

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to career and professional academies;
3 creating s. 1003.493, F.S.; defining the term "career and
4 professional academy"; providing academy goals and duties;
5 providing types of career and professional academies;
6 providing for the approval of career education courses as
7 core curricula courses under certain circumstances;
8 creating s. 1003.494, F.S.; requiring the Department of
9 Education to establish a Career High-Skill Occupational
10 Initiative for Career Education (CHOICE) project as a
11 competitive process for the designation of school district
12 participants and CHOICE academies; providing eligibility
13 criteria for such designation; providing duties of school
14 districts and the department; providing for the award to
15 certain school districts of startup funds for the
16 development of CHOICE academies; creating s. 1003.495,
17 F.S.; requiring the department to establish a
18 comprehensive career academy project to provide for the
19 designation of comprehensive career academies; providing
20 duties of the department; providing for assessment of
21 academies; amending s. 1003.43, F.S.; requiring district
22 school board student progression plans to provide for the
23 substitution of certain courses for credit requirements
24 for high school graduation; amending ss. 288.9015 and
25 445.004, F.S.; providing duties of Enterprise Florida,
26 Inc., and Workforce Florida, Inc., to conform; providing
27 an effective date.
28

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

30

31 Section 1. Section 1003.493, Florida Statutes, is created
32 to read:

33 1003.493 Career and professional academies.--

34 (1) A "career and professional academy" is a research-
35 based program as described in subsection (3) that offers a
36 rigorous and relevant academic curriculum with an industry and
37 business relevant career theme offered by a public school or
38 school district.

39 (2) The goals of career and professional academies are to:

40 (a) Increase student achievement.

41 (b) Focus on careers and postsecondary education.

42 (c) Raise student aspiration and commitment to academic
43 achievement.

44 (3) A career and professional academy may be offered as
45 one of the following small learning communities:

46 (a) A Career High-Skill Occupational Initiative for Career
47 Education (CHOICE) academy, pursuant to s. 1003.494, with one
48 career theme and created as part of an existing high school or
49 as a school-within-a-school program. Students in the school are
50 not required to be students in the academy.

51 (b) A comprehensive career academy, pursuant to s.
52 1003.495, that is structured around one or more career themes
53 and consists of one or more career academy programs.

54 (4) Each career and professional academy must:

55 (a) Provide a rigorous and relevant standards-based
56 academic curriculum through a career-based theme with

57 instruction relevant to the career. The curriculum must take
 58 into consideration multiple styles of student learning; promote
 59 learning by doing through application and adaptation; maximize
 60 relevance of the subject matter; enhance each student's capacity
 61 to excel; and include an emphasis on work habits and work
 62 ethics.

63 (b) Include one or more partnerships with businesses,
 64 industry, employers, economic development organizations, or
 65 other appropriate partners from the local community. Such
 66 partnerships must include opportunities for:

67 1. Highly skilled professionals to provide instruction in
 68 their areas of expertise.

69 2. Use of state-of-the-art equipment in the instructional
 70 program of the academy.

71 3. Internships, externships, and on-the-job training.

72 (c) Include one or more partnerships with public or
 73 private postsecondary institutions accredited by a regional or
 74 national accrediting agency recognized by the United States
 75 Department of Education. The educational partner must:

76 1. Agree to articulate coursework to maximize
 77 transferability of credit.

78 2. Offer a postsecondary degree, diploma, or certificate
 79 in the career theme of the academy.

80 (d) Provide creative and tailored student advisement,
 81 including opportunities and encouragement for parent
 82 participation in career education planning, and coordination
 83 with middle schools in the school district to provide career
 84 counseling. The coordination with middle schools must include

85 promotion in middle school of secondary and postsecondary career
86 education programs and opportunities to participate in an
87 academy. Such promotion may take place through middle school
88 exploratory courses.

89 (e) Provide a career education certification on the high
90 school diploma pursuant to s. 1003.431.

