

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 Pre-K - 12

BILL: SB 432

INTRODUCER: Senator Hutson

SUBJECT: STEM Teachers Pilot Program

DATE: January 19, 2016

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Bailey	Klebacha	ED	Pre-meeting
2.	_____	_____	AED	_____
3.	_____	_____	AP	_____

I. Summary:

SB 432 requires the Department of Education (DOE) to implement and administer a 5-year STEM Teachers Pilot Program. The bill allows a participating school district to hire an individual who holds a master's degree in the field of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, but who does not hold an educator certificate, to teach in a K-12 classroom.

Specifically, the bill:

- Permits a school district ranked in the top 10 percent of districts, based on the district grade, to participate in the pilot program;
- Requires individuals who wish to teach under the program to meet select educator certification eligibility requirements;
- Requires the DOE, at the end of the 5-year program, to analyze the performance data of students within participating districts and report the findings to the Legislature; and
- Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer the program.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2016.

II. Present Situation:

STEM Education

STEM education is the intentional integration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and their associated practices to create a student-centered learning environment in which students investigate and engineer solutions to problems, and construct evidence-based explanations of real-world phenomena with a focus on a student's social, emotional, physical, and academic needs through shared contributions of schools, families, and community partners.¹

¹ Department of Education, *STEM Programs*, <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/subject-areas/math-science/stem/defining-stem.stml> (last visited January 15, 2016).

During 2014-15, 175,006 teachers were employed in 4,426 Florida public schools.² Of this number, 47,342 teachers were teaching in a STEM area for eight or more years in a Florida public school district.³

District Grades

Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, a school district's grade will include a district-level calculation on the specific components related to the designation of school grades.⁴ The calculation methodology captures each eligible student in the district who may transfer among schools within the district or is enrolled in a school that does not receive a grade.⁵

In the 2013-2014 school year, the following school districts were ranked as an "A" school district according to the Department of Education (DOE) 2013-2014 District Grades report: Citrus, Gilchrist, Nassau, Okaloosa, St. Johns, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, Union, and Walton County.⁶

Instructional Personnel Certification

In order for a person to serve as an educator in a traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, or other publicly operated school, the person must hold a certificate issued by the Florida Department of Education.⁷

Certification requirements are established to assure that educational personnel in public schools possess appropriate skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, and adequate pedagogical knowledge, including the use of technology to enhance student learning, and relevant subject matter competence to demonstrate an acceptable level of professional performance.⁸

The DOE identifies appropriate educator certification for the instruction of specified courses in an annual publication of a directory of course code numbers for all programs and courses funded through the Florida Education Finance Program.⁹

Eligibility Criteria for Educator Certification

To be eligible to seek educator certification, an individual must submit an application and meet specified requirements:¹⁰

- Be at least 18 years of age;
- File an affidavit to uphold the principles incorporated in the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Florida;

² Staff of the Department of Education, *Legislative Bill Analysis for SB 290* (2016).

³ *Id.*

⁴ Section 1008.34(3) and (5), F.S.

⁵ Section 1008.34(5), F.S.

⁶ Department of Education, *2013-2014 School Accountability Reports, District Grades*, <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org> (last visited January 17, 2016).

⁷ Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.

⁸ Section 1012.54, F.S.

⁹ Section 1012.55(1)(c), F.S.

¹⁰ Section 1012.56(2), F.S.

- Document receipt of a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning, or a nonaccredited institution of higher learning that the DOE has identified as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's degree, or higher;
- Submit to a background screening;
- Be of good moral character;
- Be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of an educator; and
- Demonstrate mastery of general knowledge, subject area knowledge, and professional preparation and education competence.

Exception to Educator Certification

Currently, local school district boards can issue an adjunct teaching certificate to any applicant who meets specific requirements¹¹ and has expertise in the subject area to be taught.¹² The adjunct teaching certificate is only valid through the term of the annual contract between the educator and school district.¹³

The State Board of Education provides rules to authorize district school boards to employ selected noncertificated personnel to provide instructional services in the individuals' fields of specialty or to assist instructional staff members as education paraprofessionals.¹⁴

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 432 requires the Department of Education (DOE) to implement and administer a 5-year STEM Teachers Pilot Program. The bill allows a participating school district to hire an individual who holds a master's degree in the field of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, but who does not hold an educator certificate, to teach in a K-12 classroom.

Specifically, the bill:

- Permits a school district ranked in the top 10 percent of districts, based on the district grade, to participate in the pilot program;
- Requires individuals who wish to teach under the program to meet select educator certification eligibility requirements;
- Requires the DOE, at the end of the 5-year program, to analyze the performance data of students within participating districts and report the findings to the Legislature; and
- Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer the program.

According to the most recent DOE 2013-2014 District Grades Report, the top 10% of the 67 Florida school districts eligible to participate in the pilot program are: Nassau, Okaloosa, St. Johns, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, and Union.¹⁵

¹¹ Section 1012.56(2)(a) - (f) and (10), F.S.

¹² Section 1012.57(1), F.S.

¹³ Section 1012.57(4), F.S.

¹⁴ Section 1012.55(1)(c), F.S.

¹⁵ Department of Education, *2013-2014 School Accountability Reports, District Grades*, <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org> (last visited January 17, 2016).

Eligibility Criteria for Non-Certified Individual

The bill:

- Requires the individual to document receipt of a master's degree or higher in the area of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics; and
- Exempts an individual who does not hold a professional or temporary certificate from demonstrating mastery of general knowledge, subject area knowledge, professional preparation and education competence.

Department of Education Responsibilities

The bill requires the DOE, at the end of the 5-year program, to analyze the performance data of students within participating districts, report the findings to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. The report must include a recommendation to continue or terminate the program.

The bill requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer the program.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2016.

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:

Teachers participating in the program will experience a savings by being exempt from certificate application fees. These fees range from \$130 to \$500, depending on the levels of certification and the number of subject area certifications.¹⁶

¹⁶ Staff of the Department of Education, *Legislative Bill Analysis for SB 432 (2016)*.

C. Government Sector Impact:

This fiscal impact is expected to be immaterial because if the individuals participating in the pilot program are not required to be certified educators, then the state may experience a decrease in revenue from the loss of application fees associated with a teaching certificate.¹⁷

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

The bill creates section 1012.571 of the Florida Statutes.

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.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

¹⁷ *Id.*