

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 523 Mastery-based Education

SPONSOR(S): DiCeglie

TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** None

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee	16 Y, 0 N	D'Souza	Brink
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee	12 Y, 0 N	Bailey	Potvin
3) Education Committee	14 Y, 0 N	D'Souza	Hassell

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

In 2016, the Legislature created the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program within the Department of Education (DOE) to allow students to progress to higher levels of learning based upon the mastery of concepts and skills. Under the program, the State Board of Education may allow the Commissioner of Education to waive rules relating to student progression and awarding of credits. Participation in the voluntary pilot program is limited to the P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School and the Lake, Palm Beach, Pinellas, and Seminole County school districts. The pilot program is set to expire at the end of the 2020-21 school year.

The bill:

- Renames the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program as the Mastery-Based Education Program.
- Allows developmental research schools and any public school district in the state to submit an application to the DOE to participate in the program.
- Authorizes participating lab schools and school districts to approve and use an alternative interpretation of letter grades to measure student success in grades 6 through 12; however, school districts must continue to use a 4-point scale for calculating a student's grade-point average.
- Provides that students who earn high school credit through a mastery-based education program have fair and equitable access to postsecondary education.

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact. There may be an increased need for the Department of Education staff and resources to fulfill its duties if the pilot program expands beyond the current districts participating. However, the overall need will vary based on the actual number of additional school districts that choose to participate.

The bill has an effective date of July 1, 2020.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Competency-Based Education Pilot Program

In 2016, the Legislature created the 5-year Competency-Based Education Pilot Program (CBEPP) within the Department of Education (DOE). The CBEPP allows students to progress from grade to grade at their own pace based on mastery of concepts and skills in Florida's Next Generation Sunshine State Standards (NGSSS).¹ Voluntary participation in the CBEPP is limited to the P.K. Yonge Developmental Research School and the Lake, Palm Beach, Pinellas, and Seminole County school districts.² The program is scheduled to expire at the end of the 2020-21 school year.

The DOE was required to:

- Develop a pilot program application.
- Compile student and staff schedules of participating schools before and after pilot program implementation.
- Provide participants with access to statewide, standardized assessments.
- Submit an annual report by June 1 to the Governor, Senate President, and House Speaker summarizing the CBEPP activities, accomplishments, and recommendations for statutory revisions.³

School districts applying to participate in the pilot program were required to include the following in their application:

- Vision and timelines for implementing competency-based education within the district.
- Annual goals and performance outcomes for participating schools, including student performance, promotion and retention rates, graduation rates, and indicators of college and career readiness.
- Communication plan for parents and other stakeholders.
- Scope and timelines for professional development for school instructional and administrative personnel.
- Plan for student progression based on the mastery of content.
- Plan for using technology and digital and blended learning to enhance student achievement.
- Proposed allocation of resources for the pilot program.
- Recruitment and selection of participating schools.
- Rules to be waived for participating schools.⁴

The State Board of Education (SBE) may allow the Commissioner of Education to waive rules relating to student progression and the awarding of credit for participating schools.⁵ This is in addition to the commissioner's waiver authority to facilitate innovative practices and allow local selection of educational methods.⁶

Students enrolled in a participating pilot program school are reported for and generate funding consistent with other public schools.⁷

¹ Section 1003.4996, F.S.; Rule 6A-6.0652, F.A.C.

² Section 1003.4996(1), F.S.

³ Section 1003.4996(1),(2) and (5), F.S.

⁴ Section 1003.4996(2), F.S.

⁵ Section 1003.4996(3), F.S.

⁶ See s. 1001.10(3), F.S.

⁷ Section 1003.4996(4), F.S.