91 (f) Provide instruction, certification, or credentials in
92 work readiness skills, including, but not limited to,
93 communication skills, interpersonal skills, decisionmaking
94 skills, the importance of attendance and timeliness in the work
95 environment, and work ethics.

96 (g) Establish student eligibility criteria. While
97 recognizing that rigorous academic performance will be expected
98 of all students participating in an academy, initial eligibility
99 criteria must permit opportunities for students who may not yet
100 meet the academic requirements but demonstrate characteristics
101 that may lead to success in an academy. The aim of an academy
102 should be to serve not only students who are already succeeding
103 but also students who would succeed if the proper instructional
104 and motivational opportunities were provided.

105 (5) If a career and professional academy is designated as
106 a CHOICE academy under s. 1003.494 or a comprehensive career
107 academy under s. 1003.495, the career education courses offered
108 in the academy that emphasize reading, writing, mathematics, and
109 science may be considered core curricula courses upon approval
110 of the Commissioner of Education.

111 Section 2. Section 1003.494, Florida Statutes, is created
112 to read:

113 1003.494 Career High-Skill Occupational Initiative for
 114 Career Education (CHOICE) academies.--

115 (1) The Department of Education shall establish a Career
 116 High-Skill Occupational Initiative for Career Education (CHOICE)
 117 project. The project shall consist of a competitive process for
 118 selecting and designating school districts as participants in
 119 the project and designating CHOICE academies in schools within
 120 participating school districts.

121 (2) A CHOICE academy is a career and professional academy
 122 that meets the goals and requirements specified in s. 1003.493
 123 and offers a rigorous and relevant academic curriculum leading
 124 to industry-recognized certification, college credit, and credit
 125 toward a high school diploma. Existing career education courses
 126 may serve as a foundation for the creation of a CHOICE academy.

127 (3) The purpose of a CHOICE academy shall be to:

128 (a) Draw upon ongoing partnerships between education and
 129 workforce development or economic development organizations to
 130 enhance the quality and opportunities for career education for
 131 high school students by exposure to in-demand career education
 132 as identified by such organizations in the local community.

133 (b) Build upon the state system of school improvement and
 134 education accountability by providing students with a solid
 135 academic foundation, opportunities to obtain industry-recognized
 136 certification or credentials, and preparation for postsecondary
 137 educational experiences in related fields.

138 (c) Focus students on completing high school graduation
 139 requirements, including, but not limited to, receiving passing
 140 scores on the grade 10 FCAT.

141 (d) Prepare graduating high school students to make
142 appropriate choices relative to employment and future
143 educational experiences.

144 (4) The Department of Education shall establish
145 application guidelines for an annual competitive process and
146 eligibility criteria for school district participation. A school
147 district may apply to the department for designation as a CHOICE
148 project participating district, and the department, in
149 consultation with Workforce Florida, Inc., and Enterprise
150 Florida, Inc., may designate as many school districts as it
151 deems advisable each year. Eligibility criteria for designation
152 of a school district as a CHOICE project participant shall
153 include, but not be limited to:

154 (a) The willingness and ability of associated businesses
155 or industries to form partnerships with and support CHOICE
156 academies.

157 (b) The dedication of school district resources to CHOICE
158 academies.

159 (5) The Department of Education, in consultation with
160 Workforce Florida, Inc., shall establish standards for
161 designating specific CHOICE academies in each participating
162 school district. The Okaloosa County School District may serve
163 in an advisory role in the establishment of such standards. A
164 participating school district may apply to the department for
165 designation of a CHOICE academy within a school in the district.
166 Eligibility criteria for such designation must include, but not
167 be limited to, the following:

168 (a) The existence of partnerships with an associated
 169 business or industry and a regional workforce board or the
 170 primary local economic development organization in the county as
 171 recognized by Enterprise Florida, Inc. The partnership of the
 172 business or industry with the CHOICE academy must be based on
 173 the connection of the business or industry with the academy's
 174 career theme and must involve future plans for improving the
 175 local economy. The business or industry partner must be
 176 consulted during the planning stages of a CHOICE academy and
 177 provide business or industry support and resources devoted to
 178 the CHOICE academy.

