

By Senator Wise

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1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to workplace skills of students; amending  
3 s. 1003.428, F.S.; requiring a Florida Ready to Work  
4 Credential for high school graduation with a career or  
5 technical major area of interest; amending s. 1009.536,  
6 F.S.; requiring a student to earn the credential for  
7 receipt of a Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award;  
8 amending s. 445.004, F.S.; requiring Workforce Florida,  
9 Inc., and the Department of Education to ensure consistent  
10 use of the credential; providing an effective date.

11  
12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

13  
14 Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section  
15 1003.428, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

16 1003.428 General requirements for high school graduation;  
17 revised.--

18 (2) The 24 credits may be earned through applied,  
19 integrated, and combined courses approved by the Department of  
20 Education and shall be distributed as follows:

21 (b) Eight credits in majors, minors, or electives:

22 1. Four credits in a major area of interest, such as  
23 sequential courses in a career and technical program, fine and  
24 performing arts, or academic content area, selected by the  
25 student as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156.  
26 Students may revise major areas of interest each year as part of  
27 annual course registration processes and should update their  
28 education plan to reflect such revisions. Annually by October 1,  
29 the district school board shall approve major areas of interest

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30 and submit the list of majors to the Commissioner of Education  
31 for approval. Each major area of interest shall be deemed  
32 approved unless specifically rejected by the commissioner within  
33 60 days. Upon approval, each district's major areas of interest  
34 shall be available for use by all school districts and shall be  
35 posted on the department's website. Beginning with students  
36 entering their first year of high school in the 2008-2009 school  
37 year, a student must earn a Florida Ready to Work Credential as  
38 created under s. 1004.99 in order to graduate with a career or  
39 technical major area of interest.

40 2. Four credits in elective courses selected by the student  
41 as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156. These  
42 credits may be combined to allow for a second major area of  
43 interest pursuant to subparagraph 1., a minor area of interest,  
44 elective courses, or intensive reading or mathematics  
45 intervention courses as described in this subparagraph.

46 a. Minor areas of interest are composed of three credits  
47 selected by the student as part of the education plan required by  
48 s. 1003.4156 and approved by the district school board.

49 b. Elective courses are selected by the student in order to  
50 pursue a complete education program as described in s. 1001.41(3)  
51 and to meet eligibility requirements for scholarships.

52 c. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 on  
53 FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an  
54 intensive reading course the following year. Placement of Level 2  
55 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content area  
56 course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be  
57 determined by diagnosis of reading needs. The department shall  
58 provide guidance on appropriate strategies for diagnosing and

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59 meeting the varying instructional needs of students reading below  
60 grade level. Reading courses shall be designed and offered  
61 pursuant to the comprehensive reading plan required by s.  
62 1011.62(8).

63 d. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 or  
64 Level 2 on FCAT Mathematics, the student must receive remediation  
65 the following year. These courses may be taught through applied,  
66 integrated, or combined courses and are subject to approval by  
67 the department for inclusion in the Course Code Directory.

68 Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 1009.536, Florida  
69 Statutes, is amended to read:

70 1009.536 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award.--The  
71 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award is created within the  
72 Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to recognize and  
73 reward academic achievement and career preparation by high school  
74 students who wish to continue their education.

75 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Gold Seal  
76 Vocational Scholars award if the student meets the general  
77 eligibility requirements for the Florida Bright Futures  
78 Scholarship Program and the student:

79 (a) Completes the secondary school portion of a sequential  
80 program of studies that requires at least three secondary school  
81 career credits taken over at least 2 academic years, and is  
82 continued in a planned, related postsecondary education program.  
83 If the student's school does not offer such a two-plus-two or  
84 tech-prep program, the student must complete a job-preparatory  
85 career education program selected by Workforce Florida, Inc., for  
86 its ability to provide high-wage employment in an occupation with  
87 high potential for employment opportunities. On-the-job training

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88 may not be substituted for any of the three required career  
89 credits.

90 (b) Demonstrates readiness for postsecondary education by  
91 earning a passing score on the Florida College Entry Level  
92 Placement Test or its equivalent as identified by the Department  
93 of Education.

94 (c) Earns a minimum cumulative weighted grade point average  
95 of 3.0, as calculated pursuant to s. 1009.531, on all subjects  
96 required for a standard high school diploma, excluding elective  
97 courses.

98 (d) Earns a minimum unweighted grade point average of 3.5  
99 on a 4.0 scale for secondary career courses comprising the career  
100 program.

101 (e) Beginning with students entering their first year of  
102 high school in the 2008-2009 school year, earns a gold level  
103 Florida Ready to Work credential as created under s. 1004.99.

104 Section 3. Subsection (5) of section 445.004, Florida  
105 Statutes, is amended to read:

106 445.004 Workforce Florida, Inc.; creation; purpose;  
107 membership; duties and powers.--

108 (5) Workforce Florida, Inc., shall have all the powers and  
109 authority, not explicitly prohibited by statute, necessary or  
110 convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes as determined  
111 by statute, Pub. L. No. 105-220, and the Governor, as well as its  
112 functions, duties, and responsibilities, including, but not  
113 limited to, the following:

114 (a) Serving as the state's Workforce Investment Board  
115 pursuant to Pub. L. No. 105-220. Unless otherwise required by

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116 federal law, at least 90 percent of the workforce development  
117 funding must go into direct customer service costs.

