

**The Florida Senate**  
**BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

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Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Appropriations

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BILL: SB 918

INTRODUCER: Senators Bradley and Jones

SUBJECT: Education

DATE: April 16, 2021

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Westmark</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
2.	<u>Underhill</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AED</u>	<b>Recommend: Favorable</b>
3.	<u>Underhill</u>	<u>Sadberry</u>	<u>AP</u>	<b>Pre-meeting</b>

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## I. Summary:

SB 918 provides additional requirements for how the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) FEFP bonus funds can be expended by school districts, and expands the expenditure of bonus funding to include school programs administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate which prepare prospective students to enroll in AICE courses.

The bill also updates which teachers are eligible for a bonus to include classroom teachers who teach International General Certificate of Secondary Education (pre-AICE) courses.

The bill does not require a state appropriation. See Section V.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

## II. Present Situation:

### Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE)

Successful completion of an Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) curriculum<sup>1</sup> is one option for a student to graduate from high school in Florida with a standard high school diploma.<sup>2</sup> The Cambridge AICE Diploma is a certificate that requires learners to study a compulsory core subject with specified Cambridge subjects drawn from the three curriculum areas: mathematics and science (Group 1); languages (Group 2); and arts and

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<sup>1</sup> Cambridge International AS and A Level qualifications offer a choice of 55 subjects, which schools can offer in almost any combination. An AS Level course typically lasts one academic year; an A Level course typically takes two years. Cambridge Assessment International Assessment, *Curriculum*, <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-advanced/cambridge-international-as-and-a-levels/curriculum/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Section 1003.4282(1)(a), F.S.

humanities (Group 3). There is also the option to study interdisciplinary subjects (Group 4). In order to achieve the Cambridge AICE Diploma, learners must achieve a minimum of seven credits, with at least one credit from Groups 1, 2, and 3.<sup>3</sup> Prior to enrolling in Cambridge AICE courses, a student can enroll in Cambridge IGCSE, the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (pre-AICE).<sup>4</sup> Cambridge IGCSE examination sessions occur twice a year in June and in November.<sup>5</sup>

Over 700 universities in the United States formally accept Cambridge AS and A Levels and the Cambridge AICE Diploma.<sup>6</sup>

### ***AICE in Florida***

The AICE program is one of a number of articulated acceleration programs, which are intended to shorten the time necessary for a student to earn a high school diploma and a postsecondary degree, broaden the scope of curricular options available, or increase the depth of study available for a particular subject.<sup>7</sup> The law provides the following benefits to schools and students engaged in the AICE program:

- Successful completion of a course examination qualifies for college credit.<sup>8</sup>
- The percentage of a school's students eligible to earn college credit favorably affects the school's grade.<sup>9</sup>
- A grade earned in AICE or pre-AICE is assigned additional weight for determining student eligibility for a Bright Futures Scholarship.<sup>10</sup>
- Classroom teachers and school districts receive funding incentives based on the performance of each student in AICE examinations.<sup>11</sup>

At least 177 high schools in 31 Florida school districts currently offer the AICE program.<sup>12</sup> Almost 40 percent of AICE program participants in Florida are considered eligible for free or

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<sup>3</sup> Cambridge Assessment International Education, *Cambridge AICE Diploma qualification*, <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-advanced/cambridge-aice-diploma/qualification/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Cambridge Assessment International Education, *Cambridge IGCSE*, <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-upper-secondary/cambridge-igcse/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> Cambridge Assessment International Education, *Cambridge IGCSE qualification*, <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-upper-secondary/cambridge-igcse/qualification/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2021).

<sup>6</sup> Cambridge Assessment International Education, *Guidance for schools and students*, <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/recognition-and-acceptance/schools-and-students/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> Section 1007.27(1), F.S. Accelerated mechanisms include, but are not limited to, dual enrollment and early admission, advanced placement (AP), credit by examination, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program, and the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) Program. *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> Section 1003.4295, F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1008.34(3)(b)2.b., F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Section 1009.531(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1011.62(1)(m), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Email, Angela Dempsey, PooleMcKinley (Feb. 12, 2021) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education).

reduced-price meals.<sup>13</sup> During the 2019-2020 fiscal year, 63,212 students in Florida participated in the AICE program.<sup>14</sup>

In spring 2020, 47,577 students enrolled in pre-AICE courses in Florida.<sup>15</sup> In fall 2020, 54,046 students enrolled in pre-AICE courses in Florida.<sup>16</sup> In the 2019-2020 school year, 668 end-of-course pre-AICE exams were taken in Florida, of which 440 scored grade E or above.<sup>17</sup>

### ***Funds for the Operation of Schools - AICE Incentive Funding***

The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) provides a funding incentive for school districts with students in AICE courses who successfully complete AICE examinations or earn an AICE diploma.<sup>18</sup> A value of 0.16 FTE student membership is calculated for each student enrolled in a full-credit AICE course who receives a score of E, and 0.08 FTE student membership for each student enrolled in a half-credit AICE course who receives a score of E or higher on a subject examination. A value of 0.3 FTE student membership is calculated for each student who receives an AICE diploma.<sup>19</sup>

