

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; requiring every public  
3           school to designate lead teachers in certain subject areas  
4           to train and mentor teachers at their respective schools;  
5           requiring school districts to appoint master trainers in  
6           certain subject areas; requiring the Department of  
7           Education to offer training and provide certain  
8           information electronically; requiring the State Board of  
9           Education to adopt rules relating to certain  
10          qualifications for certification; establishing priorities  
11          for mentoring; requiring school districts to provide  
12          written statements regarding liability insurance coverage;  
13          requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
14          Government Accountability to study teacher preparation  
15          programs and submit a report; requiring teacher  
16          preparation programs to offer certain options; amending s.  
17          1001.51, F.S.; permitting elected district school  
18          superintendents to directly dismiss administrative  
19          personnel; amending s. 1004.04, F.S., relating to public  
20          accountability and state approval for teacher preparation  
21          programs; requiring programs to incorporate instruction  
22          regarding gifted and academically talented student  
23          identification and placement; requiring the department to  
24          establish an electronic reporting system for approved  
25          teacher preparation programs; permitting persons who are  
26          eligible to participate as a mentor in the Dale Hickam  
27          Excellent Teaching Program to supervise or direct teacher  
28          preparation students during field experience courses or

29 | internships; amending s. 1004.85, F.S.; requiring  
 30 | postsecondary educator preparation institutes to guarantee  
 31 | the quality of graduates; requiring institutes to provide  
 32 | additional training to educators who fail to demonstrate  
 33 | certain essential skills at no cost to the educator or  
 34 | employer; amending s. 1012.32, F.S.; permitting background  
 35 | screenings of individuals participating in student  
 36 | teaching to be transferred among districts; amending s.  
 37 | 1012.33, F.S., relating to contracts with instructional  
 38 | staff, supervisors, and school principals; revising the  
 39 | probationary period for persons newly employed as  
 40 | instructional staff; requiring mentoring, recordkeeping,  
 41 | and reporting; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; revising  
 42 | acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general  
 43 | knowledge for educator certification; requiring the Office  
 44 | of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability  
 45 | to study teacher retention rates and submit a report;  
 46 | providing an effective date.

47 |  
 48 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

49 |  
 50 | Section 1. Lead teachers and master trainers.--

51 | (1) Each school district shall require every public school  
 52 | in that district to designate a lead teacher in the subject  
 53 | areas of reading, mathematics, social studies, and science. Each  
 54 | lead teacher shall attend periodic training provided by the  
 55 | district master trainers on the latest research regarding  
 56 | effective teaching methodologies, techniques, and skills,

HB 7155

2007

57 including use of information technology; advancements in  
58 curricula; cross-curricula training strategies; and student  
59 motivation and management. Lead teachers shall train and mentor  
60 teachers at their respective schools in their respective subject  
61 areas.

62 (2) Each school district shall appoint master trainers who  
63 must be specialists in reading, mathematics, social studies, or  
64 science and in techniques for using information technology to  
65 teach the subject area. The master trainers must train the lead  
66 teachers and provide onsite training for schools needing  
67 additional assistance, particularly schools graded "D" or "F."

68 (3) The Department of Education shall offer a 3-day summer  
69 academy for master trainers. Training shall include information  
70 regarding the latest research on effective teaching  
71 methodologies, techniques, and skills, including use of  
72 information technology; advancements in curricula; cross-  
73 curricula training strategies; and student motivation and  
74 management.

75 (4) The Department of Education shall make electronically  
76 available to all teachers the latest updated information  
77 regarding their subject areas and teaching advancements.

78 Section 2. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the  
79 contrary, the State Board of Education shall adopt rules that:

80 (1) Allow the military occupational specialty designation  
81 for instruction to be used as verification of instructional  
82 experience for purposes of teacher certification.

HB 7155

2007

83           (2) Count credit granted by the American Council for  
84 Education the same as college credit for purposes of teacher  
85 certification.

86           (3) Allow military personnel to use proof of completion of  
87 Defense Language Institute training to demonstrate subject area  
88 competence in the critical shortage area of foreign language.

89           Section 3. Notwithstanding any provision of law or rule to  
90 the contrary, the first priority for the use of the time  
91 required of teachers who have achieved certification by the  
92 National Board of Professional Teaching Standards for mentoring  
93 or related services shall be to provide such services to  
94 beginning teachers, teachers in need of improvement, and  
95 candidates enrolled in teacher preparation programs, including  
96 educator preparation institutes.

