities, during the school day, for secondary students and exposure for elementary and secondary students to a representative variety of industries, businesses, and careers.

The bill authorizes a student who earns credit for one year of related technical instruction for a registered apprenticeship or preapprenticeship program to use such credit to satisfy specified high school graduation credit requirements.

The bill authorizes an exemption from the career education basic skills assessment to certain students with a private school diploma or home education affidavit.

The bill adds to the duties of the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help (REACH Office) to study the status of career and technical education (CTE) in each school district within the state, and report findings by March 1, 2025. The REACH Office must also coordinate an annual statewide report on the supply and demand of nursing occupations. The bill also repeals the Florida Talent Development Council.

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

*Vote: Senate 32-0; House 105-3*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### HB 931 — School Chaplains

by Reps. McClain, Daniels, and others (CS/SB 1044 by Education Pre-K -12 Committee and Senator Grall)

This bill authorizes each district school board or charter school governing board to adopt a policy to authorize volunteer school chaplains to provide supports, services, and programs to students.

The bill requires the policy to:

- Describe the supports, services, or programs that volunteer school chaplains may be assigned;
- Require that principals of schools with a volunteer school chaplain inform all parents of the availability of such supports, services, and programs; and
- Require written parental consent before a student participates in or receives supports, services, and programs provided by a volunteer school chaplain. Parents must be permitted to select a volunteer school chaplain from the list provided by the school district, which must include the chaplain's religious affiliation, if any.

The bill requires any district school board or charter school governing board that adopts a volunteer school chaplain policy to publish the list of volunteer school chaplains, including any religious affiliation, on the school district's website.

The bill requires volunteer school chaplains to meet the background screening requirements for noninstructional school district employees or contractual personnel who are permitted access on school grounds when students are present or have direct contact with students.

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

*Vote: Senate 28-12; House 89-25*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **HB 1109 — Security for Jewish Day Schools and Preschools**

by Rep. Fine and others (SB 1396 by Senators Gruters and Yarborough)

The bill establishes a program within the Department of Education, subject to legislative appropriation, to provide recurring funds to make full-time Jewish day schools and preschools in the state secure with professional security hardening, as needed.

The bill specifies allowable uses of funds based on a risk assessment by law enforcement or a private security company, which include equipment, personnel, transportation, and services.

The bill authorizes the State Board of Education to adopt rules to implement the program.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 108-6*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/CS/SB 1264 — History of Communism**

by Appropriations Committee on Education; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senators Collins, Rodriguez, Harrell, and Avila

The bill requires, beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, instruction in public schools on the history of communism that is age and developmentally appropriate. The bill specifies topics that must be included in such instruction.

The bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to prepare and offer standards for the required instruction, and allows the DOE to seek input from victims of communism and organizations dedicated to the victims of communism.

The bill establishes the Institute for Freedom in the Americas (institute) within Miami Dade College (MDC) to preserve the ideals of a free society and promote democracy in the Americas. The institute must:

- Partner with the Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom (center) to hold workshops, symposiums and conferences for leaders that promote democracy.
- Enter into an agreement with the center to provide coursework and programs that advance democratic practices and economic and legal reforms.
- Provide educational and experiential opportunities for regional leaders.

The bill requires MDC to establish a direct support organization (DSO) to support the institute and specifies the composition of the five-member DSO board to be appointed by the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The bill renames the Adam Smith Center for the Study of Economic Freedom to the Adam Smith Center for Economic Freedom, authorizes the center to offer degrees, and requires the center to partner with the institute to support its mission.

The bill requires the Department of State, in collaboration with the DOE, to consult with state and national stakeholders to provide a recommendation to the Legislature by December 1, 2024, on the creation of a museum focusing on the history of communism.

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

*Vote: Senate 25-7; House 106-7*

## 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*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/HB 1317 Patriotic Organizations**

by Choice & Innovation Subcommittee and Rep. Duggan and others (CS/SB 1016 by Education Pre-K -12 Committee and Senators Wright and Collins)

The bill defines the term “patriotic organization” as a youth membership organization serving young people under the age of 21 that is listed in specified sections of Title 36, U.S.C., with an educational purpose that promotes patriotism and civic involvement. The organizations defined in the bill are:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of America;
- Boy Scouts of America;
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America;
- Civil Air Patrol;
- Future Farmers of America;
- Girl Scouts of the United States of America;
- Naval Sea Cadets;
- Little League Incorporated; and
- Marine League Corp.