179 (b) The existence of at least one established partnership
 180 and an articulation agreement for credit with a postsecondary
 181 institution.

182 (c) The existence of participation opportunities for
 183 students, including students in home education programs,
 184 students with disabilities, and nontraditional students.

185 (d) The existence of a plan for sustaining the CHOICE
 186 academy.

187
 188 The Okaloosa County School District and other school districts
 189 that have received funding from Workforce Florida, Inc., for the
 190 establishment of CHOICE academies prior to July 1, 2006, shall
 191 receive an expedited review for CHOICE academy designation by
 192 the department.

193 (6) A participating school district shall:

194 (a) Identify an appropriate location for classes.

195 (b) Ensure that a CHOICE academy is flexible enough to
 196 respond both to the needs and abilities of students and to the
 197 needs of associated businesses or industries.

198 (c) Redirect appropriated funding from ongoing activities
 199 to a CHOICE academy.

200 (d) Plan for sustaining a CHOICE academy as an ongoing
 201 program without additional funding.

202 (e) Assist in program technical support for students in
 203 private schools, charter schools, or home education programs.

204 (f) Allow students in private schools, charter schools, or
 205 home education programs to participate in a CHOICE academy
 206 through dual enrollment.

207 (7) The Department of Education shall:

208 (a) With assistance from Workforce Florida, Inc., provide
 209 technical assistance to participating school districts in
 210 submitting applications for designation of specific CHOICE
 211 academies located in specific schools in the school district,
 212 reorganizing career education opportunities, developing CHOICE
 213 academies with career themes in areas deemed appropriate by
 214 Workforce Florida, Inc., or local economic development
 215 organizations, and developing funding plans.

216 (b) Approve or disapprove within 30 days a request by a
 217 participating school district on behalf of a designated CHOICE
 218 academy for the substitution of appropriate rigorous and
 219 relevant coursework deemed critical for student success by an
 220 industry for coursework required for high school graduation. If
 221 the school district does not receive a response to the request
 222 within 30 days, the district school board shall allow the

223 substitution according to its student progression plan pursuant
 224 to s. 1003.43(1).

225 (c) Make appropriate policy decisions relative to CHOICE
 226 academies when such decisions are not specifically directed by
 227 law.

228 (d) Jointly with Workforce Florida, Inc., and in
 229 consultation with the school districts, develop evaluation
 230 criteria for CHOICE academies. Such criteria shall include
 231 increased academic performance of students and schools using
 232 school-level accountability data.

233 (e) Report to the State Board of Education, the Governor,
 234 the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
 235 Representatives by July 1 of each year on school district
 236 participation in the CHOICE project, designated CHOICE academies
 237 with enrollment and completion data for such academies, and
 238 appropriate outcomes for students who have completed a CHOICE
 239 academy program. Such outcomes may include continuing
 240 educational experiences of CHOICE academy graduates, business or
 241 industry satisfaction with the CHOICE academies, placement of
 242 CHOICE academy graduates in employment, and earnings of such
 243 graduates.

244 (f) Have the authority to promote CHOICE academies and to
 245 provide planning and startup resources.

246 (8) Pursuant to appropriation in the General
 247 Appropriations Act, the Department of Education shall award one-
 248 time startup funds to five of the school districts designated as
 249 participants in the CHOICE project for the development of CHOICE
 250 academies. All school districts designated by the department are

251 authorized to establish one or more CHOICE academies without
252 incentive funds.

253 Section 3. Section 1003.495, Florida Statutes, is created
254 to read:

255 1003.495 Comprehensive career academies.--

256 (1) The Department of Education shall establish a
257 comprehensive career academy project to provide for the
258 designation of comprehensive career academies in the school
259 districts.

