

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to improving graduation rates; amending s.  
 3           1003.21, F.S.; revising provisions relating to school  
 4           district responsibilities with respect to exit interviews  
 5           when a student seeks to terminate school enrollment;  
 6           creating s. 1003.4935, F.S.; creating the Transition  
 7           Success Program to ease school transitions, reduce dropout  
 8           rates, and provide information regarding certain  
 9           opportunities; providing requirements and suggested  
 10          practices; requiring the Department of Education to  
 11          develop criteria and standards for Transition Success  
 12          Programs; amending s. 1008.34, F.S.; adding graduation  
 13          rate and dropout rate to the evaluation criteria for  
 14          school grades for certain schools; amending s. 1008.36,  
 15          F.S.; including Transition Success Programs as potential  
 16          recipients of Florida School Recognition Program awards;  
 17          providing an effective date.

18  
 19   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

20  
 21           Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section  
 22   1003.21, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

23           1003.21 School attendance.--

24           (1)

25           (c) A student who attains the age of 16 years during the  
 26   school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance  
 27   beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the  
 28   student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school

HB 7141

2007

29 enrollment with the district school board. Public school  
30 students who have attained the age of 16 years and who have not  
31 graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until the  
32 formal declaration of intent is filed with the district school  
33 board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school  
34 enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential  
35 and must be signed by the student and the student's parent. The  
36 school district must notify the student's parent of receipt of  
37 the student's declaration of intent to terminate school  
38 enrollment. The student's guidance counselor or other school  
39 personnel must conduct an exit interview with the student to  
40 determine the reasons for the student's decision to terminate  
41 school enrollment and actions that could be taken to keep the  
42 student in school. The student must be informed of opportunities  
43 to continue his or her education in a different environment,  
44 including, but not limited to, participation in a vocational  
45 program, job training program, ready to work certification  
46 program under s. 1004.99, adult education, or ~~and~~ GED test  
47 preparation. The school district shall maintain records on the  
48 exit interview, including the specific recommendations made for  
49 participation in available educational programs and the  
50 student's actions in response to the recommendations.  
51 Additionally, the student must complete a survey in a format  
52 prescribed by the Department of Education to provide data on  
53 student reasons for seeking to terminate ~~terminating~~ enrollment  
54 and actions taken by schools to keep students enrolled.

55 Section 2. Section 1003.4935, Florida Statutes, is created  
56 to read:

HB 7141

2007

57 1003.4935 Transition Success Program.--

58 (1) The Transition Success Program is created to ease the  
59 transition from elementary school to middle school and middle  
60 school to high school, to reduce dropout rates caused by the  
61 difficulty with transition, and to provide students with  
62 extensive self-awareness opportunities concerning career goals  
63 and interests.

64 (2) A Transition Success Program may be a school-within-a-  
65 school, pursuant to s. 1003.02(4), that is organized to have  
66 small teams of interdisciplinary teachers who share the same  
67 group of students, have flexible scheduling with common planning  
68 time, and use team planning concepts and curricular and  
69 instructional innovation in working with groups of students in  
70 grades 6-9.

71 (3) Each Transition Success Program must:

72 (a) Require close monitoring of student attendance and  
73 behavior and provide early intervention and support for students  
74 at risk of dropping out.

75 (b) Require that each student receive intensive career  
76 exploration and counseling.

77 (c) Provide detailed information to students regarding the  
78 opportunities available in the district for major areas of  
79 interest and career academies.

80 (4) By the 2008-2009 school year, the department shall  
81 develop criteria and standards for the establishment of  
82 Transition Success Programs in public schools where appropriate,  
83 design model programs, and provide technical assistance to

HB 7141

2007

84 school districts and public schools establishing Transition  
85 Success Programs.

86 Section 3. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section  
87 1008.34, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

88 1008.34 School grading system; school report cards;  
89 district grade.--

90 (3) DESIGNATION OF SCHOOL GRADES.--Each school that has  
91 students who are tested and included in the school grading  
92 system, except an alternative school that receives a school  
93 improvement rating pursuant to s. 1008.341, shall receive a  
94 school grade; however, an alternative school may choose to  
95 receive a school grade under this section in lieu of a school  
96 improvement rating. Additionally, a school that serves any  
97 combination of students in kindergarten through grade 3 which  
98 does not receive a school grade because its students are not  
99 tested and included in the school grading system shall receive  
100 the school grade designation of a K-3 feeder pattern school  
101 identified by the Department of Education and verified by the  
102 school district. A school feeder pattern exists if at least 60  
103 percent of the students in the school serving a combination of  
104 students in kindergarten through grade 3 are scheduled to be  
105 assigned to the graded school. School grades itemized in  
106 subsection (2) shall be based on the following:

107 (a) Criteria.--A school's grade shall be based on a  
108 combination of:

109 1. Student achievement scores, including achievement  
110 scores for students seeking a special diploma.

HB 7141

2007

111           2. Student learning gains as measured by annual FCAT  
112 assessments in grades 3 through 10; learning gains for students  
113 seeking a special diploma, as measured by an alternate  
114 assessment tool, shall be included not later than the 2009-2010  
115 school year.

116           3. Improvement of the lowest 25th percentile of students  
117 in the school in reading, math, or writing on the FCAT, unless  
118 these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance.

119           4. A satisfactory or measured rising graduation rate and a  
120 satisfactory or measured decreasing dropout rate as defined by  
121 State Board of Education rule for schools that include grade 9  
122 or higher.

123  
124 The State Board of Education shall adopt appropriate criteria  
125 for each school grade. The criteria must also give added weight  
126 to student achievement in reading. Schools designated with a  
127 grade of "C," making satisfactory progress, shall be required to  
128 demonstrate that adequate progress has been made by students in  
129 the school who are in the lowest 25th percentile in reading,  
130 math, or writing on the FCAT, including Florida Writes, unless  
131 these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance.

132           Section 4. Subsection (3) of section 1008.36, Florida  
133 Statutes, is amended to read:

134           1008.36 Florida School Recognition Program.--

135           (3) All public schools, including charter schools, that  
136 receive a school grade pursuant to s. 1008.34 are eligible to  
137 participate in the program. Additionally, a Transition Success  
138 Program that operates as a school-within-a-school and meets the

HB 7141

2007

139 requirements of this section may be eligible for an award even  
140 if the school within which the program is operated does not  
141 qualify for an award.

142

143 Notwithstanding statutory provisions to the contrary, incentive  
144 awards are not subject to collective bargaining.

145 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.