The bill authorizes a school district to:

- Allow a representative of a patriotic organization the opportunity to speak with and distribute informational materials in a classroom setting to students to encourage participation in the patriotic organization and inform students of benefits to the student and the community.
- Provide opportunities for a patriotic organization to have displays at schools within the district to provide opportunities for student recruitment.

The bill requires that if a school district authorizes a representative of a patriotic organization to speak with students the school district must:

- Provide a specific date and time for the patriotic organization to speak to students.
- Notify parents or guardians of each patriotic organization’s expected presentation and the option to withhold consent for their child participating in such presentation.

The bill requires that a school district may not discriminate against a patriotic organization in the use of any school building or property for activities that occur outside of the school day.

Additionally, the bill specifies that a school district that allows a patriotic organization to speak with and distribute informational materials to students or use school buildings or property is not required to provide equal access to an organization that is not designated as a patriotic organization.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 111-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### CS/HB 1361 — Education

by Education & Employment Committee and Rep. Temple and others (CS/SB 7038 by Appropriations Committee; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senator Yarborough)

The bill enhances supports for students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) through grade 12 by:

- Designating the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning (Lastinger Center) as the administrator of the New Worlds Reading Initiative and New Worlds Scholarship programs.
- Codifying the Lastinger Center in law and establishing duties for the center.
- Establishing the New Worlds Tutoring Program to be administered by the Lastinger Center to support school districts and schools in improving student achievement in reading and mathematics, including grants for automated tutoring for students in kindergarten through grade 5 and for in-person tutoring for, at a minimum, students in grades kindergarten through 5.
- Expanding the eligibility for the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts to include VPK students.
- Expands the minimum qualifications to offer tutoring under the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts to include a person with a specified microcredential or specified VPK credential.
- Clarifying student eligibility for supports under the New Worlds Reading Initiative as identified by student progress monitoring.
- Providing for a mechanism for parents to use the New Worlds Scholarship Account to make direct purchases of qualifying expenditures.
- Establishing a grant program for artificial intelligence learning platforms in order to improve outcomes and reduce teacher workload. The bill provides a recurring appropriation of \$2 million for the Lastinger Center to administer the grants for subscription fees and professional learning to support and accelerate learning for students in grades 6 through 12 during the school day.

The provisions of the bill implementing the New Worlds Reading Initiative are subject to legislative appropriation.

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

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 113-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/CS/HB 1403 — School Choice**

by Education & Employment Committee; Choice & Innovation Subcommittee; and Rep. Tomkow and others (SB 7048 by Education Pre-K -12 Committee)

The bill makes several changes to Florida’s school choice program consisting primarily of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship (FTC), which includes students in a personalized education program (PEP), the Family Empowerment Scholarship for students attending a private school (FES-EO), and the Family Empowerment Scholarship for students with disabilities (FES-UA).

#### ***Eligibility and Enrollment***

The bill expands eligibility for scholarship programs to the dependent children of an active duty member of the United States Armed Forces who has received permanent change of station orders to Florida or whose home of record or state of residence, at the time of renewal, is Florida. Additionally, the bill establishes for the 2024-25 school year the maximum number of FES-UA Scholarships at 72,615. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, the FES-UA scholarship program cap will increase by 5 percent of the state’s total exceptional student education enrollment, annually, with an additional 1 percent growth available based on FES-UA participation. The bill also authorizes FES-UA scholarship funds to be used at a private school that offers a prekindergarten program.

The bill authorizes a PEP student to also enroll in a private school if the student attends classes in person for at least two days a week, with the remaining days following the PEP learning plan.

The bill establishes firm deadlines for Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFO) and parents related to the application for and renewal of scholarships under the FTC, PEP, FES-UA, and FES-EO programs. The bill establishes deadlines, which include requirements for renewal families to accept a scholarship by May 31, and new scholarship families by December 15. The deadlines prioritize disbursing scholarship funds to renewal students over new students, but authorize SFOs to establish application deadlines for new scholarships under the FTC scholarship program.

#### ***Scholarship Payments***

The bill codifies deadlines and responsibilities for Scholarship Funding Organizations (SFOs) and the Department of Education (DOE) regarding the disbursement of funds for the FES scholarship program. The specified payments include specified quarterly payments into a student’s scholarship account, and a requirement that tuition and fee payments be made within seven business days after parent and school approval.

#### ***Purchasing Handbook***

The bill requires the SFO to develop a purchasing handbook that includes policies for the authorized use of funds. The handbook must maintain and routinely update a list of prohibited

items and services, and items or services that require preauthorization or additional documentation. The bill mandates that the purchasing handbook be submitted to the DOE by August 1, 2024, and by each July 1 thereafter. The bill authorizes the DOE to assess a penalty of up to \$10,000 if the purchasing handbook is not submitted by the required dates. Finally, the bill requires the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities to develop and update appropriate purchasing guidelines for recipients of the FES-UA scholarship.