260 (2) A comprehensive career academy is a career and
261 professional academy that meets the goals and requirements
262 specified in s. 1003.493 and offers a rigorous and relevant
263 academic curriculum that prepares students for college, careers,
264 and productive citizenship.

265 (3) The Department of Education, in consultation with the
266 school districts, shall adopt criteria for evaluation of
267 comprehensive career academies and an assessment tool based on
268 national standards of practice. The assessment tool must be
269 designed so that a comprehensive career academy may use it as a
270 self-assessment tool.

271 (4) Each comprehensive career academy shall perform a
272 self-assessment using the adopted assessment tool at the end of
273 the first year of operation and periodically thereafter as
274 determined by the Department of Education.

275 (5) A school district may request the Department of
276 Education to conduct an assessment of a comprehensive career
277 academy for purposes of designation by the department as a
278 comprehensive career academy. If the department determines that

279 an academy meets national standards of practice, the department
 280 shall designate the academy as a comprehensive career academy.

281 (6) The Department of Education shall approve or
 282 disapprove within 30 days a request by a school district on
 283 behalf of a designated comprehensive career academy for the
 284 substitution of appropriate rigorous and relevant coursework
 285 deemed critical for student success by an industry for
 286 coursework required for high school graduation. If the school
 287 district does not receive a response to the request within 30
 288 days, the district school board shall allow the substitution
 289 according to its student progression plan pursuant to s.
 290 1003.43(1).

291 Section 4. Subsection (1) of section 1003.43, Florida
 292 Statutes, is amended to read:

293 1003.43 General requirements for high school graduation.--

294 (1) Graduation requires successful completion of either a
 295 minimum of 24 academic credits in grades 9 through 12 or an
 296 International Baccalaureate curriculum. The 24 credits shall be
 297 distributed as follows:

298 (a) Four credits in English, with major concentration in
 299 composition and literature.

300 (b) Three credits in mathematics. Effective for students
 301 entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and
 302 thereafter, one of these credits must be Algebra I, a series of
 303 courses equivalent to Algebra I, or a higher-level mathematics
 304 course.

305 (c) Three credits in science, two of which must have a
 306 laboratory component. Agriscience Foundations I, the core course

307 | in secondary Agriscience and Natural Resources programs, counts
 308 | as one of the science credits.

309 | (d) One credit in American history.

310 | (e) One credit in world history, including a comparative
 311 | study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major
 312 | political systems.

313 | (f) One-half credit in economics, including a comparative
 314 | study of the history, doctrines, and objectives of all major
 315 | economic systems. The Florida Council on Economic Education
 316 | shall provide technical assistance to the department and
 317 | district school boards in developing curriculum materials for
 318 | the study of economics.

319 | (g) One-half credit in American government, including
 320 | study of the Constitution of the United States. For students
 321 | entering the 9th grade in the 1997-1998 school year and
 322 | thereafter, the study of Florida government, including study of
 323 | the State Constitution, the three branches of state government,
 324 | and municipal and county government, shall be included as part
 325 | of the required study of American government.

326 | (h)1. One credit in practical arts career education or
 327 | exploratory career education. Any career education course as
 328 | defined in s. 1003.01 may be taken to satisfy the high school
 329 | graduation requirement for one credit in practical arts or
 330 | exploratory career education provided in this subparagraph;

331 | 2. One credit in performing fine arts to be selected from
 332 | music, dance, drama, painting, or sculpture. A course in any art
 333 | form, in addition to painting or sculpture, that requires manual
 334 | dexterity, or a course in speech and debate, may be taken to

335 satisfy the high school graduation requirement for one credit in
336 performing arts pursuant to this subparagraph; or

337 3. One-half credit each in practical arts career education
338 or exploratory career education and performing fine arts, as
339 defined in this paragraph.

