

By Senator Taddeo

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to individual education plan
3 requirements for students with disabilities; amending
4 s. 1003.5716, F.S.; revising the timeline for the
5 development and implementation of an individual
6 education plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities
7 to transition to postsecondary education and career
8 opportunities; revising the requirements for an IEP
9 for the transitions to a postsecondary education or
10 career opportunities; requiring the parents of
11 students with disabilities to provide a written notice
12 relating to the deferment of a standard high school
13 diploma by a specified date; conforming provisions to
14 changes made by the act; requiring the Department of
15 Education to conduct a review of specified services
16 and programs; requiring the department to establish
17 and publish on its website uniform best practices for
18 such services and programs by a specified date;
19 providing an effective date.

20
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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23 Section 1. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 1003.5716,
24 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

25 1003.5716 Transition to postsecondary education and career
26 opportunities.—All students with disabilities who are 3 years of
27 age to 21 years of age have the right to a free, appropriate
28 public education. As used in this section, the term "IEP" means
29 individual education plan.

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30 (1) To ensure quality planning for a successful transition
31 of a student with a disability to postsecondary education and
32 career opportunities, during the student's seventh grade year,
33 an IEP team shall begin the process of, and develop an IEP for,
34 identifying the need for transition services before the student
35 with a disability enters high school ~~attains the age of 14 years~~
36 in order for his or her postsecondary goals and career goals to
37 be identified. The plan must be operational and in place to
38 begin implementation on the first day of the student's first
39 year in high school or when he or she attains the age of 16
40 years, whichever occurs first. This process must include, but is
41 not limited to:

42 (a) Consideration of the student's need for instruction in
43 the area of self-determination and self-advocacy to assist the
44 student's active and effective participation in an IEP meeting;
45 ~~and~~

46 (b) Preparation for the student to graduate from high
47 school with a standard high school diploma pursuant to s.
48 1003.4282 with a Scholar designation unless the parent chooses a
49 Merit designation; ~~-~~

50 (c) The provision of information to parents and students
51 about the school district's high school-level transition courses
52 and vocational, career, and collegiate programs available to
53 students with disabilities and how to access such programs,
54 including, but not limited to, school-based transition programs;
55 the Center for Students with Unique Abilities collegiate,
56 career, and technical courses; and programs and services
57 provided to youth and adults by the Division of Vocational
58 Rehabilitation, the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, and

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59 the Division of Blind Services. Applications for Division of
60 Vocational Rehabilitation services and Agency for Persons with
61 Disabilities services shall be provided to parents and students
62 at IEP meetings. An IEP team must also discuss with parents
63 restrictions on information sharing which come into effect
64 without the appointment of guardianship upon a student with a
65 disability turning 18 years of age; and

66 (d) Discussion of the process for a student with a
67 disability who meets the requirements for a standard high school
68 diploma to defer the receipt of such diploma pursuant to s.
69 1003.4282(10) (c). The parent of such student must provide a
70 notice in writing no later than May 15 of the year his or her
71 student will graduate that he or she understands the process for
72 deferment and whether his or her student will defer the receipt
73 of such diploma.

74 (2) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect
75 when the student enters the first day of his or her first year
76 in high school or attains the age of 16, or younger if
77 determined appropriate by the parent and the IEP team, the IEP
78 must include the following statements that must be updated
79 annually:

80 (a) A statement of intent to pursue a standard high school
81 diploma and a Scholar or Merit designation, pursuant to s.
82 1003.4285, as determined by the parent.

83 (b) A statement of intent to receive a standard high school
84 diploma before the student attains the age of 22 and a
85 description of how the student will fully meet the requirements
86 in s. 1003.4282, including, but not limited to, a portfolio
87 pursuant to s. 1003.4282(10) (b) which meets the criteria

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88 specified in State Board of Education rule. The IEP must also
89 specify the outcomes and additional benefits expected by the
90 parent and the IEP team at the time of the student's graduation.

91 (c) A statement of appropriate measurable long-term
92 postsecondary education and career goals based upon age-
93 appropriate transition assessments related to training,
94 education, employment, and, if appropriate, independent living
95 skills and the transition services, including preemployment
96 transition services and courses of study needed to assist the
97 student in reaching those goals.

98 Section 2. The Department of Education shall conduct a
99 review of existing transition services and programs for students
100 with disabilities to establish uniform best practices for such
101 programs to deliver appropriate employment, pre-employment, and
102 independent living skills education to students enrolled in such
103 transition programs. The department must establish and publish
104 on its website such uniform best practices no later than July 1,
105 2022.

106 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2021.