

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 725 Workforce Education
SPONSOR(S): Robinson
TIED BILLS: None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** CS/SB 418

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Higher Education & Career Readiness Subcommittee	15 Y, 0 N	McAlarney	Fudge
2) Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee			
3) Education Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

This bill amends s. 1011.80, F.S., to allow school district career centers, which have a workforce education program, to award Associate in Applied Science or Associate in Science in Nursing degrees. These degrees can only be awarded to graduates of the center’s licensed practical nurse program.

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact. (See fiscal comments.)

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2020.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Workforce Education Program

Florida statute defines workforce education as “adult general education and career education” that “may consist of a continuing workforce education course or a program of study leading to an occupational completion point,¹ a career certificate, an applied technology diploma, or a career degree.”² Workforce education is geared toward improving a person’s employability through adult general education programs.³ It includes career certificate programs;⁴ applied technology diploma programs;⁵ continuing workforce education courses;⁶ degree career education programs;⁷ and apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs⁸.

Under current Florida law, Florida College System (FCS) institutions and school districts may conduct workforce education programs; however, only a FCS institution may award college credit for an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) or an Associate in Science (AS) degree. If an AAS or an AS degree program includes an occupational completion point⁹ that confers a certificate or an applied technology diploma, a school district career center can operate that part of the program.¹⁰

Florida College System Institution

The FCS has 28 member colleges with 72 campuses.¹¹ FCS institutions are overseen by the State Board of Education (SBE) and are governed by local boards of trustees.¹² Currently, there are 733,000 students enrolled in FCS institutions.¹³ FCS institutions offer traditional associate and baccalaureate degrees and career educational programs.¹⁴ The reason the Florida legislature created FCS institutions was, “to maximize open access for students, respond to community needs for postsecondary academic education and career degree education, and provide associate and baccalaureate degrees that will best meet the state’s employment needs.”¹⁵ FCS institutions must be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.¹⁶ FCS institutions may be referred to as community colleges or state colleges depending upon programs offered, a vote of the local board of trustees, SBE, and legislative approval.

School District Career Center

¹ Section 1004.02(25), F.S.

² Section 1004.02(21), F.S.

³ Section 1011.80(1)(a), F.S.

⁴ Section 1011.80(1)(b), F.S.

⁵ Section 1011.80(1)(c), F.S.

⁶ Section 1011.80(1)(d), F.S.

⁷ Section 1011.80(1)(e), F.S.

⁸ Section 1011.80(1)(f), F.S.

⁹ See Section 1004.02(21), F.S. An occupational completion point means the occupational competencies that qualify a person to enter an occupation that is linked to a career and technical program.

¹⁰ Section 1011.80(2), F.S.

¹¹ The Florida College System, *Welcome to the Florida College System*, <https://www.floridacollegesystem.com/> (last visited January 9, 2020).

¹² FLA. CONST. art. IX, s. 8.

¹³ The Florida College System, *Welcome to the Florida College System*, <https://www.floridacollegesystem.com/> (last visited January 9, 2020).

¹⁴ Section 1001.60(2)(a), F.S.

¹⁵ Section 1001.60(1), F.S.

¹⁶ Section 1001.60(b)1., F.S.

Florida law allows school districts to operate career centers, which offer terminal courses of a technical nature, as well as courses for adults and out-of-school youth.¹⁷ These centers are administered by directors who report to the local Superintendent of Schools and are responsible to the district school board.¹⁸ As of December 2019, there were 49 career centers operating in 31 school districts in Florida. The centers are not authorized to award college credit or degrees. These centers are accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE).¹⁹ The COE is a national accrediting agency that accredits institutions that offer certificate, diploma, or applied science degrees.²⁰

Nursing Programs

Florida regulates the nursing profession in order to ensure that all practicing nurses meet minimum requirements for the safe practice of nursing and to ensure that nurses who fall below the minimum competency, or present a danger to the public, are prohibited from practicing.²¹ All educational institutions that wish to conduct a program for the pre-licensure education of practical nurses or professional nurses must apply to the Florida Department of Health, and be approved by the Florida Board of Nursing.²²

Licensed Practical Nurse

A licensed practical nurse (LPN) is any person licensed in Florida or holding a multistate license to practice practical nursing.²³ Currently, Florida has 39 accredited career centers offering LPN programs.²⁴ In 2018-2019, 28 school districts offered LPN programs, with approximately 4,000 students enrolled. Additionally, 13 FCS institutions offered LPN programs, enrolling 869 students.²⁵ These are 1350-hour programs preparing students for employment as LPNs.²⁶

Registered Nurse

A registered nurse (RN) is any person licensed in Florida or holding an active multistate license to practice professional nursing.²⁷ FCS institutions offer a 72-credit hour AS in Nursing programs to prepare students for employment as RNs.²⁸ In 2018-2019, 13,619 FCS students were enrolled in an AS in Nursing program.²⁹ Florida AS in Nursing degree programs are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).³⁰ Currently, FCS institutions offer AS in Nursing degree programs, but do not offer AAS in Nursing degree programs.³¹

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

¹⁷ Section 1001.44(1), F.S.