97           Section 4. School district insurance coverage  
98 statement.--Each school district shall provide to all covered  
99 instructional personnel a written statement explaining the  
100 liability insurance coverage that the district provides such  
101 personnel. The statement must be concise, written in lay  
102 language, and distributed to covered instructional personnel  
103 separate from any other information they may otherwise receive  
104 from the district. The statement must include a clear  
105 explanation of the scope of the coverage and a reference to and  
106 discussion of the existing laws that protect teachers and  
107 principals from liability. The statement must be provided to and  
108 discussed with covered personnel at all annual orientations  
109 provided by the school district as well as posted on the school  
110 district's website.

HB 7155

2007

111           Section 5. The Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
112 Government Accountability (OPPAGA) shall conduct a study to  
113 identify teacher preparation programs that are most effective at  
114 producing new teachers who are employed in Florida public K-12  
115 classrooms. The study must:

116           (1) Analyze the rates at which students complete teacher  
117 preparation programs in order to examine the productivity of  
118 these programs;

119           (2) Follow one or more cohorts of teacher preparation  
120 program completers from universities, community colleges,  
121 educator preparation institutes, and district alternative  
122 certification programs to determine the proportion of graduates  
123 who enter classroom teaching; and

124           (3) Follow one or more cohorts of newly employed Florida  
125 K-12 classroom teachers to determine how long they remain in the  
126 classroom and whether teachers who remain in the classroom are  
127 more likely to be products of certain teacher preparation  
128 programs.

129  
130 The number of cohorts shall be determined by OPPAGA based on the  
131 research needs of the project. A report shall be submitted to  
132 the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of  
133 Representatives by February 1, 2008.

134           Section 6. Each institution that offers state-approved  
135 teacher preparation programs shall make options available to  
136 students to pursue a teacher preparation program comprised of 3  
137 years of coursework followed by a 1-year paid residency or  
138 internship with opportunities for students to participate in

139 classroom experiences each year of the program and specify such  
 140 options in a report to the President of the Senate and the  
 141 Speaker of the House of Representatives. The report shall be  
 142 submitted annually no later than February 1 and may be used to  
 143 develop a performance funding model for approved teacher  
 144 education programs.

145 Section 7. Subsection (7) of section 1001.51, Florida  
 146 Statutes, is amended to read:

147 1001.51 Duties and responsibilities of district school  
 148 superintendent.--The district school superintendent shall  
 149 exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below and  
 150 elsewhere in the law, provided that, in so doing, he or she  
 151 shall advise and counsel with the district school board. The  
 152 district school superintendent shall perform all tasks necessary  
 153 to make sound recommendations, nominations, proposals, and  
 154 reports required by law to be acted upon by the district school  
 155 board. All such recommendations, nominations, proposals, and  
 156 reports by the district school superintendent shall be either  
 157 recorded in the minutes or shall be made in writing, noted in  
 158 the minutes, and filed in the public records of the district  
 159 school board. It shall be presumed that, in the absence of the  
 160 record required in this section, the recommendations,  
 161 nominations, and proposals required of the district school  
 162 superintendent were not contrary to the action taken by the  
 163 district school board in such matters.

164 (7) PERSONNEL.--Be responsible, as required herein, for  
 165 directing the work of the personnel, subject to the requirements  
 166 of chapter 1012. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to

HB 7155

2007

167 the contrary, a district school superintendent elected under s.  
168 5, Art. IX of the State Constitution may directly dismiss  
169 administrative personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(3)(a) and (b).

170 Section 8. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3), paragraph (b)  
171 of subsection (5), and paragraph (b) of subsection (6) of  
172 section 1004.04, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

173 1004.04 Public accountability and state approval for  
174 teacher preparation programs.--

175 (3) DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS.--A system  
176 developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with  
177 postsecondary educational institutions shall assist departments  
178 and colleges of education in the restructuring of their programs  
179 in accordance with this section to meet the need for producing  
180 quality teachers now and in the future.

181 (c) State-approved teacher preparation programs must  
182 incorporate:

183 1. Appropriate English for Speakers of Other Languages  
184 instruction so that program graduates will have completed the  
185 requirements for teaching limited English proficient students in  
186 Florida public schools.

187 2. Scientifically researched, knowledge-based reading  
188 literacy and computational skills instruction so that program  
189 graduates will be able to provide the necessary academic  
190 foundations for their students at whatever grade levels they  
191 choose to teach.

192 3. Gifted and academically talented student identification  
193 and placement instruction so that program graduates will be able  
194 to identify gifted and academically talented students in the

HB 7155

2007

195 elementary grades and provide these students with accelerated  
196 learning opportunities throughout their academic careers that  
197 allow them to work at suitably challenging levels.

