

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to the high school equivalency diploma
3 program; amending s. 1003.435, F.S.; providing for the
4 award of a high school equivalency diploma to students
5 who meet specified criteria relating to high school
6 graduation requirements; conforming provisions to
7 changes made by the act; providing an effective date.
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9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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11 Section 1. Section 1003.435, Florida Statutes, is amended
12 to read:

13 1003.435 High school equivalency diploma program.—

14 (1) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules that
15 prescribe performance standards and provide for comprehensive
16 examinations to be administered to candidates for high school
17 equivalency diplomas. Such rules shall include, but are not
18 limited to, provisions for fees, frequency of examinations, and
19 procedures for retaking an examination upon unsatisfactory
20 performance.

21 (2) The department may award high school equivalency
22 diplomas to candidates who meet the performance standards
23 prescribed by the State Board of Education through the high
24 school equivalency diploma examinations and the subject area
25 examinations or, for those candidates who failed to pass the

26 assessments required under s. 1008.22(3), through:

27 (a) Earning the 24 credits required under s. 1003.4282, or
28 the required 18 credits under s. 1002.3105(5), for a standard
29 high school diploma and achieving a 2.5 GPA while enrolled in
30 high school; or

31 (b) Earning the 24 credits required under s. 1003.4282, or
32 the required 18 credits under s. 1002.3105(5), achieving a 2.0
33 GPA, and earning an industry certification while enrolled in
34 high school.

35 (3) Each district school board shall offer and administer
36 the high school equivalency diploma examinations and the subject
37 area examinations to all candidates pursuant to rules of the
38 State Board of Education.

39 (4) A candidate for a high school equivalency diploma
40 shall be at least 18 years of age on the date of the examination
41 or, for those candidates seeking a diploma under paragraph
42 (2)(a) or paragraph (2)(b), 17 years of age, except that in
43 extraordinary circumstances, as provided for in rules of the
44 district school board of the district in which the candidate
45 resides or attends school, a candidate may take the examination
46 after reaching the age of 16.

47 (5) Each district school board shall develop, in
48 cooperation with the area Florida College System institution
49 board of trustees, a plan for the provision of advanced
50 instruction for those students who meet the requirements of

51 paragraph (2) (a) or paragraph (2) (b), attain satisfactory
52 performance on the high school equivalency examination or the
53 subject area examinations, or who demonstrate through other
54 means a readiness to engage in postsecondary-level academic
55 work. The plan shall include provisions for the equitable
56 distribution of generated funds to cover personnel, maintenance,
57 and other costs of offering the advanced instruction. Priority
58 shall be given to programs of advanced instruction offered in
59 high school facilities.

60 (6) All high school equivalency diplomas issued under the
61 provisions of this section shall have equal status with other
62 high school diplomas for all state purposes, including admission
63 to any state university or Florida College System institution.

64 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.