### ***Reporting***

The bill updates the quarterly reporting requirements for SFOs to include information on applications received, application review timeframes, reimbursements received, and reimbursement processing timeframes. Additionally, the bill requires a SFO to establish a process to collect input and feedback from parents, private schools, and providers before implementing substantial modifications or enhancements to the reimbursement process.

### ***Hope Scholarship Program***

The bill shifts to the FTC scholarship program the scholarship funding portion of the Hope Scholarship Program (HSP), but maintains HSP requirements, with an additional requirement for the school to notify parents of the opportunity to attend an eligible private school under the FES and FTC scholarship programs.

### ***Additional School Choice Provisions***

The bill clarifies that public school students receiving a scholarship under a New Worlds Scholarship Account remain eligible for transportation scholarships under the FES and FTC scholarship programs.

The bill removes the requirement that a virtual instruction program provider be nonsectarian in its admissions and operations.

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

*Vote: Senate 40-0; House 89-18*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/CS/HB 1473 — School Safety**

by Education & Employment Committee; Judiciary Committee; and Reps. Trabulsy, Hunschofsky, and others (CS/SB 1356 by Criminal Justice Committee and Senator Calatayud)

The bill modifies provisions related to the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program, which:

- Clarify that private schools seeking to participate in the guardian program are responsible for costs associated with background screening in addition to costs associated with training, but authorizes the sheriff providing the training to waive the costs.
- Provide that an individual certified and in good standing with the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission is exempt from the required school guardian training.
- Change the 12-hour diversity training to training on de-escalating incidents.
- Implement new reporting requirements related to individuals certified as school guardians and serving as school guardians in school districts, charter schools, and private schools, with penalties for noncompliance.
- Require the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to serve as the central repository of information regarding certified and appointed guardians.

The bill establishes new perimeter and door safety requirements with which school districts and charter school governing boards must comply by August 1, 2024. These include:

- Keeping routes of ingress and egress securely closed and locked when students are on campus, or actively staffed when open or unlocked.
- Requiring that violations of such perimeter and safety requirements be reported to the applicable school official or governing board.
- Requiring classrooms to be locked, or actively staffed, during class time, and for classrooms to have the safest part of the room marked.
- Requiring each school district to develop a progressive discipline policy for instructional and administrative personnel who knowingly violate school safety requirements.

The bill requires the Office of Safe Schools (OSS) to, by August 1, 2024, develop and adopt a Florida school safety compliance inspection report to document compliance with Florida school safety requirements. The OSS must also:

- Triennially conduct unannounced inspections of all public schools using the safety compliance inspection report, with associated reporting and acknowledgement requirements. The bill provides for a bonus program for school principals and charter school administrators whose schools are found to be in full compliance with school safety requirements.
- By December 1, 2024, evaluate the distribution methodology for the Safe Schools Allocation and, if necessary, make recommendations for an alternate methodology to distribute the remaining balance of the Safe Schools Allocation.

The bill provides for criminal penalties against a person who knowingly or willfully operates a drone over a Pre-K -12 public or private school or allows a drone to make contact with a school, with specified exceptions.

The bill requires public schools, including charter schools, within the first five days of school to provide age and developmentally appropriate instruction on the use or misuse of FortifyFL, the state mobile suspicious activity reporting tool.

Lastly, the bill creates, subject to appropriation, a grant program to be administered by the FDLE to support private schools' school safety efforts.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 112-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K-12

### **CS/CS/HB 1509 — Pub. Rec./School Guardians**

by State Affairs Committee; Judiciary Committee; and Rep. Trabulsy and others (CS/SB 7056 by Rules Committee; Education Pre-K-12 Committee; and Senator Calatayud)

The bill creates an exemption from public records requirements for any information held by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) or a law enforcement agency, school district, or charter school and reported to the FDLE that would identify whether an individual has been certified to serve as a school guardian.

The bill provides that the public record exemption is a public necessity because disclosure of the identity of a school guardian could affect his or her ability to adequately respond to an active assailant situation.

The public records exemption established in the bill is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act and stands repealed on October 2, 2029, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect on the same date that CS/CS/HB 1509 or similar legislation takes effect, if such legislation is adopted in this legislative session and becomes law.

