

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to school attendance; amending s.
3 1002.20, F.S.; providing that compulsory school
4 attendance laws apply to children ages 6 to 18 years;
5 requiring parental notice of forfeiture of benefits
6 received from a state financial assistance program
7 upon request for termination of school enrollment;
8 amending s. 1003.21, F.S.; requiring students to
9 attend school until the age of 18 years; conforming
10 provisions; amending s. 1003.435, F.S.; removing
11 discretionary authority of a district school board to
12 allow a student to take a high school equivalency
13 examination after reaching a specified age; amending
14 s. 1003.51, F.S.; conforming provisions to changes
15 made by the act; providing an effective date.

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

18
19 Section 1. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (2) of
20 section 1002.20, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

21 1002.20 K-12 student and parent rights.—Parents of public
22 school students must receive accurate and timely information
23 regarding their child's academic progress and must be informed
24 of ways they can help their child to succeed in school. K-12
25 students and their parents are afforded numerous statutory

26 | rights including, but not limited to, the following:

27 | (2) ATTENDANCE.—

28 | (a) Compulsory school attendance.—The compulsory school
29 | attendance laws apply to all children between the ages of 6 and
30 | 18 ~~16~~ years, as provided in s. 1003.21(1) and (2)(a), and, in
31 | accordance with the provisions of s. 1003.21(1) and (2)(a):

32 | 1. A student who attains the age of 18 ~~16~~ years during the
33 | school year has the right to file a formal declaration of intent
34 | to terminate school enrollment if the declaration is signed by
35 | the parent. The parent has the right to be notified by the
36 | school district of the district's receipt of the student's
37 | declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment.

38 | 2. Students who become or have become married or who are
39 | pregnant and parenting have the right to attend school and
40 | receive the same or equivalent educational instruction as other
41 | students.

42 | (b) Regular school attendance.—Parents of students who
43 | have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any school
44 | year but who have not attained the age of 18 ~~16~~ years must
45 | comply with the compulsory school attendance laws. Parents have
46 | the option to comply with the school attendance laws by
47 | attendance of the student in a public school; a parochial,
48 | religious, or denominational school; a private school; a home
49 | education program; or a private tutoring program, in accordance
50 | with the provisions of s. 1003.01(13). If a student's parent

51 requests termination of his or her child's enrollment in school,
52 the parent must be notified that he or she forfeits any benefit
53 he or she is receiving for the child from any state financial
54 assistance program effective upon such termination.

55 Section 2. Paragraphs (a) and (c) of subsection (1) of
56 section 1003.21, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

57 1003.21 School attendance.—

58 (1)

59 (a)1. All children who have attained the age of 6 years or
60 who will have attained the age of 6 years by February 1 of any
61 school year or who are older than 6 years of age but who have
62 not attained the age of 18 ~~16~~ years, except as otherwise
63 provided, are required to attend school regularly during the
64 entire school term.

65 2. Children who will have attained the age of 5 years on
66 or before September 1 of the school year are eligible for
67 admission to public kindergartens during that school year under
68 rules adopted by the district school board.

69 (c)1. A student who attains the age of 18 ~~16~~ years during
70 the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance
71 beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the
72 student files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school
73 enrollment with the district school board. Public school
74 students who have attained the age of 18 ~~16~~ years and who have
75 not graduated are subject to compulsory school attendance until

76 | the formal declaration of intent is filed with the district
77 | school board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating
78 | school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning
79 | potential and must be signed by the student and the student's
80 | parent. The school district shall notify the student's parent of
81 | receipt of the student's declaration of intent to terminate
82 | school enrollment. The student's certified school counselor or
83 | other school personnel shall conduct an exit interview with the
84 | student to determine the reasons for the student's decision to
85 | terminate school enrollment and actions that could be taken to
86 | keep the student in school. The student's certified school
87 | counselor or other school personnel shall inform the student of
88 | opportunities to continue his or her education in a different
89 | environment, including, but not limited to, adult education and
90 | high school equivalency examination preparation. Additionally,
91 | the student shall complete a survey in a format prescribed by
92 | the Department of Education to provide data on student reasons
93 | for terminating enrollment and actions taken by schools to keep
94 | students enrolled.

95 | 2. If a parent requests termination of his or her child's
96 | enrollment in school, the parent shall forfeit any benefit he or
97 | she is receiving for the child from any state financial
98 | assistance program. The school district shall notify the parent
99 | that forfeiture of such benefit is effective upon the child's
100 | termination from school.

101 Section 3. Subsection (4) of section 1003.435, Florida
 102 Statutes, is amended to read:

103 1003.435 High school equivalency diploma program.—

104 (4) A candidate for a high school equivalency diploma
 105 shall be at least 18 years of age on the date of the
 106 examination, ~~except that in extraordinary circumstances, as~~
 107 ~~provided for in rules of the district school board of the~~
 108 ~~district in which the candidate resides or attends school, a~~
 109 ~~candidate may take the examination after reaching the age of 16.~~

110 Section 4. Subsection (4) of section 1003.51, Florida
 111 Statutes, is amended to read:

112 1003.51 Other public educational services.—

113 (4) Each district school board shall:

114 ~~(a) Notify students in juvenile justice education programs~~
 115 ~~who attain the age of 16 years of the law regarding compulsory~~
 116 ~~school attendance and make available the option of enrolling in~~
 117 ~~an education program to attain a Florida high school diploma by~~
 118 ~~taking the high school equivalency examination before release~~
 119 ~~from the program. The Department of Education shall assist~~
 120 ~~juvenile justice education programs with becoming high school~~
 121 ~~equivalency examination centers.~~

122 (a) ~~(b)~~ Respond to requests for student education records
 123 received from another district school board or a juvenile
 124 justice education program within 5 working days after receiving
 125 the request.

126 (b)~~(e)~~ Provide access to courses offered pursuant to ss.
127 1002.37, 1002.45, and 1003.498. School districts and providers
128 may enter into cooperative agreements for the provision of
129 curriculum associated with courses offered pursuant to s.
130 1003.498 to enable providers to offer such courses.

131 (c)~~(d)~~ Complete the assessment process required by
132 subsection (2).

133 (d)~~(e)~~ Monitor compliance with contracts for education
134 programs for students in juvenile justice prevention, day
135 treatment, residential, and detention programs.

136 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2017.