

By Senator Brandes

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to education; creating s. 1003.631,
3 F.S.; creating the Schools of Excellence Program;
4 providing for designation as a School of Excellence;
5 providing requirements for a School of Excellence;
6 providing for redesignation; authorizing Schools of
7 Excellence to have specified administrative
8 flexibilities; authorizing certain teachers to earn a
9 professional certificate by completing a specified
10 program; amending s. 1012.28, F.S.; providing
11 additional authority and responsibilities to the
12 principal of a School of Excellence; providing that
13 newly assigned principals of certain schools must be
14 provided specified authority and responsibilities;
15 amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; providing that successful
16 completion of a specified program demonstrates mastery
17 of certain skills; revising the criteria instructional
18 personnel must meet to be issued a professional
19 certificate; providing that an applicant for
20 professional certification is not required to take or
21 pass a specified examination under certain
22 circumstances; providing requirements for the
23 development and implementation of a comprehensive
24 teacher mentorship certification program; providing
25 the purpose of the program; requiring the Department
26 of Education to adopt standards for the approval of
27 district-developed programs; providing requirements
28 for such standards; providing program requirements;
29 providing peer mentor requirements; amending s.

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30 1012.585, F.S.; providing that instructional personnel
31 may substitute 1 year of specified employment for a
32 certain amount of inservice points within a certain
33 cycle for certificate renewal; providing such
34 employment does not satisfy a specified credit hour
35 requirement; amending s. 1012.98, F.S.; revising the
36 activities designed to implement the School Community
37 Professional Development Act to include specified
38 training relating to the comprehensive teacher
39 mentorship program; revising requirements for school
40 district professional development systems; requiring
41 the department to disseminate professional development
42 programs that meet specified criteria; providing an
43 effective date.

44
45 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

46
47 Section 1. Section 1003.631, Florida Statutes, is created
48 to read:

49 1003.631 Schools of Excellence.—The Schools of Excellence
50 Program is established to provide administrative flexibility to
51 the state's top schools so that the instructional personnel and
52 administrative staff at such schools can continue to serve their
53 communities and increase student learning to the best of their
54 professional ability.

55 (1) DESIGNATION.—

56 (a) The State Board of Education shall designate a school
57 as a School of Excellence if the school's percentage of possible
58 points earned in its school grade calculation is in the 80th

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59 percentile or higher for schools comprised of the same grade
60 groupings, including elementary schools, middle schools, high
61 schools, and schools with a combination of grade levels, for at
62 least 2 of the last 3 school years. The school must have data
63 for each applicable school grade component pursuant to s.
64 1008.34(3) to be eligible for designation as a School of
65 Excellence. A qualifying school shall retain the designation as
66 a School of Excellence for up to 3 years, at the end of which
67 time the school may renew the designation, if:

68 1. The school was in the 80th percentile or higher pursuant
69 to this subsection for 2 of the previous 3 years; and

70 2. The school did not receive a school grade lower than "B"
71 pursuant to s. 1008.34 during any of the previous 3 years.

72 (b) A school that earns a school grade lower than "B"
73 pursuant to s. 1008.34 during the 3-year period may not continue
74 to be designated as a School of Excellence during the remainder
75 of that 3-year period and loses the administrative flexibilities
76 provided in subsection (2).

77 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE FLEXIBILITIES.—A School of Excellence
78 must be provided the following administrative flexibilities:

79 (a) Exemption from any provision of law or rule that
80 expressly requires a minimum period of daily or weekly
81 instruction in a specified subject area.

82 (b) Principal autonomy as provided under s. 1012.28(8).

83 (c) For instructional personnel, the substitution of 1
84 school year of employment at a School of Excellence for 20
85 inservice points toward the renewal of a professional
86 certificate, up to 60 inservice points in a 5-year cycle,
87 pursuant to s. 1012.585(3).

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88 (d) Exemption from compliance with district policies or
89 procedures that establish times for the start and completion of
90 the school day.

