

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

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

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 1394

INTRODUCER: Senator Legg

SUBJECT: Education

DATE: March 24, 2014

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	deMarsh-Mathues	Klebacha	ED	Favorable
2.	_____	_____	AED	_____
3.	_____	_____	AP	_____

I. Summary:

SB 1394 increases from one to two the number of industry certifications that a student must earn to attain a Merit designation on his or her standard high school diploma.

Current law provides for Scholar and Merit designations that high school students may earn if they satisfy course and testing requirements above-and-beyond those required for a standard high school diploma.

The bill is effective upon becoming a law.

II. Present Situation:

Currently, Florida public high school students have four options for obtaining a standard high school diploma -- a traditional 4-year, 24-credit option;¹ an 18-credit graduation option;² or completion of an International Baccalaureate (IB) or Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum.³ In addition, current law requires each school district to adopt an early graduation policy allowing a high school student who completes 24 credits in less than eight semesters and meets the GPA and assessment requirements to graduate early.⁴

¹ Section 1003.428, F.S., established high school graduation requirements beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2007-2008 school year. Section 1003.4282, F.S., established high school graduation requirements for students entering grade 9 in the 2013-2014 school year and thereafter.

² Section 1002.3105(5), F.S. Effective July 1, 2013, students may earn a standard high school diploma in 18 credits by achieving a 2.0 GPA; earning credit in the same 15 English Language Arts, mathematics, science, social studies, and fine and performing arts courses required under the traditional 24-credit option; and earning 3 elective credits, instead of the 6 electives required by the 24-credit option.

³ Sections 1003.428 and 1003.4282, F.S.

⁴ Section 1003.4281, F.S.

Current law provides for Scholar and Merit designations that high school students may earn if they satisfy course and testing requirements above-and-beyond those required for a standard high school diploma.⁵ Students pursuing a Scholar designation must:⁶

- Pass the 11th grade English Language Arts assessment, effective when the state transitions to new assessments;
- Earn one credit in Algebra II and one credit in Statistics or an equally rigorous course. When the state transitions to new assessments, students must pass the Algebra II assessment.
- Pass the Biology I end-of-course (EOC) assessment and earn one credit in Chemistry or Physics and one credit in an equally rigorous course.
- Pass the U.S. History EOC assessment.
- Earn two credits in the same foreign language.
- Earn at least one credit in an AP, IB, AICE or a dual enrollment course.

Students pursuing a Merit designation must attain one or more industry certifications.⁷

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1394 increases from one to two the number of industry certifications that a student must earn to attain a Merit designation on his or her standard high school diploma.

The bill is effective upon becoming a law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

⁵ Section 1003.4285, F.S.

⁶ Section 1003.4285(1)(a), F.S.

⁷ Section 1003.4285(1)(b), F.S.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following section of the Florida Statutes: 1003.4285.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.