118 (b) Providing oversight and policy direction to ensure that  
119 the following programs are administered by the Agency for  
120 Workforce Innovation in compliance with approved plans and under  
121 contract with Workforce Florida, Inc.:

122 1. Programs authorized under Title I of the Workforce  
123 Investment Act of 1998, Pub. L. No. 105-220, with the exception  
124 of programs funded directly by the United States Department of  
125 Labor under Title I, s. 167.

126 2. Programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933,  
127 as amended, 29 U.S.C. ss. 49 et seq.

128 3. Activities authorized under Title II of the Trade Act of  
129 2002, as amended, 19 U.S.C. ss. 2272 et seq., and the Trade  
130 Adjustment Assistance Program.

131 4. Activities authorized under 38 U.S.C., chapter 41,  
132 including job counseling, training, and placement for veterans.

133 5. Employment and training activities carried out under  
134 funds awarded to this state by the United States Department of  
135 Housing and Urban Development.

136 6. Welfare transition services funded by the Temporary  
137 Assistance for Needy Families Program, created under the Personal  
138 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996,  
139 as amended, Pub. L. No. 104-193, and Title IV, s. 403, of the  
140 Social Security Act, as amended.

141 7. Displaced homemaker programs, provided under s. 446.50.

142 8. The Florida Bonding Program, provided under Pub. L. No.  
143 97-300, s. 164(a)(1).

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144 9. The Food Stamp Employment and Training Program, provided  
145 under the Food Stamp Act of 1977, 7 U.S.C. ss. 2011-2032; the  
146 Food Security Act of 1988, Pub. L. No. 99-198; and the Hunger  
147 Prevention Act, Pub. L. No. 100-435.

148 10. The Quick-Response Training Program, provided under ss.  
149 288.046-288.047. Matching funds and in-kind contributions that  
150 are provided by clients of the Quick-Response Training Program  
151 shall count toward the requirements of s. 288.90151(5)(d),  
152 pertaining to the return on investment from activities of  
153 Enterprise Florida, Inc.

154 11. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit, provided under the Tax  
155 and Trade Relief Extension Act of 1998, Pub. L. No. 105-277, and  
156 the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, Pub. L. No. 105-34.

157 12. Offender placement services, provided under ss.  
158 944.707-944.708.

159 (c) The agency may adopt rules necessary to administer the  
160 provisions of this chapter which relate to implementing and  
161 administering the programs listed in paragraph (b) as well as  
162 rules related to eligible training providers and auditing and  
163 monitoring subrecipients of the workforce system grant funds.

164 (d) Contracting with public and private entities as  
165 necessary to further the directives of this section. All  
166 contracts executed by Workforce Florida, Inc., must include  
167 specific performance expectations and deliverables. All Workforce  
168 Florida, Inc., contracts, including those solicited, managed, or  
169 paid by the Agency for Workforce Innovation pursuant to s.  
170 20.50(2) are exempt from s. 112.061, but shall be governed by  
171 subsection (1).

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172 (e) Notifying the Governor, the President of the Senate,  
173 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of noncompliance  
174 by the Agency for Workforce Innovation or other agencies or  
175 obstruction of the board's efforts by such agencies. Upon such  
176 notification, the Executive Office of the Governor shall assist  
177 agencies to bring them into compliance with board objectives.

178 (f) Ensuring that the state does not waste valuable  
179 training resources. Thus, the board shall direct that all  
180 resources, including equipment purchased for training Workforce  
181 Investment Act clients, be available for use at all times by  
182 eligible populations as first priority users. At times when  
183 eligible populations are not available, such resources shall be  
184 used for any other state authorized education and training  
185 purpose. Workforce Florida, Inc., may authorize expenditures to  
186 award suitable framed certificates, pins, or other tokens of  
187 recognition for performance by a regional workforce board, its  
188 committees and subdivisions, and other units of the workforce  
189 system. Workforce Florida, Inc., may also authorize expenditures  
190 for promotional items, such as t-shirts, hats, or pens printed  
191 with messages promoting the state's workforce system to  
192 employers, job seekers, and program participants. However, such  
193 expenditures are subject to federal regulations applicable to the  
194 expenditure of federal funds.

195 (g) Establish a dispute resolution process for all  
196 memoranda of understanding or other contracts or agreements  
197 entered into between the agency and regional workforce boards.

198 (h) Archiving records with the Bureau of Archives and  
199 Records Management of the Division of Library and Information  
200 Services of the Department of State.

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201 (i) Working with the Department of Education and Enterprise  
202 Florida, Inc., in the implementation of the CHOICE project  
203 pursuant to s. 1003.494.

204 (j) In partnership with the Department of Education,  
205 ensuring consistent use of the Florida Ready to Work Credential  
206 as created under s. 1004.99.

207 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.