*Vote: Senate 40-0; House 111-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **SB 1688 — Career-themed Courses**

by Senators Osgood, Yarborough, Hutson, Simon, Book, Garcia, and Davis

The bill adds requirements to improve student awareness of career and technical education (CTE) opportunities.

The bill adds to the information required to inform the strategic 3-year plan developed jointly by the local school district, local workforce development boards, economic development agencies, and state-approved postsecondary institutions. The bill adds that the plan must be constructed and based, in part, on strategies to inform and promote the CTE opportunities available in the district to students, parents, the community, and stakeholders.

The bill aligns the collection by the Department of Education of student achievement and performance data in industry-certified career education programs and career-themed courses with the annual review conducted by the Commissioner of Education regarding K-12 and postsecondary CTE offerings.

The bill requires each district school board to inform students and parents during course selection for middle school of the career and professional academy or career-themed courses available within the district.

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

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 115-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/SB 7002 — Deregulation of Public Schools**

by Fiscal Policy Committee; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senators Hutson, Osgood, and Calatayud

The bill enables increased efficiency and higher productivity for district school boards by providing flexibility from redundant requirements related to operations, reporting, personnel, facilities, and finances.

#### ***School District Operations***

The bill authorizes the district school board to delegate to the superintendent the authority to establish a process for the review and approval of district-wide policies and procedures to improve efficiency.

The bill provides flexibility to district school boards in satisfying their statutory duties to provide public notices related to meetings, levying millage, and the adoption of budgets by authorizing the publication of such notices on their websites. The bill maintains the requirement for public notice to be provided at least two days prior to the noticed meeting.

The bill authorizes a district school board to adopt a policy that allows a parent to agree to a method of notification regarding a student's placement in a dropout prevention program or a suspension that is an alternative to U.S. or certified mail.

The bill clarifies district school board authority in setting policies regarding the transfer of electronic records.

#### ***School District Reports***

The bill repeals several obsolete reporting requirements including the school district guidance report, school district report of the reduction of relocatable use, economic security report, school district educational plant survey, and the Florida College System employment equity accountability report.

The bill also reduces financial reporting requirements by specifying that only school districts identified in State Board of Education (SBE) rule as having a financial concern would be subject to monthly reporting, and all others may be subject to less frequent reporting.

#### ***School District Personnel***

The bill supports school district efforts to recruit and retain personnel. The bill:

- Requires the SBE to develop strategies to address critical teacher shortages areas;
- Requires the SBE to waive initial subject area examination and certification fees for specified exceptional student education teachers and requires the Commissioner of

Education to make recommendations for the retention of exceptional student education teachers;

- Authorizes district school boards to develop and adopt their own policies relating to mentors and support for first-time teachers;
- Authorizes a newly-hired Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program instructor to complete required emergent literacy training within 45 days of employment.
- Authorizes a district school board to use advanced degrees for salary adjustments when setting salary schedules for instructional personnel or school administrators if the advanced degree is in the individual's area of certification;
- Authorizes certified educators to request that their certification be placed in inactive status;
- Authorizes the use of a passing score on the SAT, ACT, or Classical Learning Test to satisfy the mastery of general knowledge requirement for professional educator certification;
- Provides flexibility in the assignment of teachers by clarifying that regulations related the percentage of experienced teachers assigned in low-performing schools or schools with a high percentage of low-income families is based on a teacher having no less than 3 years of experience; and
- Authorizes the civil penalties collected pursuant to enforcement by a school bus infraction detection system to be used to provide financial awards to recruit or retain school bus drivers in the school district in which the civil penalties are assessed and collected, and removes a requirement that the signage on the buses be posted with high-visibility reflective signage.

The bill provides additional clarity for district school boards and teachers' unions regarding district school board duties that may not be precluded by collective bargaining, including but not limited to, the provision of incentives to effective and highly effective teachers, incentives to teachers assigned to low-performing schools, implementation of student intervention and support strategies, and the implementation of school safety plans and requirements. The bill also requires the president of a bargaining unit to appear with a district superintendent if called by the SBE to explain an impasse.

The bill expands the role of the Florida Institute for Charter School Innovation (Institute) by authorizing the Institute to develop a professional learning system and design an alternative teacher preparation program to enable certified teachers at charter schools to add coverages and endorsements to their certificates.

The bill also clarifies that a teacher candidate enrolled in a postsecondary educator preparation institute must meet basic screening and teacher eligibility requirements prior to participating in field experiences.