Four of the five eligible school districts participated in the CBEPP during the 2016-2017 school year, with Seminole using 2016-2017 as a planning year. Four districts, including Seminole, participated in the 2017-2018 school year, while Lake chose to pause its participation in the 2017-2018 school year.⁸

The four participating school districts implemented the pilot program partially in 64 elementary schools, two middle schools, ten high schools, and one K-12 school during the 2017-2018 school year.⁹

Developmental Research Schools

Developmental research (lab) schools are a category of public schools that provide elementary and secondary instruction and are affiliated with the college of education within the state university of closest geographic proximity.¹⁰ The primary goal of lab schools is to enhance instruction in mathematics, science, computer science, and foreign languages by using the resources available on a state university campus, while also providing and education in nonspecialized subjects.¹¹

Middle and High School Grading System

Current law defines the grade 6 through grade 12 grading system and interpretation of letter grades used to measure student success as follows:

- Grade “A” equals 90%-100%, has a grade point average value of 4, and is defined as “outstanding progress.”
- Grade “B” equals 80%-89%, has a grade point average value of 3, and is defined as “above average progress.”
- Grade “C” equals 70%-79%, has a grade point average value of 2, and is defined as “average progress.”
- Grade “D” equals 60%-69%, has a grade point average value of 1, and is defined as “lowest acceptable progress.”
- Grade “F” equals 0%-59%, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as “failure.”
- Grade “I” equals zero percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as “incomplete.”¹²

For purposes of class ranking, district school boards are authorized to exercise a weighted grading system in accordance with the weighted provisions allowed in dual enrollment courses.¹³

Statewide Articulation Agreement

The SBE and Board of Governors of the State University System must enter into a statewide articulation agreement to facilitate the seamless articulation of student credit between Florida’s educational entities, including between secondary and postsecondary educational institutions.¹⁴ The articulation agreement governs articulation between secondary and postsecondary programs.¹⁵

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill renames the CBEPP as the Mastery-Based Education Program (MBEP) and expands the option to participate in the MBEP to all lab schools and public school districts. However, the bill does not delete the limitation of the program beyond 2020-21.

⁸ Florida Department of Education, *Competency-Based Education Pilot Program, 2017-2018 Annual Report* (June 1, 2018), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7749/urlt/CBPP-Report.pdf>. No other CBEPP annual report has been published since the 2017-2018 report.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Section 1002.32(2), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1002.32(3)(a), F.S.

¹² Section 1003.437, F.S.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ Section 1007.23(1), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1007.23(1)(a), F.S.

The bill authorizes participants in the MBEP to award course credit as a student demonstrates mastery of the core content and skills, consistent with the NGSSS, rather than award credit based on the 135 or 120 hour instructional requirements. A district school board must approve a participating school's use of mastery-based progression in lieu of instructional time. Some students may progress more rapidly through a course by mastering core content and skills without having to meet the minimum instructional hours' requirement, while others may need more than 135 or 120 hours of instruction to master course core content and skills.

The bill authorizes participating school districts to use alternatives for the interpretation of middle and high school letter grades ("alternative grading system") to measure student success in grades 6 through 12, but participating districts must continue to use the established four-point scale for calculating a student's grade-point average.

The bill revises the requirements for the statewide articulation agreement to provide fair and equitable access for students who graduate with a standard high school diploma and have earned high school credit through a mastery-based education program.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 1003.436, F.S., authorizing a district school board or developmental research school participating in the MBEP to award credit based on student mastery of certain content and skills.

Section 2. Amends s. 1003.437, F.S., authorizing a district school board or developmental research school participating in the MBEP to use an alternative interpretation of letter grades for certain students; and requiring participating district school boards and developmental research schools to use the current 4-point scale in determining student grade point averages.

Section 3. Amends s. 1003.4996, F.S., renaming the Competency-Based Education Pilot Program; and authorizing public schools districts and developmental research schools to submit applications for the program.

Section 4. Amends s. 1007.23, F.S., requiring the statewide articulation agreement to include fair and equitable access for students who graduate with a standard high school diploma and have earned high school credit through mastery-based education.

Section 5. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2020.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

There may be increased need for DOE staff and resources to fulfill the duties for the expanded program; however, the overall need will vary based on the actual scope of the program and the number of districts that participate. Additional staff may not be necessary if the program is not expanded beyond the current districts participating.¹⁶

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

¹⁶ 2020 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis, Florida Department of Education, email received from Jessica Fowler, January 23, 2020.

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

None.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

None.