

By Representative Greenstein

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to the WAGES Program; creating  
3           s. 414.035, F.S.; directing the Department of  
4           Children and Family Services to implement a  
5           high school education requirement for certain  
6           WAGES Program participants; providing for  
7           exemptions; providing for rules; amending s.  
8           414.065, F.S.; conforming provisions relating  
9           to existing education services and requirements  
10          for program participants; providing an  
11          effective date.

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

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15           Section 1. Section 414.035, Florida Statutes, is  
16          created to read:

17           414.035 WAGES high school education requirement.--The  
18 department, in consultation with the Department of Education,  
19 shall implement a high school education requirement for WAGES  
20 Program participants who are between the ages of 19 and 55,  
21 inclusive, and who have not already completed high school or  
22 obtained a high school equivalency diploma. Under this  
23 requirement, such participants must pursue a high school or  
24 equivalency diploma while enrolled in the WAGES Program. A  
25 participant who has not enrolled in a high school or high  
26 school equivalency program within 18 months after enrollment  
27 in the WAGES Program shall be removed from WAGES Program  
28 participation. Pregnant teenagers, and hardship cases as  
29 determined by the department, shall be exempt from this  
30 requirement. The department is authorized to adopt rules for  
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1 the implementation of the WAGES high school education  
2 requirement.

3 Section 2. Paragraphs (i) and (j) of subsection (1)  
4 and paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section 414.065,  
5 Florida Statutes, 1998 Supplement, are amended to read:

6 414.065 Work requirements.--

7 (1) WORK ACTIVITIES.--The following activities may be  
8 used individually or in combination to satisfy the work  
9 requirements for a participant in the WAGES Program:

10 (i) Education services related to employment for  
11 participants 18 ~~19~~ years of age or younger.--Education  
12 services provided under this paragraph are designed to prepare  
13 a participant for employment in an occupation. The department  
14 and the Department of Labor and Employment Security shall  
15 coordinate education services with the school-to-work  
16 activities provided under s. 229.595. Activities provided  
17 under this paragraph are restricted to participants 18 ~~19~~  
18 years of age or younger who have not completed high school or  
19 obtained a high school equivalency diploma.

20 (j) School attendance.--Attendance at a high school or  
21 attendance at a program designed to prepare the participant to  
22 receive a high school equivalency diploma is a required  
23 program activity for each participant 18 ~~19~~ years of age or  
24 younger who:

25 1. Has not completed high school or obtained a high  
26 school equivalency diploma;

27 2. Is a dependent child or a head of household; and

28 3. For whom it has not been determined that another  
29 program activity is more appropriate.

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1 (3) EXEMPTION FROM WORK ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS.--The  
2 following individuals are exempt from work activity  
3 requirements:

4 (d) One custodial parent with a child under 3 months  
5 of age, except that the parent may be required to attend  
6 parenting classes or other activities to better prepare for  
7 the responsibilities of raising a child. If the custodial  
8 parent is age 18 ~~19~~ or younger and has not completed high  
9 school or the equivalent, he or she may be required to attend  
10 school or other appropriate educational activities.

11 Section 3. This act shall take effect October 1, 1999.

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14 HOUSE SUMMARY

15 Directs the Department of Children and Family Services,  
16 in consultation with the Department of Education, to  
17 implement a high school education requirement for  
18 participants in the WAGES Program ages 19 to 55,  
19 inclusive, who do not already have a high school or  
20 equivalency diploma. Provides that participants who fail  
21 to enroll in a diploma program within 18 months shall be  
22 removed from the WAGES Program. Provides exemptions for  
23 pregnant teenagers and for hardship cases as determined  
24 by the department.  
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