Current law requires each school district to allocate at least 80 percent of the funds received from the AICE bonus FTE funding to the school program that generated the funds.<sup>20</sup>

Additionally, classroom teachers receive bonus funds for the performance of their students on AICE examinations, in the amount of \$50 for each student taught by the AICE teacher in each full-credit AICE course, and \$25 for each student taught by the AICE teacher in each half-credit AICE course, who receives a score of E or higher on the AICE examination. An additional bonus of \$500 is allotted to each AICE teacher in a school designated with a grade of “D” or “F” who has at least one student scoring E or higher on the full-credit AICE examination, regardless of the number of classes taught or number of such students, or an additional \$250 to each AICE teacher in such a school who has at least one student scoring E or higher on the half-credit AICE examination in that class.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, *School Choice Landscape* (Feb. 15, 2021), at 39.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*, at 38. Palm Beach County School District accounts for one-third of all AICE students in the state with 20,993 program participants. *Id.*, at 39.

<sup>15</sup> Email, Angela Dempsey, PooleMcKinley (Feb 19, 2021) (on file with the Senate Committee on Education).

<sup>16</sup> *Id.* Some IGCSE syllabuses, such as Cambridge pre-AICE Spanish Level 1, 2, or 3 and Cambridge pre-AICE Mathematics Levels 1, 2, or 3, extends beyond one year, meaning the exam may not be administered until the end of the course sequence. However, the enrollment data would reflect each of these courses. Additionally, many schools offer the IGCSE curriculum to develop the skills and content mastery required for future AICE courses without administering the IGCSE exams. In 2019, 668 end-of-course IGCSE exams were taken in Florida, of which 440 obtained a score grade E or higher. *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> *Id.* Cambridge International A Level and AS Level subjects are graded from A\* to E or A to E, respectively, and the Cambridge AICE Diploma is awarded on a points system, such that each grade is converted to points to award a Cambridge AICE Diploma at one of three levels based on the overall score. Cambridge Assessment International Education, *Cambridge AICE Diploma qualification*, <https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-advanced/cambridge-aice-diploma/qualification/> (last visited Feb. 23, 2021).

<sup>18</sup> See 1011.62, F.S. Florida also provides incentive funds for dual enrollment, exploratory career education, the International Baccalaureate Program, advanced placement courses, and career-themed courses, among others. Section 1011.62(1), F.S.

<sup>19</sup> Section 1011.62(1)(m), F.S.

<sup>20</sup> *Id.*

<sup>21</sup> *Id.*

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill modifies the requirement in law that each school district allocate at least 80 percent of the funds received from the Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) bonus FTE funding to the school program that generated the funds to also include school programs administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate that prepare prospective students to enroll in AICE courses.

The bill adds a restriction that such funds must be expended solely for the payment of costs associated with the:

- Application and registration process;
- Program fees and site licenses;
- Training, professional development, salaries, benefits, and bonuses for instructional personnel and program coordinators;
- Examination and diploma fees;
- Membership fees;
- Supplemental books;
- Instructional supplies, materials, and equipment; and
- Other activities that identify prospective AICE students or prepare prospective students to enroll in AICE courses.

The bill specifies that the school district is required to distribute bonus funds to each classroom teacher who provided International General Certificate of Secondary Education (pre-AICE) instruction. The bill removes references to full-credit and half-credit courses and exams, to reflect that Cambridge no longer offers half-credit exams. Accordingly, the bill changes the designation from half-credit AICE courses to pre-AICE courses for the \$25 and \$250 bonus awards a teacher would earn for students who successfully complete examinations.<sup>22</sup>

Expanding the use of existing FTE bonus funding to school programs administered by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate may require school districts to increase the support of pre-AICE instruction, which prepares prospective students to enroll in AICE courses. The financial supports for pre-AICE instruction and related activities may increase opportunities for Florida secondary students to take Cambridge courses and prepare for AICE courses.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.

### IV. Constitutional Issues:

#### A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

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<sup>22</sup> Florida law does not provide similar funding incentives for pre-IB courses. Section 1011.62(1)(l), F.S. However, a value of 0.16 FTE is calculated for each student enrolled in an IB course who receives a score of 4 or higher on a subject examination, and a value of 0.3 FTE is calculated for each student who receives an IB diploma, which value is added to the FTE in basic programs from grades 9 through 12. *Id.*

**B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:**

None.

**C. Trust Funds Restrictions:**

None.

**D. State Tax or Fee Increases:**

None.

**E. Other Constitutional Issues:**

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:****A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

**B. Private Sector Impact:**

None.

**C. Government Sector Impact:**

The bill does not require a state appropriation. Expanding the distribution of financial incentives to apply to International General Certificate of Secondary Education (pre-AICE) programs may affect how school districts allocate bonus funds related to Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) and pre-AICE activities.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Statutes Affected:**

This bill substantially amends section 1011.62 of the Florida Statutes.

**IX. Additional Information:**

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**  
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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