

By Senator Bracy

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Voluntary Prekindergarten
3 Education Program; amending s. 1002.55, F.S.; revising
4 the educational credentials and training required
5 after a specified date for prekindergarten instructors
6 in school-year prekindergarten programs delivered by
7 private prekindergarten providers; providing for the
8 future revision of alternate educational credentials
9 that such instructors may hold; amending ss. 1002.61
10 and 1007.23, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes
11 made by the act; providing effective dates.

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

14
15 Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section
16 1002.55, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

17 1002.55 School-year prekindergarten program delivered by
18 private prekindergarten providers.—

19 (3) To be eligible to deliver the prekindergarten program,
20 a private prekindergarten provider must meet each of the
21 following requirements:

22 (c)1. The private prekindergarten provider must have, for
23 each prekindergarten class of 11 children or fewer, at least one
24 prekindergarten instructor who meets each of the following
25 requirements:

26 a.1. The prekindergarten instructor must hold, at a
27 minimum, one of the following credentials:

28 (I)a. A child development associate credential issued by
29 the National Credentialing Program of the Council for

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30 Professional Recognition; or

31 ~~(II)b.~~ A credential approved by the Department of Children
32 and Families as being equivalent to or greater than the
33 credential described in sub-sub-subparagraph (I). ~~sub-~~
34 ~~subparagraph a.~~

35
36 The Department of Children and Families may adopt rules under
37 ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 which provide criteria and procedures
38 for approving equivalent credentials under sub-sub-subparagraph
39 (II). ~~sub-subparagraph b.~~

40 ~~b.2.~~ The prekindergarten instructor must successfully
41 complete an emergent literacy training course and a student
42 performance standards training course approved by the office as
43 meeting or exceeding the minimum standards adopted under s.
44 1002.59. The requirement for completion of the standards
45 training course shall take effect July 1, 2014, and the course
46 shall be available online.

47 2. Effective July 1, 2022, the private prekindergarten
48 provider must have, for each prekindergarten class of 11
49 children or fewer, at least one prekindergarten instructor who
50 meets each of the following requirements:

51 a. The prekindergarten instructor must hold an associate or
52 higher degree in child development.

53 b. The prekindergarten instructor must successfully
54 complete 20 hours of professional development approved by the
55 office, including an emergent literacy training course and a
56 student performance standards training course approved by the
57 office as meeting or exceeding the minimum standards adopted
58 under s. 1002.59.

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59 Section 2. Effective July 1, 2022, subsection (4) of
60 section 1002.55, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

61 1002.55 School-year prekindergarten program delivered by
62 private prekindergarten providers.—

63 (4) A prekindergarten instructor, in lieu of the minimum
64 credentials and courses required under paragraph (3)(c), may
65 hold one of the following educational credentials:

66 (a) A bachelor's or higher degree in early childhood
67 education, prekindergarten or primary education, preschool
68 education, or family and consumer science;

69 (b) A bachelor's or higher degree in elementary education,
70 if the prekindergarten instructor has been certified to teach
71 children any age from birth through 6th grade, regardless of
72 whether the instructor's educator certificate is current, and if
73 the instructor is not ineligible to teach in a public school
74 because his or her educator certificate is suspended or revoked;

75 ~~(c) An associate's or higher degree in child development;~~

76 (c) ~~(d)~~ A bachelor's ~~An associate's~~ or higher degree in an
77 unrelated field, at least 6 credit hours in early childhood
78 education or child development, and at least 480 hours of
79 experience in teaching or providing child care services for
80 children any age from birth through 8 years of age; or

81 (d) ~~(e)~~ An educational credential approved by the department
82 as being equivalent to or greater than an educational credential
83 described in this subsection. The department may adopt criteria
84 and procedures for approving equivalent educational credentials
85 under this paragraph.

86 Section 3. Subsection (4) of section 1002.61, Florida
87 Statutes, is amended to read:

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88 1002.61 Summer prekindergarten program delivered by public
89 schools and private prekindergarten providers.—

90 (4) Notwithstanding ss. 1002.55(3)(c)1.a. ~~1002.55(3)(c)1.~~
91 and 1002.63(4), each public school and private prekindergarten
92 provider must have, for each prekindergarten class, at least one
93 prekindergarten instructor who is a certified teacher ~~or holds~~
94 ~~one of the educational credentials specified in s. 1002.55(4)(a)~~
95 ~~or (b)~~. As used in this subsection, the term "certified teacher"
96 means a teacher holding a valid Florida educator certificate
97 under s. 1012.56 who has the qualifications required by the
98 district school board to instruct students in the summer
99 prekindergarten program. In selecting instructional staff for
100 the summer prekindergarten program, each school district shall
101 give priority to teachers who have experience or coursework in
102 early childhood education.

103 Section 4. Subsection (6) of section 1007.23, Florida
104 Statutes, is amended to read:

105 1007.23 Statewide articulation agreement.—

106 (6) The articulation agreement must guarantee the
107 articulation of 9 credit hours toward a postsecondary degree in
108 early childhood education for programs approved by the State
109 Board of Education and the Board of Governors which:

110 (a) Award a child development associate credential issued
111 by the National Credentialing Program of the Council for
112 Professional Recognition or award a credential approved under s.
113 1002.55(3)(c)1.a.(II) ~~1002.55(3)(c)1.b.~~ or s. 402.305(3)(c) as
114 being equivalent to the child development associate credential;
115 and

116 (b) Include training in emergent literacy which meets or

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117 exceeds the minimum standards for training courses for
118 prekindergarten instructors of the Voluntary Prekindergarten
119 Education Program in s. 1002.59.

120 Section 5. Except as otherwise expressly provided in this
121 act, this act shall take effect July 1, 2017.