

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

Provide limited government - The State Board of Education is given rulemaking authority for the administration of the GED Success Scholarship Program.

Promote personal responsibility – The bill provides an opportunity for students who have received their GED to further their education through the GED Success Scholarship.

Empower families - The bill provides the opportunity for students who receive the GED scholarship to be able to obtain a job and realize economic self-sufficiency.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

General Educational Development (GED) Program

Florida in 2000-2001, had 29,606 dropouts from the educational system. Of those 3,883 (13.12%) went on to take the GED but 12,304 (41.56 %) did not further their education.¹ The fastest-growing, highest-paying jobs will require education beyond high school. The most common reasons that people take the GED test are employment and education. Of the 324,327 people in Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states who took the GED test in 2000, 31 percent cited employment as the determining factor for taking it.²

Career Centers

Currently s. 1001.44, F.S., provides for district school boards and district school boards of contiguous districts to establish or acquire career centers after first obtaining approval from the Department of Education (DOE). Before 2004, the statutory term used for such centers was “technical centers.” Career centers are often still referred to as technical centers. Career centers offer postsecondary adult vocational programs (PSAV) that result in a certificate for students that complete the program. Career centers are not degree issuing institutions. Florida currently has 47 such career centers.

Applied Associate in Science Degree

Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degrees are two year technical degrees indicating that a student has been trained in a particular field and is prepared for employment. These degrees are offered at degree issuing institutions, such as community colleges.

Articulation

The Commissioner of Education was directed by the passing of HB 769 (Chapter 2004-357, L.O.F.) to convene a Career Education Task Force (Task Force) to investigate issues related to workforce or career education. The Task Force chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, held several meetings to discuss workforce related issues. One of the recommendations of the Task Force was strengthening articulation at all levels.

Articulation was also a legislative priority in 2005. HB 6005 required the Department of Education (DOE) to conduct an “articulation audit”. As a result of that requirement DOE convened an articulation workgroup composed of representatives from school districts and community colleges in April 2005. The purpose of this workgroup was to look at the issues, review the current status of articulation from PSAV certificates to associate degrees and make recommendations on possible statewide articulation agreements.

¹ Department of Education statistics 3/01/05

² SREB September 2002, Focus on the GED: Who Takes it and Why

The workgroup established a process to include the approval of the Articulation Coordination Committee (ACC). The ACC is appointed by and reports to the Commissioner of Education. The ACC exists to coordinate ways to help students move easily from institution to institution and from one level of education to the next. The workgroup has met on several occasions and recently made a presentation to the ACC to release the results of phase one of the project. This consisted of several recommended PSAV certificate to associate degree statewide articulation agreements. The recommendations should be presented to the State Board of Education in the next month or two for approval.

Statewide Targeted Occupation List and Regional Targeted Occupations List

The statewide list of targeted occupations is determined by the Florida Workforce Estimating Conference (WEC). Section 216.136(a)2., F.S., requires the WEC to review data concerning the local and regional demands for short-term and long-term employment in high-skills/high-wage program jobs, as well as other jobs. The WEC develops the official targeted occupations list based on industry and occupational employment projections and wages prepared by the Labor Market Statistics Office in the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation. The WEC meets semi-annually and makes recommendations to Workforce Florida, Inc. for use as a guide for establishing Regional Targeted Occupation Lists, which are approved by Workforce Florida, Inc.³

Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program

The Florida Public Student Assistance Grant provides need-based assistance to degree seeking students attending degree granting institutions. The grant is currently not available to school district career centers or charter technical career centers.

Effect of Proposed Changes

Technical College

The bill relating to postsecondary education, authorizes district school boards that have established career centers as part of the district school system to enter into an articulation agreement for the delivery of specified associate in applied science (AAS) degree programs.

The bill authorizes career centers and charter technical career centers that offer a postsecondary adult vocational (PSAV) program designed to articulate into an associate in applied science degree and enters into an articulation agreement for the delivery of such a degree program to use the designation "technical college".

The bill defines a PSAV program as a job preparatory program, excluding continuing workforce education, through which a student receives a vocational certificate upon completion of instruction.

Statewide Articulation

The bill requires that State Board of Education statewide articulation agreements that govern articulation between secondary and postsecondary education include credit earned through high school career and technical education majors and career academies and admission of postsecondary vocational, technical, or career education certificate or diploma graduates from school district career centers or charter technical career centers.

The bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish an articulated career path for specific workforce education professions including, but not limited to, the program areas of criminal justice, business, nursing, allied health and early childhood education by March 1, 2007. The career path must provide for the articulation of:

- Credit earned in vocational, technical, or career certificate or diploma programs to associate in science degrees or associate in applied science degrees.

³ See <http://www.labormarketinfo.com/wec/index.htm>

- Credit earned in associate in science degree programs to credit in baccalaureate degree programs.
- Credit awarded by public and private institutions.
- Credit for experiential learning associated with minimum training requirements for employment.

The bill requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to collect, review, and conduct an assessment and evaluation of all existing statewide articulation agreements and to report on the results by December 2006.