198 (5) CONTINUED PROGRAM APPROVAL.--Notwithstanding  
199 subsection (4), failure by a public or nonpublic teacher  
200 preparation program to meet the criteria for continued program  
201 approval shall result in loss of program approval. The  
202 Department of Education, in collaboration with the departments  
203 and colleges of education, shall develop procedures for  
204 continued program approval that document the continuous  
205 improvement of program processes and graduates' performance.

206 (b) Additional criteria for continued program approval for  
207 public institutions may be approved by the State Board of  
208 Education. Such criteria must emphasize instruction in classroom  
209 management and must provide for the evaluation of the teacher  
210 candidates' performance in this area. The criteria shall also  
211 require instruction in working with underachieving students.  
212 Program evaluation procedures must include, but are not limited  
213 to, program graduates' satisfaction with instruction and the  
214 program's responsiveness to local school districts. Additional  
215 criteria for continued program approval for nonpublic  
216 institutions shall be developed in the same manner as for public  
217 institutions; however, such criteria must be based upon  
218 significant, objective, and quantifiable graduate performance  
219 measures. Responsibility for collecting data on outcome measures  
220 through survey instruments and other appropriate means shall be  
221 shared by the postsecondary educational institutions and the  
222 Department of Education. By January 1 of each year, the



HB 7155

2007

223 Department of Education shall report this information for each  
224 postsecondary educational institution that has state-approved  
225 programs of teacher education to the Governor, the State Board  
226 of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the President of  
227 the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, all  
228 Florida postsecondary teacher preparation programs, and  
229 interested members of the public. This report must analyze the  
230 data and make recommendations for improving teacher preparation  
231 programs in the state. By August 1, 2008, the Department of  
232 Education shall establish an electronic reporting system by  
233 which all institutions with programs approved under this section  
234 shall report data required for continued approval. The system  
235 must be linked to the K-20 Education Data Warehouse and provide  
236 institutions with a means of reviewing and utilizing data for  
237 purposes of continuous program improvement. The system must also  
238 align data elements to allow for comparison of performance  
239 outcomes common to programs approved under this section and  
240 other types of approved teacher preparation programs in this  
241 state.

242 (6) PRESERVICE FIELD EXPERIENCE.--All postsecondary  
243 instructors, school district personnel and instructional  
244 personnel, and school sites preparing instructional personnel  
245 through preservice field experience courses and internships  
246 shall meet special requirements. District school boards are  
247 authorized to pay student teachers during their internships.

248 (b) All school district personnel and instructional  
249 personnel who supervise or direct teacher preparation students  
250 during field experience courses or internships must have

HB 7155

2007

251 evidence of "clinical educator" training or eligibility for  
252 participation as a mentor in the Dale Hickam Excellent Teaching  
253 Program pursuant to s. 1012.72 and must successfully demonstrate  
254 effective classroom management strategies that consistently  
255 result in improved student performance. The State Board of  
256 Education shall approve the training requirements.

257 Section 9. Subsections (4) through (7) of section 1004.85,  
258 Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (5) through (8),  
259 respectively, and a new subsection (4) is added to that section  
260 to read:

261 1004.85 Postsecondary educator preparation institutes.--

262 (4) Each educator preparation institute shall guarantee  
263 the high quality of its graduates during the first 2 years  
264 immediately following graduation from the program or following  
265 initial certification, whichever occurs first. Any educator in a  
266 Florida school who fails to demonstrate the essential skills  
267 specified in s. 1004.04(5)(e) shall be provided additional  
268 training by the educator preparation institute at no expense to  
269 the educator or the employer. Such training must consist of an  
270 individualized plan agreed upon by the school district and the  
271 educator preparation institute that includes specific learning  
272 outcomes. The educator preparation institute assumes no  
273 responsibility for the educator's employment contract with the  
274 employer. Employer satisfaction shall be determined by an  
275 annually administered survey instrument approved by the  
276 Department of Education that measures, at a minimum, employer  
277 satisfaction with the ability of graduates to demonstrate the  
278 essential skills specified in s. 1004.04(5)(e).

HB 7155

2007

279 Section 10. Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) of section  
 280 1012.32, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

281 1012.32 Qualifications of personnel.--

282 (2)

283 (d) Individuals ~~Student teachers, persons~~ participating in  
 284 student teaching a field experience pursuant to s. 1004.04(6) or  
 285 s. 1004.85, and persons participating in a short-term experience  
 286 as a teacher assistant pursuant to s. 1004.04(10) in any  
 287 district school system, lab school, or charter school shall,  
 288 upon engagement to provide services, undergo background  
 289 screening as required under s. 1012.56. Such screening may be  
 290 transferred from one school district to another school district.