91 (3) TEACHER CERTIFICATION.—A temporary certificateholder
92 under s. 1012.56(7)(b) who is employed by a School of Excellence
93 may earn a professional certificate by meeting the requirements
94 of s. 1012.56(7)(a)3.

95 Section 2. Subsection (8) of section 1012.28, Florida
96 Statutes, is amended, and subsection (9) is added to that
97 section, to read:

98 1012.28 Public school personnel; duties of school
99 principals.—

100 (8) The principal of a School of Excellence or a school
101 participating in the Principal Autonomy Pilot Program Initiative
102 under s. 1011.6202 has the following additional authority and
103 responsibilities:

104 (a) In addition to the authority provided in subsection
105 (6), the authority to select qualified instructional personnel
106 for placement or to refuse to accept the placement or transfer
107 of instructional personnel by the district school
108 superintendent. Placement of instructional personnel at a
109 participating school in a participating school district does not
110 affect the employee's status as a school district employee.

111 (b) The authority to deploy financial resources to school
112 programs at the principal's discretion to help improve student
113 achievement, as defined in s. 1008.34(1), and meet performance
114 goals identified in the principal autonomy proposal submitted
115 pursuant to s. 1011.6202.

116 (c) To annually provide to the district school

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117 superintendent and the district school board a budget for the
118 operation of the participating school that identifies how funds
119 provided pursuant to s. 1011.69(2) are allocated. The school
120 district shall include the budget in the annual report provided
121 to the State Board of Education pursuant to s. 1011.6202(6).

122 (9) A school district must provide a principal newly
123 assigned to a school with a school grade of "D" or "F" under s.
124 1008.34 with the additional authority and responsibilities
125 provided in subsection (8). The district may revoke the
126 principal's additional authority and responsibilities under this
127 subsection after the school year following the first school year
128 the school achieves a school grade of "C" or higher.

129 Section 3. Subsection (6), paragraph (a) of subsection (7),
130 and paragraph (a) of subsection (8) of section 1012.56, Florida
131 Statutes, are amended to read:

132 1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

133 (6) MASTERY OF PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND EDUCATION
134 COMPETENCE.—Acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of
135 professional preparation and education competence are:

136 (a) Successful completion of an approved teacher
137 preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution
138 within this state and achievement of a passing score on the
139 professional education competency examination required by state
140 board rule;

141 (b) Successful completion of a teacher preparation program
142 at a postsecondary educational institution outside Florida and
143 achievement of a passing score on the professional education
144 competency examination required by state board rule;

145 (c) Documentation of a valid professional standard teaching

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146 certificate issued by another state;

147 (d) Documentation of a valid certificate issued by the
148 National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or a national
149 educator credentialing board approved by the State Board of
150 Education;

151 (e) Documentation of two semesters of successful, full-time
152 or part-time teaching in a Florida College System institution,
153 state university, or private college or university that awards
154 an associate or higher degree and is an accredited institution
155 or an institution of higher education identified by the
156 Department of Education as having a quality program and
157 achievement of a passing score on the professional education
158 competency examination required by state board rule;

159 (f) Successful completion of professional preparation
160 courses as specified in state board rule, successful completion
161 of a professional preparation and education competence program
162 pursuant to paragraph (8) (b), and achievement of a passing score
163 on the professional education competency examination required by
164 state board rule;

165 (g) Successful completion of a comprehensive teacher
166 mentorship certification ~~professional development certification~~
167 ~~and education competency~~ program pursuant to, ~~outlined in~~
168 paragraph (8) (a); or

169 (h) Successful completion of a competency-based
170 certification program pursuant to s. 1004.85 and achievement of
171 a passing score on the professional education competency
172 examination required by rule of the State Board of Education.

173
174 The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to implement this

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175 subsection ~~by December 31, 2014~~, including rules to approve
176 specific teacher preparation programs that are not identified in
177 this subsection which may be used to meet requirements for
178 mastery of professional preparation and education competence.

179 (7) TYPES AND TERMS OF CERTIFICATION.—

180 (a) The Department of Education shall issue a professional
181 certificate for a period not to exceed 5 years to any applicant
182 who fulfills one of the following:

183 1. Meets all the requirements outlined in subsection (2).