### ***School District Facilities and Finances***

The bill provides flexibility for district school boards in planning related to school facilities. The bill:

- Clarifies the authority of a district school board to adopt exceptions to the State Requirements for Educational Facilities.
- Adds discretion for local emergency management plans to determine requirements related to staffing emergency shelter facilities instead of requiring the district school board to staff the facilities.
- Broadens the scope of properties a district school board can lease or lease-purchase to include educational plants, ancillary plants, and auxiliary facilities instead of only educational facilities.
- Extends the exemption from cost per student station limitations for new construction projects until July 1, 2028.
- Increases from \$280,000 to \$600,000 the limit on day-labor contracts that a district school board may employ for the construction, renovation, remodeling, or maintenance of existing facilities.
- Removes the requirement to monitor and report the impact of change orders on the district school board educational facilities plan.

The bill also increases from \$175 to \$200 per unweighted full-time equivalent student the amount from a district's capital outlay millage levy that the district may expend on specified vehicles and the payment of the cost of insurance premiums for educational and ancillary plants.

The bill provides for school districts an exception to the prohibition on using funds to purchase transportation equipment and supplies at prices which exceed those determined by the Department of Education (DOE) to be the lowest which can be obtained. The bill specifies that a school district that is unable to purchase transportation equipment and supplies at the lowest determined price may request from the DOE assistance with purchasing at such prices and may exceed such prices if the DOE is unable to assist the school district with its purchase.

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

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 115-0*

## Committee on Education Pre-K -12

### **CS/SB 7004 — Education**

by Fiscal Policy Committee; Education Pre-K -12 Committee; and Senators Osgood and Simon

#### ***Instructional Materials***

The bill provides school districts with additional time to review state-adopted instructional materials by requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to publish the initial state adoption list prior to the start of the local school district adoption process. The bill requires the state-adoption list to be published as follows: by December 1, 2025, for the 2025-2026 adoption cycle; by July 31, 2026, for the 2026-2027 adoption cycle; and by July 31 in the year preceding an adoption for all subsequent adoption cycles.

The bill provides flexibility for district school boards to determine the adequate number of instructional materials in each classroom. The bill removes specific dates for superintendents to report instructional materials to be used, and that such notification include a district school board plan regarding the requisition of adequate instructional materials. Finally, the bill authorizes principal discretion in the collection of funds for lost or damaged instructional materials.

#### ***Early Learning***

The bill allows a school district to meet the requirement to offer a summer Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) program by contracting with private VPK providers. The bill revises from 3 to 2 the number of administrations of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring (CSPM) system in a summer VPK program. The bill also revises from every 2 years to every 3 years the requirement that each early learning coalition submit a school readiness program plan to the DOE.

The bill requires the referral of VPK students who demonstrate a substantial deficiency in early literacy or mathematics skills based on the midyear or final administration of the CSPM to the local school district to receive additional instruction prior to entering kindergarten.

#### ***School Improvement***

The bill allows the State Board of Education (SBE) to provide a school implementing a turnaround plan additional time to implement a community school model if the school has received a community school planning grant.

#### ***Student Progression***

The bill provides that a student who has filed a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment may take the GED assessment, without an extraordinary exemption, after reaching the age of 16.

The bill removes the requirement for administration of the common assessment for students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) prevention, residential, or day treatment programs, as well as the requirement that district school boards take action on a provider contract for DJJ educational programs that continue to underperform within 6 months after a monitoring plan.

The bill provides a school principal with the discretion to require a performance contract if a parent requests a student participate in an Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) option.

### ***Virtual Education***

The bill removes the requirement for a school district to offer a virtual instruction option. The bill also authorizes a school district virtual program to provide the equipment and access necessary for participation to any full-time student enrolled in the program, regardless of income status. Finally, the bill removes the requirement that a virtual provider be nonsectarian in its admissions and operations.

### ***Required Reporting***

The bill repeals reporting relating to participation in fine arts courses, a comparison of charter technical career centers to public technical centers, student achievement for middle grades students in career and professional academies and in career courses, student performance in academically high-performing school districts, single-gender programs, the Competency-based Education Pilot Program, the committee of practitioners under the No Child Left Behind Act, and duplicative community assessment and accountability feedback reports.

The bill also makes optional district participation in and submissions to the Art in the Capitol Competition.

### ***Postsecondary***

The bill removes the requirement for the SBE to establish the tuition and out-of-state fees for developmental education and associate degree credit. The bill removes the requirement for the SBE to identify performance metrics for the Florida College System (FCS) and develop a plan that specifies goals and objectives for each FCS institution. The bill removes obsolete language regarding baccalaureate degree approval at St. Petersburg College. Finally, the bill removes an obsolete requirement that automotive service technology education programs be industry certified by a certain date.

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

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 117-0*