

1                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to students enrolled in dropout  
 3           retrieval programs; amending s. 1002.45, F.S.;  
 4           defining the term "dropout retrieval program";  
 5           authorizing virtual instruction program providers who  
 6           exclusively provide services through a dropout  
 7           retrieval program to receive a school improvement  
 8           rating; requiring all other virtual instruction  
 9           program providers to receive a school grade; amending  
 10          s. 1008.34, F.S.; revising the criteria used to  
 11          determine if certain students are not included in the  
 12          calculation of an alternative school's school grade;  
 13          providing an effective date.

14  
 15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 17           **Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and paragraph**  
 18 **(a) of subsection (7) of section 1002.45, Florida Statutes, are**  
 19 **amended to read:**

20           1002.45 Virtual instruction programs.—

21           (1) PROGRAM.—

22           (a) For purposes of this section, the term:

23           1. "Approved virtual instruction program provider" means a  
 24 provider that is approved by the State Board of Education under  
 25 subsection (2), the Florida Virtual School, a franchise of the

26 Florida Virtual School, or a Florida College System institution.

27 2. "Department" means the Department of Education.

28 3. "Dropout retrieval program" means a program serving  
29 students who have officially withdrawn from high school before  
30 graduation and who are not engaged in the education system at  
31 the time of enrollment.

32 ~~4.3.~~ "Virtual instruction program" means a program of  
33 instruction provided in an interactive learning environment  
34 created through technology in which students are separated from  
35 their teachers by time or space, or both.

36 (7) ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—

37 (a) Each approved virtual instruction program provider  
38 contracted pursuant to this section must:

39 1. Participate in the statewide assessment program under  
40 s. 1008.22 and in the state's education performance  
41 accountability system under s. 1008.31.

42 2. Receive a school grade under s. 1008.34 or a school  
43 improvement rating under s. 1008.341, as applicable. A virtual  
44 instruction program provider that exclusively provides services  
45 as a dropout retrieval program may choose to receive a school  
46 improvement rating. The school improvement rating received by an  
47 ~~each~~ approved virtual instruction program provider shall be  
48 based upon the aggregated assessment scores of all students  
49 served by the provider statewide. All other ~~Each~~ approved  
50 virtual instruction program providers ~~provider~~ shall receive a

51 district grade pursuant to s. 1008.34 based upon the aggregated  
52 assessment scores of all students served by the provider  
53 statewide and a separate school grade for each school district  
54 with which it contracts based upon the assessment scores of all  
55 students served within the school district. The department shall  
56 publish the school grade or school improvement rating received  
57 by each approved virtual instruction program provider on its  
58 Internet website. The department shall develop an evaluation  
59 method for providers of part-time programs which includes the  
60 percentage of students making learning gains, the percentage of  
61 students successfully passing any required end-of-course  
62 assessment, the percentage of students taking Advanced Placement  
63 examinations, and the percentage of students scoring 3 or higher  
64 on an Advanced Placement examination.

65 **Section 2. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section**  
66 **1008.34, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

67 1008.34 School grading system; school report cards;  
68 district grade.—

69 (3) DESIGNATION OF SCHOOL GRADES.—

70 (d) The data of students attending alternative schools,  
71 students designated as hospital or homebound, and students who  
72 transfer to a private school shall be factored into a school  
73 grade as follows:

74 1.a. The student performance data for eligible students  
75 attending alternative schools that provide dropout prevention

76 | and academic intervention services pursuant to s. 1003.53 shall  
 77 | be included in the calculation of the home school's grade. The  
 78 | term "eligible students" in this subparagraph does not include  
 79 | students:

80 |     (I) Attending an alternative school who are subject to  
 81 | district school board policies for expulsion for repeated or  
 82 | serious offenses.

83 |     (II) Who are in dropout retrieval programs serving  
 84 | students who have officially withdrawn from high school before  
 85 | graduation and who are not engaged in the education system at  
 86 | the time of enrollment. ~~been designated as dropouts, or~~

87 |     (III) Who are in programs operated or contracted by the  
 88 | Department of Juvenile Justice.

89 |     b. As used in this subparagraph, the term "home school"  
 90 | means the school to which the student would be assigned if the  
 91 | student were not assigned to an alternative school. If an  
 92 | alternative school chooses to be graded under this section,  
 93 | student performance data for eligible students identified in  
 94 | this subparagraph shall not be included in the home school's  
 95 | grade but shall be included only in the calculation of the  
 96 | alternative school's grade. A school district that fails to  
 97 | assign statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment scores  
 98 | of each of its students to his or her home school or to the  
 99 | alternative school that receives a grade shall forfeit Florida  
 100 | School Recognition Program funds for one fiscal year. School

101 districts must require collaboration between the home school and  
102 the alternative school in order to promote student success. This  
103 collaboration must include an annual discussion between the  
104 principal of the alternative school and the principal of each  
105 student's home school concerning the most appropriate school  
106 assignment of the student.

107       2. Student performance data for students designated as  
108 hospital or homebound shall be assigned to their home school for  
109 the purposes of school grades. As used in this subparagraph, the  
110 term "home school" means the school to which a student would be  
111 assigned if the student were not assigned to a hospital or  
112 homebound program.

113       3. A high school must include a student in its graduation  
114 rate if the student transfers from the high school to a private  
115 school with which the school district has a contractual  
116 relationship.

117       **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.