184 2. ~~or,~~ For a professional certificate covering grades 6
185 through 12, ~~any applicant who~~:

186 a.1. Meets the requirements of paragraphs (2) (a)-(h).

187 b.2. Holds a master's or higher degree in the area of
188 science, technology, engineering, or mathematics.

189 c.3. Teaches a high school course in the subject of the
190 advanced degree.

191 d.4. Is rated highly effective as determined by the
192 teacher's performance evaluation under s. 1012.34, based in part
193 on student performance as measured by a statewide, standardized
194 assessment or an Advanced Placement, Advanced International
195 Certificate of Education, or International Baccalaureate
196 examination.

197 e.5. Achieves a passing score on the Florida professional
198 education competency examination required by state board rule.

199 3. Meets the requirements of paragraphs (2) (a)-(h) and
200 completes a comprehensive teacher mentorship certification
201 program pursuant to paragraph (8) (a). An applicant who completes
202 the program and is rated highly effective as determined by his
203 or her performance evaluation under s. 1012.34 is not required

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204 to take or achieve a passing score on the professional education
205 competency examination in order to be awarded a professional
206 certificate.

207
208 Each temporary certificate is valid for 3 school fiscal years
209 and is nonrenewable. However, the requirement in paragraph
210 (2) (g) must be met within 1 calendar year of the date of
211 employment under the temporary certificate. Individuals who are
212 employed under contract at the end of the 1 calendar year time
213 period may continue to be employed through the end of the school
214 year in which they have been contracted. A school district shall
215 not employ, or continue the employment of, an individual in a
216 position for which a temporary certificate is required beyond
217 this time period if the individual has not met the requirement
218 of paragraph (2) (g). The State Board of Education shall adopt
219 rules to allow the department to extend the validity period of a
220 temporary certificate for 2 years when the requirements for the
221 professional certificate, not including the requirement in
222 paragraph (2) (g), were not completed due to the serious illness
223 or injury of the applicant or other extraordinary extenuating
224 circumstances. The department shall reissue the temporary
225 certificate for 2 additional years upon approval by the
226 Commissioner of Education. A written request for reissuance of
227 the certificate shall be submitted by the district school
228 superintendent, the governing authority of a university lab
229 school, the governing authority of a state-supported school, or
230 the governing authority of a private school.

231 (8) COMPREHENSIVE TEACHER MENTORSHIP CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
232 ~~PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CERTIFICATION AND EDUCATION COMPETENCY~~

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PROGRAM.—

(a) The Department of Education shall develop and each school district may provide a ~~cohesive~~ competency-based, comprehensive teacher mentorship certification ~~professional development certification and education competency~~ program. The purpose of the program is to provide by which members of a school district's instructional staff supportive induction services through which they can demonstrate ~~may satisfy the~~ mastery of professional preparation and education competence requirements consistent with ~~specified in~~ subsection (6) and rules of the State Board of Education. Participants must hold a state-issued temporary certificate. A school district that implements the program shall provide a competency-based certification program developed by the Department of Education or developed by the district and approved by the Department of Education. The department shall adopt standards for the approval of district-developed comprehensive teacher mentorship certification programs, including program administration and evaluation; mentor roles, selection, and training; beginning teacher assessment and professional development; and instructional practices aligned to the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices. The program shall include the following:

1. A minimum period of initial preparation before assuming duties as the teacher of record.
2. An option for collaboration between school districts and other supporting agencies or educational entities for implementation.
3. An experienced peer-mentor component. Each individual selected by the district as a peer mentor:

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262 a. Must hold a valid professional certificate issued
263 pursuant to this section;~~;~~

264 b. Must have earned at least 3 years of teaching experience
265 in prekindergarten through grade 12;~~;~~~~and~~

266 c. Must have completed specialized training in clinical
267 supervision and participate in ongoing mentor training;

268 d. Must have earned an effective or highly effective rating
269 on the prior year's performance evaluation under s. 1012.34; and

270 e. May ~~or~~ be a peer evaluator under the district's
271 evaluation system approved under s. 1012.34.