340
341 Such credit for practical arts career education or exploratory
342 career education or for performing fine arts shall be made
343 available in the 9th grade, and students shall be scheduled into
344 a 9th grade course as a priority.

345 (i) One-half credit in life management skills to include
346 consumer education, positive emotional development, marriage and
347 relationship skill-based education, nutrition, parenting skills,
348 prevention of human immunodeficiency virus infection and
349 acquired immune deficiency syndrome and other sexually
350 transmissible diseases, benefits of sexual abstinence and
351 consequences of teenage pregnancy, information and instruction
352 on breast cancer detection and breast self-examination,
353 cardiopulmonary resuscitation, drug education, and the hazards
354 of smoking.

355 (j) One credit in physical education to include
356 assessment, improvement, and maintenance of personal fitness.
357 Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity
358 or varsity level, for two full seasons, shall satisfy the one-
359 credit requirement in physical education if the student passes a
360 competency test on personal fitness with a score of "C" or
361 better. The competency test on personal fitness must be
362 developed by the Department of Education. A district school

363 board may not require that the one credit in physical education
364 be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of one semester
365 with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, in a
366 physical activity class that requires participation in marching
367 band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a Reserve
368 Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class a significant component
369 of which is drills shall satisfy a one-half credit requirement
370 in physical education. This one-half credit may not be used to
371 satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for
372 adaptive physical education under an individual educational plan
373 (IEP) or 504 plan.

374 (k) Eight and one-half elective credits.

375

376 District school boards may award a maximum of one-half credit in
377 social studies and one-half elective credit for student
378 completion of nonpaid voluntary community or school service
379 work. Students choosing this option must complete a minimum of
380 75 hours of service in order to earn the one-half credit in
381 either category of instruction. Credit may not be earned for
382 service provided as a result of court action. District school
383 boards that approve the award of credit for student volunteer
384 service shall develop guidelines regarding the award of the
385 credit, and school principals are responsible for approving
386 specific volunteer activities. A course designated in the Course
387 Code Directory as grade 9 through grade 12 that is taken below
388 the 9th grade may be used to satisfy high school graduation
389 requirements or Florida Academic Scholars award requirements as
390 specified in a district school board's student progression plan.

391 A student shall be granted credit toward meeting the
 392 requirements of this subsection for equivalent courses, as
 393 identified pursuant to s. 1007.271(6), taken through dual
 394 enrollment. Each district school board's student progression
 395 plan must provide for the substitution of a course identified in
 396 the Course Code Directory and offered in a designated CHOICE
 397 academy under s. 1003.494 or in a designated comprehensive
 398 career academy under s. 1003.495 for a credit requirement for
 399 graduation under this subsection. A student may make such
 400 substitution for a maximum of two of the academic credit
 401 requirements.

402 Section 5. Subsection (7) is added to section 288.9015,
 403 Florida Statutes, to read:

404 288.9015 Enterprise Florida, Inc.; purpose; duties.--

405 (7) Enterprise Florida, Inc., shall work with the
 406 Department of Education and Workforce Florida, Inc., in the
 407 designation of school districts as participants in the CHOICE
 408 project pursuant to s. 1003.494.

409 Section 6. Paragraph (i) is added to subsection (5) of
 410 section 445.004, Florida Statutes, to read:

411 445.004 Workforce Florida, Inc.; creation; purpose;
 412 membership; duties and powers.--

413 (5) Workforce Florida, Inc., shall have all the powers and
 414 authority, not explicitly prohibited by statute, necessary or
 415 convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes as
 416 determined by statute, Pub. L. No. 105-220, and the Governor, as
 417 well as its functions, duties, and responsibilities, including,
 418 but not limited to, the following:

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419 | (i) Working with the Department of Education and
420 | Enterprise Florida, Inc., in the implementation of the CHOICE
421 | project pursuant to s. 1003.494.

422 | Section 7. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.