291  
 292 Fingerprints shall be submitted to the Department of Law  
 293 Enforcement for state processing and to the Federal Bureau of  
 294 Investigation for federal processing. Persons subject to this  
 295 subsection found through fingerprint processing to have been  
 296 convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude shall not be  
 297 employed, engaged to provide services, or serve in any position  
 298 requiring direct contact with students. Probationary persons  
 299 subject to this subsection terminated because of their criminal  
 300 record have the right to appeal such decisions. The cost of the  
 301 background screening may be borne by the district school board,  
 302 the charter school, the employee, the contractor, or a person  
 303 subject to this subsection.

304 Section 11. Paragraph (a) of subsection (3) of section  
 305 1012.33, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

306 1012.33 Contracts with instructional staff, supervisors,  
 307 and school principals.--

308 (3) (a) Each district school board shall provide a  
 309 professional service contract as prescribed herein. Each member  
 310 of the instructional staff who completed the following  
 311 requirements prior to July 1, 1984, shall be entitled to and  
 312 shall be issued a continuing contract in the form prescribed by  
 313 rules of the state board pursuant to s. 231.36, Florida Statutes  
 314 (1981). Each member of the instructional staff who completes the  
 315 following requirements on or after July 1, 1984, shall be  
 316 entitled to and shall be issued a professional service contract  
 317 in the form prescribed by rules of the state board as provided  
 318 herein:

319 1. The member must hold a professional certificate as  
 320 prescribed by s. 1012.56 and rules of the State Board of  
 321 Education.

322 2.a. The member must have completed 3 years of  
 323 probationary service in the district during a period not in  
 324 excess of 5 successive years, except for leave duly authorized  
 325 and granted.

326 b. For any person newly employed as a member of the  
 327 instructional staff after July 1, 2007, the member must have  
 328 completed 5 years of probationary service in the district during  
 329 a period not in excess of 7 successive years, except for leave  
 330 duly authorized and granted. During the first year of service, a  
 331 teacher shall be provided mentoring and induction to assist with  
 332 skills necessary for excellent teaching. Mentoring shall be  
 333 provided by a nationally board-certified teacher, if available.

334 A principal may prescribe a second year of mentoring in order to  
 335 continue the skill building process. During the probationary  
 336 process, the district shall require the principal to maintain  
 337 records of assistance to the teacher, copies of teacher  
 338 appraisals, and reasons for teacher nonrenewal, if applicable. A  
 339 principal must submit annually a written report to the district,  
 340 on a form developed by the district, this record and other  
 341 relevant information on probationary teachers under the  
 342 principal's direct supervision.

343 3. The member must have been recommended by the district  
 344 school superintendent for such contract and reappointed by the  
 345 district school board based on successful performance of duties  
 346 and demonstration of professional competence.

347 4. For any person newly employed as a member of the  
 348 instructional staff after June 30, 1997, the initial annual  
 349 contract shall include a 97-day probationary period during which  
 350 time the employee's contract may be terminated without cause or  
 351 the employee may resign without breach of contract.

352 Section 12. Subsection (3) of section 1012.56, Florida  
 353 Statutes, is amended to read:

354 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.--

355 (3) MASTERY OF GENERAL KNOWLEDGE.--Acceptable means of  
 356 demonstrating mastery of general knowledge are:

357 (a) Achievement of passing scores on basic skills  
 358 examination required by state board rule for persons seeking  
 359 initial certification before July 1, 2009;

360 (b) Achievement of passing scores on an examination that  
 361 demonstrates mastery of a college-level general education

HB 7155

2007

362 curriculum required by state board rule for persons seeking  
363 initial certification on or after July 1, 2009 ~~the College Level~~  
364 ~~Academic Skills Test earned prior to July 1, 2002;~~

365 (c) A valid professional standard teaching certificate  
366 issued by another state;

367 (d) A valid certificate issued by the National Board for  
368 Professional Teaching Standards or a national educator  
369 credentialing board approved by the State Board of Education; or

370 (e) Documentation of two semesters of successful teaching  
371 in a community college, state university, or private college or  
372 university that awards an associate or higher degree and is an  
373 accredited institution or an institution of higher education  
374 identified by the Department of Education as having a quality  
375 program.

376 Section 13. The Office of Program Policy Analysis and  
377 Government Accountability shall conduct a study of teacher  
378 retention rates for each school district. The study shall report  
379 and analyze the teacher retention rates for each school district  
380 and each school within the district. The study shall also report  
381 and analyze the retention rates for new teachers. Teacher  
382 retention rates shall be disaggregated to include ethnicity,  
383 age, subject area, and grade level. A report shall be submitted  
384 to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of  
385 Representatives by March 1, 2008.

386 Section 14. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.