272 4. Weekly opportunities for mentoring activities that
273 include, at a minimum, common planning time, ongoing
274 professional development targeted to a teacher's needs,
275 opportunities for a teacher to observe other teachers, co-
276 teaching experiences, and reflection and follow-up discussions.
277 Mentorship activities must be provided for a teacher's first
278 year in the program and may be provided until the teacher
279 attains his or her professional certificate in accordance with
280 this section.

281 ~~5.4.~~ An assessment of teaching performance aligned to the
282 district's system for personnel evaluation under s. 1012.34
283 which provides for:

284 a. An initial evaluation of each educator's competencies to
285 determine an appropriate individualized professional development
286 plan.

287 b. A summative evaluation to assure successful completion
288 of the program.

289 ~~6.5.~~ Competency-based training on professional education
290 preparation content knowledge that includes, but is not limited

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291 to, the following:

292 a. The state standards provided under s. 1003.41, including
293 scientifically based reading instruction, content literacy, and
294 mathematical practices, for each subject identified on the
295 temporary certificate.

296 b. The educator-accomplished practices approved by the
297 state board.

298 c. A variety of data indicators for monitoring student
299 progress.

300 d. Methodologies for teaching students with disabilities.

301 e. Methodologies for teaching students of limited English
302 proficiency appropriate for each subject area identified on the
303 temporary certificate.

304 f. Techniques and strategies for operationalizing the role
305 of the teacher in assuring a safe learning environment for
306 students.

307 ~~7.6.~~ Required achievement of passing scores on the subject
308 area and professional education competency examination required
309 by State Board of Education rule. Mastery of general knowledge
310 must be demonstrated as described in subsection (3).

311 Section 4. Subsection (3) and paragraph (b) of subsection
312 (5) of section 1012.585, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:
313 1012.585 Process for renewal of professional certificates.—

314 (3) For the renewal of a professional certificate, the
315 following requirements must be met:

316 (a) The applicant must earn a minimum of 6 college credits
317 or 120 inservice points or a combination thereof. For each area
318 of specialization to be retained on a certificate, the applicant
319 must earn at least 3 of the required credit hours or equivalent

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320 inservice points in the specialization area. Education in
321 "clinical educator" training pursuant to s. 1004.04(5)(b) and
322 credits or points that provide training in the area of
323 scientifically researched, knowledge-based reading literacy and
324 computational skills acquisition, exceptional student education,
325 normal child development, and the disorders of development may
326 be applied toward any specialization area. Credits or points
327 that provide training in the areas of drug abuse, child abuse
328 and neglect, strategies in teaching students having limited
329 proficiency in English, or dropout prevention, or training in
330 areas identified in the educational goals and performance
331 standards adopted pursuant to ss. 1000.03(5) and 1008.345 may be
332 applied toward any specialization area. Credits or points earned
333 through approved summer institutes may be applied toward the
334 fulfillment of these requirements. Inservice points may also be
335 earned by participation in professional growth components
336 approved by the State Board of Education and specified pursuant
337 to s. 1012.98 in the district's approved master plan for
338 inservice educational training, including, but not limited to,
339 serving as a trainer in an approved teacher training activity,
340 serving on an instructional materials committee or a state board
341 or commission that deals with educational issues, or serving on
342 an advisory council created pursuant to s. 1001.452.

343 (b) In lieu of college course credit or inservice points,
344 the applicant may renew a subject area specialization by passage
345 of a state board approved Florida-developed subject area
346 examination or, if a Florida subject area examination has not
347 been developed, a standardized examination specified in state
348 board rule.

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349 (c) Instructional personnel may substitute 1 school year of
350 employment at a School of Excellence, as defined in s. 1003.631,
351 for 20 inservice points, up to a maximum of 60 inservice points
352 in a 5-year cycle. However, inservice points earned under this
353 paragraph may not be used to satisfy the 3 credit hour
354 specialization area requirement under paragraph (a).

