

# SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee

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BILL: SB 334

INTRODUCER: Senator Wilson

SUBJECT: School Grading System

DATE: February 2, 2007

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	deMarsh-Mathues	Matthews	ED	<b>Unfavorable</b>
2.	_____	_____	EA	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

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## I. Summary:

The bill removes the letter grades used to describe school performance under Florida's system of school improvement and accountability. Additionally, the bill expands the assignment of community assessment teams to "D" and "F" schools. Under current law, a community assessment team is only required if a school is designated as failing to make adequate progress (an "F" school).

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 1001.42, 1002.33, 1002.38, 1002.415, 1003.62, 1008.33, 1008.34, 1008.345, and 1011.62.

## II. Present Situation:

Student achievement data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in grades 3-10 are used to establish both proficiency levels and annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the state.<sup>1</sup> Results are also used as the primary criteria in calculating school performance grades, school rewards and recognition, and performance-based funding.<sup>2</sup> The results of the statewide assessment program must be annually reported by the Commissioner of Education.

The following letter grades are used to designate school performance:

- "A," for schools making excellent progress;
- "B," for schools making above average progress;
- "C," for schools making satisfactory progress;

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1008.34, F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

- “D,” for schools making less than satisfactory progress; and
- “F,” for schools failing to make adequate progress.<sup>3</sup>

The criteria for designating school performance grades are based on a combination of the following:<sup>4</sup>

- Student achievement scores, including achievement scores for students seeking a special diploma;
- Student learning gains as measured by annual FCAT assessments in grades 3 through 10; and
- Improvement of the lowest 25th percentile of students in the school in reading, math, or writing on the FCAT, unless these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance.

Student assessment data used in determining school grades includes:

- Aggregate scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school who have been:
  - Assessed on the FCAT; and
  - Assessed on the FCAT, including Florida Writes, with scores at or in the lowest 25th percentile of students in the school in reading, math, or writing, unless these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance; and
- Achievement scores and learning gains of eligible students attending alternative schools that provide dropout prevention and academic intervention services pursuant to s. 1003.53, F.S.

Current law requires a community assessment team to be assigned by the Commissioner of Education to school districts or governing boards with a school that fails to make adequate progress.<sup>5</sup> The team must review school performance data, determine the cause for low performance, and make recommendations for implementing a plan to improve performance. Teams must include a representative of the Department of Education (DOE), parents, teachers, and other members of the community.

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill revises current law to remove the letter grades used to describe school performance under Florida’s system of school improvement and accountability.<sup>6</sup> Schools will continue to be designated on the basis of achieving different levels of progress. Additionally, the bill expands the assignment of community assessment teams to “D” and “F” schools. Under current law, a community assessment team is only required if a school is designated as failing to make adequate progress (an “F” school).

The bill takes effect July 1, 2007.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1008.34, F.S.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Section 1008.345, F.S.

<sup>6</sup> These provisions relate to the powers and duties of district school boards, charter schools, the Opportunity Scholarship Program, K-8 virtual schools, academic performance-based charter school districts, public school improvement, school grading system, school improvement and education accountability, and funds for the operation of schools, respectively.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

## A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

## B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

## C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

## A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

## B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

## C. Government Sector Impact:

There may be some costs associated with assigning community assessment teams to districts or governing boards with schools that make less than satisfactory progress.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

A grade of “C” is currently used to designate a school that makes satisfactory progress. On page 11, line 10, the reference to making adequate progress should be removed. This description is not used in the current statutory provisions for school grades. The bill’s title should be amended to reflect the provisions for community assessment teams. Section 1008.36, F.S., related to the school recognition program, also contains references to letter grades. However, it is not amended by the bill.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.



## **VIII. Summary of Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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