¹⁸ Section 1001.44(3)(a), F.S.

¹⁹ Florida Department of Education, 2019 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis, *SB 0418*, available at <http://abar.laspbs.state.fl.us/ABAR/Attachment.aspx?ID=29774>.

²⁰ Council on Occupational Education, Accreditation, *FAQs*, <https://council.org/accreditation-frequently-asked-questions/> (last visited January 10, 2020).

²¹ Section 464.002, F.S.

²² Section 464.019, F.S.

²³ Section 464.003(14), F.S.

²⁴ Florida Department of Education, Florida Postsecondary Adult Vocational Certificate Programs, Florida Postsecondary Adult Certificate Programs, *2019-20 Council of Occupational Education (COE) Matrix* (December 21, 2019), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5652/urlt/coematrix.xls>.

²⁵ Florida Department of Education, *supra* note 19.

²⁶ Florida Department of Education, Curriculum Framework, *Practical Nursing (2019-2020)*, available at <http://fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/18703/urlt/H170607-1920.rtf>.

²⁷ Section 464.003(20), F.S.

²⁸ Florida Department of Education, *supra* note 19.

²⁹ *Id.*

³⁰ Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, *Mission, Purpose, Goals*, <https://www.acenursing.org/> (last visited Nov. 19, 2019).

³¹ Florida Department of Education, *supra* note 19.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) programs prepare nurses for workforce opportunities that require a BSN. Twenty-seven FCS institutions are approved to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).³² In 2018-2019, 6,429 students were enrolled in FCS BSN programs.³³ Students must have an active nursing license to participate in a BSN program. A BSN is geared toward providing an opportunity for LPNs and RNs to further their education, increase their potential for career advancement, and earn higher salaries. This program includes coursework and field experience in supervision, community health, and nursing practice.³⁴

Postsecondary Adult Vocational to AAS/AS Degree Articulation

Florida currently has an LPN to Nursing AAS/AS statewide articulation agreement.³⁵ This agreement awards 10 college credit hours toward an AS Degree in Nursing R.N. for students who complete the 1,350-clock hour program in Practical Nursing at a school district technical college/center.³⁶ Students are required to begin the Nursing AS degree within five years of completing the LPN program and must meet the FCS institution's academic and residency requirements.³⁷

Florida law requires that the SBE and Board of Governors enter into statewide articulation agreements with the goal of facilitating the seamless articulation of student credit across educational entities,³⁸ including articulation among programs in nursing.³⁹ The agreements guarantee the statewide articulation of workforce development programs and courses between school districts and FCS institutions. Also, under the agreements, applied technology diploma graduates must be granted credit upon admission to an AS degree or AAS degree program.⁴⁰

Effect of Proposed Changes

This bill will allow school district career centers that have workforce education programs to award Associate in Applied Science or Associate in Science in Nursing degrees. In order to award the degrees, the center can only admit students who are graduates of the center's licensed practical nurse program. This may lead to an increase in the number of RNs in the Florida workforce and to an improved quality of care within the nursing profession.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1. Amends s. 1011.80, F.S., revising the workforce education programs that school district career centers are authorized to conduct.

Section 2. Provides an effective date of July 1, 2020.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

³² *Id.*

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ The College of the Florida Keys, Academics, *Bachelor of Science in Nursing*, <https://www.fkcc.edu/bsn/> (last visited January 10, 2020).

³⁵ Florida Department of Education, Statewide Articulation Agreements – Career Certificate Programs to AS/AAS Degree, Practical Nursing, *Postsecondary Adult Vocational (PSAV) to AAS/AS Degree Articulation* (February 28, 2018), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-technical-edu-agreements/psav-to-aas-as-degree.stml>.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ Florida Department of Education, *supra* note 19.

³⁸ Section 1007.23(1)(g), F.S.

³⁹ *Id.*

⁴⁰ Section 1007.23(4), F.S.

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Indeterminate.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

It is unknown how many of the current 31 school districts that operate public career centers would choose to offer an AS degree in nursing and how many students would be enrolled. Career centers that opt to offer associate degrees in nursing will likely incur accreditation application fees, along with start-up and operational expenses. As program enrollments increase, additional state funding will be required.

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.