355 (d)~~(e)~~ If an applicant wishes to retain more than two
356 specialization areas on the certificate, the applicant shall be
357 permitted two successive validity periods for renewal of all
358 specialization areas, but must earn no fewer than 6 college
359 course credit hours or the equivalent in any one validity
360 period.

361 (e)~~(d)~~ The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for
362 the expanded use of training for renewal of the professional
363 certificate for educators who are required to complete training
364 in teaching students of limited English proficiency or students
365 with disabilities and training in the teaching of reading as
366 follows:

367 1. A teacher who holds a professional certificate may use
368 college credits or inservice points earned through training in
369 teaching students of limited English proficiency or students
370 with disabilities and training in the teaching of reading in
371 excess of 6 semester hours during one certificate-validity
372 period toward renewal of the professional certificate during the
373 subsequent validity periods.

374 2. A teacher who holds a temporary certificate may use
375 college credits or inservice points earned through training in
376 teaching students of limited English proficiency or students
377 with disabilities and training in the teaching of reading toward

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378 renewal of the teacher's first professional certificate. Such
379 training must not have been included within the degree program,
380 and the teacher's temporary and professional certificates must
381 be issued for consecutive school years.

382 (f)~~(e)~~ Beginning July 1, 2014, an applicant for renewal of
383 a professional certificate must earn a minimum of one college
384 credit or the equivalent inservice points in the area of
385 instruction for teaching students with disabilities. The
386 requirement in this paragraph may not add to the total hours
387 required by the department for continuing education or inservice
388 training.

389 (5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to allow
390 the reinstatement of expired professional certificates. The
391 department may reinstate an expired professional certificate if
392 the certificateholder:

393 (b) Documents completion of 6 college credits during the 5
394 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the expired
395 certificate, completion of 120 inservice points, or a
396 combination thereof, in an area specified in paragraph (3) (a) to
397 include the credit required under paragraph (3) (f) ~~(3) (e)~~.

398
399 The requirements of this subsection may not be satisfied by
400 subject area examinations or college credits completed for
401 issuance of the certificate that has expired.

402 Section 5. Paragraph (e) is added to subsection (3) of
403 section 1012.98, Florida Statutes, and paragraph (b) of
404 subsection (4) and subsections (10) and (11) of that section are
405 amended, to read:

406 1012.98 School Community Professional Development Act.—

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407 (3) The activities designed to implement this section must:

408 (e) Provide training to teacher mentors as part of the
409 comprehensive teacher mentorship certification program under s.
410 1012.56(8)(a). The training must include components on teacher
411 development, peer coaching, time management, and other related
412 topics as determined by the Department of Education.

413 (4) The Department of Education, school districts, schools,
414 Florida College System institutions, and state universities
415 share the responsibilities described in this section. These
416 responsibilities include the following:

417 (b) Each school district shall develop a professional
418 development system as specified in subsection (3). The system
419 shall be developed in consultation with teachers, teacher-
420 educators of Florida College System institutions and state
421 universities, business and community representatives, and local
422 education foundations, consortia, and professional
423 organizations. The professional development system must:

424 1. Be approved by the department. All substantial revisions
425 to the system shall be submitted to the department for review
426 for continued approval.

427 2. Be based on analyses of student achievement data and
428 instructional strategies and methods that support rigorous,
429 relevant, and challenging curricula for all students. Schools
430 and districts, in developing and refining the professional
431 development system, shall also review and monitor school
432 discipline data; school environment surveys; assessments of
433 parental satisfaction; performance appraisal data of teachers,
434 managers, and administrative personnel; and other performance
435 indicators to identify school and student needs that can be met

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436 by improved professional performance.

437 3. Provide inservice activities coupled with followup
438 support appropriate to accomplish district-level and school-
439 level improvement goals and standards. The inservice activities
440 for instructional personnel shall focus on analysis of student
441 achievement data, ongoing formal and informal assessments of
442 student achievement, identification and use of enhanced and
443 differentiated instructional strategies that emphasize rigor,
444 relevance, and reading in the content areas, enhancement of
445 subject content expertise, integrated use of classroom
446 technology that enhances teaching and learning, classroom
447 management, parent involvement, and school safety.