GED Success Scholarship Program

The bill creates the GED Success Scholarship Program to encourage students who successfully complete a GED program to attend a program offered by an accredited public or private technical or career center or a community college which has been identified by the Department of Education to have a program that provides a career path to one of the top 15 occupations in number of annual openings as listed on the Agency for Workforce Innovation's Florida Statewide Targeted Occupations List or on a regional targeted occupations list at the time of the student's initial enrollment.

DOE is authorized to issue the scholarship to a student who meets all of the following requirements:

- Florida resident for tuition purposes
- Completed all sections of the GED tests
- Enrolled in a program identified by DOE as a program
- Submitted an application for scholarship to the DOE

Subject to the General Appropriations Act, DOE must allocate each year to eligible students one \$500 scholarship per student. The scholarship must be transmitted to the director or president of the eligible institutions.

The State Board of Education is authorized to adopt rules for the administration of the scholarship program.

Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program

The bill expands the need-based Florida Public Student Assistance Grant to postsecondary career certificate programs. The grant will be available to students attending school district career centers or charter technical career centers.

School District Career Center Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant

The bill establishes the School District Career Center Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program for the purpose of assisting career centers in building high priority instructional and capital facilities. For the school district to be eligible for a match by a state appropriation, one-third of the total cost of a facility construction project must be raised by the district, through its direct-support organization, from private sources. The state match, subject to the General Appropriations Act, may equal the amount raised up to the cost of the project. The final one-third of funds must be provided from the school district's local capital funds.

If the state match does not equal one-third of the cost, the district must renegotiate the terms of the private contributions with the donors. If the project is terminated, the private donations, plus interest, reverts to the direct support organization, and may be remitted to the donor at the donor's discretion.

After the completion of a project, one-third of any unexpended funds must be reserved for future facility construction projects by the career center that originally received the private contribution. One-third of the unexpended funds must be returned to the General Revenue Fund and one-third must be returned to the school district.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 1001.44, F.S.; authorizing an articulation agreement for delivery of associate in applied science degree programs by career centers; providing requirements for use of the designation "technical college"; providing a definition.

Section 2. Amends s. 1002.34, F.S.; providing for a charter technical career center to use the designation "charter technical college"; providing a definition.

Section 3. Amends s. 1007.22, F.S.; revising provisions relating to establishment of interinstitutional mechanisms by public postsecondary educational institutions.

Section 4. Amends s. 1007.23, F.S.; revising components of the statewide articulation agreement; revising terminology; requiring the State Board of Education to establish articulated career paths for specific professions; requiring career paths to provide credit for certain programs and experiential learning.

Section 5. Amends s. 1009.50, F.S.; authorizing certain students in postsecondary career certificate programs to receive Florida Public Student Assistance Grants.

Section 6. Creates s. 1009.521, F.S.; creating the GED Success Scholarship Program; providing for administration; providing for the award of scholarships from appropriated funds; providing eligibility criteria; providing for transmittal of funds to eligible institutions; providing for reporting; providing for rulemaking.

Section 7. Creates s. 1011.802, F.S.; establishing the School District Career Center Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant Program; authorizing a school district direct-support organization to solicit funds and establish a separate career center capital facilities matching account for private contributions for instructional facility construction projects; providing for match by state appropriations; providing for a portion of the cost of a facility construction project to be provided from a school district's local capital funds; providing State Board of Education requirements relating to capital outlay budget request for such projects; providing for reversion of funds.

Section 8. Creates new language; requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to assess articulation agreements and identify career center programs that may articulate to certain degree programs; requiring recommendations.

Section 9. Providing an effective date of July 1, 2006.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues: See FISCAL COMMENTS

2. Expenditures: See FISCAL COMMENTS

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government revenues.

2. Expenditures:

The bill does not appear to have a fiscal impact on local government expenditures.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Not applicable.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

Florida Public Student Assistance Grant Program (FSAG-Public)

The House Proposed General Appropriations Bill (House Bill 5001, Specific Appropriation 84) for fiscal year 2006-2007 provides \$95.3 million for the FSAG-Public. The Department of Education projects that the expansion of eligibility could increase the number of students by 5,233. The department estimates an increased cost of \$3.7 million to \$7.4 million to cover the expansion of eligibility.

GED Success Scholarship Program

The GED Success Scholarship is subject to the General Appropriations Act. The number of students who would be eligible for the \$500 scholarship is not known.

School District Career Center Facility Enhancement Challenge Grant

For the school district to be eligible for a match by a state appropriation, one-third of the total cost of a facility construction project must be raised by the district, through its direct-support organization, from private sources. The state match, subject to the General Appropriations Act, may equal the amount raised up to the cost of the project. The final one-third of funds must be provided from the school district's local capital funds.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

The bill does not require a municipality or county to spend funds or to take any action requiring the expenditure of funds.

2. Other: None

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The State Board of Education is given rulemaking authority for the administration of the GED Success Scholarship Program.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None

IV. AMENDMENTS/COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE & COMBINED BILL CHANGES

On March 7, 2006, the Community College and Workforce Committee passed two amendments. The amendments made the following changes.

- Required that the articulation career path for workforce education professions shall include the program area of early childhood education.
- Removed of the awarding of a Florida high school diploma for the requirements of the GED Success Scholarship.