

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to workplace skills of students; amending  
 3           s. 1004.99, F.S., relating to the Florida Ready to Work  
 4           Certification Program; providing for the award of a  
 5           Florida Ready to Work Credential; providing for levels of  
 6           credentials based on assessment scores; amending s.  
 7           1003.428, F.S.; requiring a student to earn the credential  
 8           for high school graduation with a career or technical  
 9           major area of interest; amending s. 1009.536, F.S.;  
 10          requiring a student to earn the credential for receipt of  
 11          a Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award; amending s.  
 12          445.004, F.S.; requiring Workforce Florida, Inc., and the  
 13          Department of Education to ensure consistent use of the  
 14          credential; providing an effective date.

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 16   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 18           Section 1. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section  
 19   1004.99, Florida Statutes, is amended, subsection (4) is  
 20   renumbered as subsection (5), and a new subsection (4) is added  
 21   to that section, to read:

22           1004.99 Florida Ready to Work Certification Program.--

23           (3) The Florida Ready to Work Certification Program shall  
 24   be composed of:

25           (d) A Florida Ready to Work Credential ~~certificate~~ and  
 26   portfolio awarded to students upon successful completion of the  
 27   instruction. Each portfolio must delineate the skills

28 | demonstrated by the student as evidence of the student's  
29 | preparation for employment.

30 |       (4) A Florida Ready to Work Credential shall be awarded to  
31 | a student who successfully passes assessments in Reading for  
32 | Information, Applied Mathematics, and Locating Information or  
33 | any other assessments of comparable rigor. Each assessment shall  
34 | be scored on a scale of 3 to 7. The level of the credential each  
35 | student receives is based on the following:

36 |       (a) A bronze-level credential requires a minimum score of  
37 | 3 or above on each of the assessments.

38 |       (b) A silver-level credential requires a minimum score of  
39 | 4 or above on each of the assessments.

40 |       (c) A gold-level credential requires a minimum score of 5  
41 | or above on each of the assessments.

42 |       Section 2. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section  
43 | 1003.428, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

44 |       1003.428 General requirements for high school graduation;  
45 | revised.--

46 |       (2) The 24 credits may be earned through applied,  
47 | integrated, and combined courses approved by the Department of  
48 | Education and shall be distributed as follows:

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

50 |       1. Four credits in a major area of interest, such as  
51 | sequential courses in a career and technical program, fine and  
52 | performing arts, or academic content area, selected by the  
53 | student as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156.  
54 | Students may revise major areas of interest each year as part of  
55 | annual course registration processes and should update their

56 education plan to reflect such revisions. Annually by October 1,  
57 the district school board shall approve major areas of interest  
58 and submit the list of majors to the Commissioner of Education  
59 for approval. Each major area of interest shall be deemed  
60 approved unless specifically rejected by the commissioner within  
61 60 days. Upon approval, each district's major areas of interest  
62 shall be available for use by all school districts and shall be  
63 posted on the department's website. Beginning with students  
64 entering grade 9 in the 2008-2009 school year, a student must  
65 earn a Florida Ready to Work Credential as created under s.  
66 1004.99 in order to graduate with a career or technical major  
67 area of interest.

68 2. Four credits in elective courses selected by the  
69 student as part of the education plan required by s. 1003.4156.  
70 These credits may be combined to allow for a second major area  
71 of interest pursuant to subparagraph 1., a minor area of  
72 interest, elective courses, or intensive reading or mathematics  
73 intervention courses as described in this subparagraph.

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

77 b. Elective courses are selected by the student in order  
78 to pursue a complete education program as described in s.  
79 1001.41(3) and to meet eligibility requirements for  
80 scholarships.

81 c. For each year in which a student scores at Level 1 on  
82 FCAT Reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an  
83 intensive reading course the following year. Placement of Level

84 2 readers in either an intensive reading course or a content  
85 area course in which reading strategies are delivered shall be  
86 determined by diagnosis of reading needs. The department shall  
87 provide guidance on appropriate strategies for diagnosing and  
88 meeting the varying instructional needs of students reading  
89 below grade level. Reading courses shall be designed and offered  
90 pursuant to the comprehensive reading plan required by s.

91 1011.62(8).

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

98 Section 3. Subsection (1) of section 1009.536, Florida  
99 Statutes, is amended to read:

100 1009.536 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award.--The  
101 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars award is created within  
102 the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program to recognize and  
103 reward academic achievement and career preparation by high  
104 school students who wish to continue their education.

105 (1) A student is eligible for a Florida Gold Seal  
106 Vocational Scholars award if the student meets the general  
107 eligibility requirements for the Florida Bright Futures  
108 Scholarship Program and the student:

109 (a) Completes the secondary school portion of a sequential  
110 program of studies that requires at least three secondary school  
111 career credits taken over at least 2 academic years, and is

112 continued in a planned, related postsecondary education program.  
 113 If the student's school does not offer such a two-plus-two or  
 114 tech-prep program, the student must complete a job-preparatory  
 115 career education program selected by Workforce Florida, Inc.,  
 116 for its ability to provide high-wage employment in an occupation  
 117 with high potential for employment opportunities. On-the-job  
 118 training may not be substituted for any of the three required  
 119 career credits.

120 (b) Demonstrates readiness for postsecondary education by  
 121 earning a passing score on the Florida College Entry Level  
 122 Placement Test or its equivalent as identified by the Department  
 123 of Education.

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

128 (d) Earns a minimum unweighted grade point average of 3.5  
 129 on a 4.0 scale for secondary career courses comprising the  
 130 career program.

131 (e) Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2008-  
 132 2009 school year, earns a gold-level Florida Ready to Work  
 133 Credential as created under s. 1004.99.

134 Section 4. Paragraph (j) is added to subsection (5) of  
 135 section 445.004, Florida Statutes, to read:

136 445.004 Workforce Florida, Inc.; creation; purpose;  
 137 membership; duties and powers.--

138 (5) Workforce Florida, Inc., shall have all the powers and  
 139 authority, not explicitly prohibited by statute, necessary or

CS/HB 985

2008

140 convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes as  
141 determined by statute, Pub. L. No. 105-220, and the Governor, as  
142 well as its functions, duties, and responsibilities, including,  
143 but not limited to, the following:

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

147 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2008.