448 4. Provide inservice activities and support targeted to the
449 individual needs of new teachers participating in a
450 comprehensive teacher mentor certification program pursuant to
451 s. 1012.56(8) (a).

452 ~~5.4.~~ Include a master plan for inservice activities,
453 pursuant to rules of the State Board of Education, for all
454 district employees from all fund sources. The master plan shall
455 be updated annually by September 1, must be based on input from
456 teachers and district and school instructional leaders, and must
457 use the latest available student achievement data and research
458 to enhance rigor and relevance in the classroom. Each district
459 inservice plan must be aligned to and support the school-based
460 inservice plans and school improvement plans pursuant to s.
461 1001.42(18). Each district inservice plan must provide a
462 description of the training that middle grades instructional
463 personnel and school administrators receive on the district's
464 code of student conduct adopted pursuant to s. 1006.07;

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465 integrated digital instruction and competency-based instruction
466 and CAPE Digital Tool certificates and CAPE industry
467 certifications; classroom management; student behavior and
468 interaction; extended learning opportunities for students; and
469 instructional leadership. District plans must be approved by the
470 district school board annually in order to ensure compliance
471 with subsection (1) and to allow for dissemination of research-
472 based best practices to other districts. District school boards
473 must submit verification of their approval to the Commissioner
474 of Education no later than October 1, annually. Each school
475 principal may establish and maintain an individual professional
476 development plan for each instructional employee assigned to the
477 school as a seamless component to the school improvement plans
478 developed pursuant to s. 1001.42(18). An individual professional
479 development plan must be related to specific performance data
480 for the students to whom the teacher is assigned, define the
481 inservice objectives and specific measurable improvements
482 expected in student performance as a result of the inservice
483 activity, and include an evaluation component that determines
484 the effectiveness of the professional development plan.

485 ~~6.5.~~ Include inservice activities for school administrative
486 personnel that address updated skills necessary for
487 instructional leadership and effective school management
488 pursuant to s. 1012.986.

489 ~~7.6.~~ Provide for systematic consultation with regional and
490 state personnel designated to provide technical assistance and
491 evaluation of local professional development programs.

492 ~~8.7.~~ Provide for delivery of professional development by
493 distance learning and other technology-based delivery systems to

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494 reach more educators at lower costs.

495 ~~9.8.~~ Provide for the continuous evaluation of the quality
496 and effectiveness of professional development programs in order
497 to eliminate ineffective programs and strategies and to expand
498 effective ones. Evaluations must consider the impact of such
499 activities on the performance of participating educators and
500 their students' achievement and behavior.

501 ~~10.9.~~ For middle grades, emphasize:

502 a. Interdisciplinary planning, collaboration, and
503 instruction.

504 b. Alignment of curriculum and instructional materials to
505 the state academic standards adopted pursuant to s. 1003.41.

506 c. Use of small learning communities; problem-solving,
507 inquiry-driven research and analytical approaches for students;
508 strategies and tools based on student needs; competency-based
509 instruction; integrated digital instruction; and project-based
510 instruction.

511
512 Each school that includes any of grades 6, 7, or 8 must include
513 in its school improvement plan, required under s. 1001.42(18), a
514 description of the specific strategies used by the school to
515 implement each item listed in this subparagraph.

516 (10) For instructional personnel and administrative
517 personnel who have been evaluated as less than effective, a
518 district school board shall require participation in specific
519 professional development programs as provided in subparagraph
520 (4) (b) 5. ~~(4) (b) 4.~~ as part of the improvement prescription.

521 (11) The department shall disseminate to the school
522 community proven model professional development programs that

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523 have demonstrated success in increasing rigorous and relevant
524 content, increasing student achievement and engagement, ~~and~~
525 meeting identified student needs, and providing effective
526 mentorship activities to new teachers and training to teacher
527 mentors. The methods of dissemination must include a web-based
528 statewide performance-support system including a database of
529 exemplary professional development activities, a listing of
530 available professional development resources, training programs,
531 and available technical assistance.

532 Section 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.