

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

**BILL #:** [CS/HB 127](#)

**TITLE:** Exceptional Student Education

**SPONSOR(S):** Kendall

**COMPANION BILL:** [CS/SB 102](#) (Gaetz)

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

## Committee References

[Careers & Workforce](#)

15 Y, 0 N, As CS



[Human Services](#)

17 Y, 0 N



[PreK-12 Budget](#)

15 Y, 0 N



[Education & Employment](#)

## SUMMARY

### Effect of the Bill:

The bill seeks to enhance the employment opportunities for students with disabilities by leveraging the existing curriculum framework for students with disabilities to establish a workforce micro-credential program. The program must be developed and implemented by the Florida Department of Education (DOE) by January 31, 2026. The DOE is required to work with both the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities housed within the University of Central Florida and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the development of the micro-credentials. To evaluate the program's effectiveness, the bill requires that the DOE submit an annual report from 2026 through 2030 with participation and outcomes data.

### Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill requires the DOE to develop and implement a workforce micro-credential program for students with disabilities leveraging the existing curriculum framework for students with disabilities. While the framework exists, the DOE must develop at least one micro-credential for each course within that framework which may provide a one-time increase in workload; however, it is anticipated that the DOE's current budget is sufficient to absorb any additional workload within existing resources. Additionally, the adoption and implementation of the workforce credential program is at the discretion of school districts. Therefore, the bill will have an indeterminate fiscal impact on local expenditures.

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The bill creates a workforce micro-credential program for [students with disabilities](#) with the goal of assisting students with securing employment upon graduation. The bill requires the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to develop and implement this program by January 31, 2026. Adoption and implementation of the workforce micro-credential program is at the discretion of school districts.

The DOE must leverage the existing [curriculum framework for student with disabilities](#) and develop at least one micro-credential for each course in that curriculum framework. Each micro-credential must indicate that the recipient has demonstrated five discrete career ready practices or career and technical education standards, including an understanding of workplace safety. Additionally, the student's demonstration of the required specified career ready practices or career and technical education standards for each micro-credential must be validated by one member of instructional staff who specializes in exceptional student education (ESE) and one member of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team.

In developing the micro-credential program, the bill requires the DOE to work with the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities housed within the University of Central Florida. For those micro-credentials associated with workplace safety, the DOE must consult with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration.

**STORAGE NAME:** h0127e.PKB

**DATE:** 3/31/2025

Beginning in 2026 and continuing through 2030, the bill requires the DOE to prepare an annual report by January 31 of the following year detailing the program’s operations. At a minimum, the report must include:

- The workforce micro-credentials offered by the program;
- Data on post-graduation student employment;
- Student participation rates; and
- Any other outcome data deemed necessary by the DOE. (Section [1](#))

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2025. (Section [2](#))

## **FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**

### STATE GOVERNMENT:

The bill requires the DOE to develop and implement a workforce micro-credential program for students with disabilities using the existing curriculum framework for students with disabilities. The DOE must develop at least one micro-credential for each course within that framework which may provide a one-time workload increase; however, it is anticipated that the DOE’s current budget is sufficient to absorb this..

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

Adoption and implementation of the workforce micro-credential program is at the discretion of school districts. Therefore, the bill will have an indeterminate fiscal impact on local government expenditures.

## **RELEVANT INFORMATION**

### **SUBJECT OVERVIEW:**

#### **[Exceptional Student Education](#)**

The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)<sup>1</sup> and Florida law<sup>2</sup> mandate that all students who are between the ages of 3 to 21 and have a disability have the right to a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). School districts have the responsibility to ensure that students suspected of having a disability are subject to general education intervention procedures.<sup>3</sup> Each district school board is required to provide for an appropriate program of special instruction, facilities, and services for exceptional students. Each district program must:<sup>4</sup>

- Provide the necessary professional services for diagnosis and evaluation of exceptional students.
- Provide the special instruction, classes, and services, either within the district school system, in cooperation with other district school systems, or through contractual arrangements with approved private schools or community facilities.

Once a child meets IDEA’s eligibility criteria, FAPE is implemented through the individualized education plan (IEP), which is the plan for providing special education and related services by the local education agency. The IEP is the primary tool for outlining a student’s specialized education needs.<sup>5</sup> The IEP is developed by an IEP team composed of school personnel and the child’s parents or guardian.<sup>6</sup> A student must be properly evaluated and found eligible as an exceptional student before receiving special instruction or services as follows:<sup>7</sup>

- A school district must evaluate a student within 60 days after receiving signed parental consent.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 34 C.F.R. Part 300.

<sup>2</sup> Section [1003.5716, F.S.](#)

<sup>3</sup> Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C.

<sup>4</sup> Section [1003.57\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>5</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Developing Quality Individual Education Plans* (2015), p. 9, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7690/urlt/0070122-qualityieps.pdf> (last visited Mar. 20, 2025).

<sup>6</sup> Congressional Research Service, *The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B: Key Statutory and Regulatory Provisions* (August 20, 2024), p. 2, available at <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R41833> (last visited Mar. 20, 2025).

<sup>7</sup> Section [1003.57\(1\)\(c\), F.S.](#)

<sup>8</sup> Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(f), F.A.C.

- An IEP team, to include the parents of the affected student, must then review the evaluation and determine the educational needs of the student.<sup>9</sup>

### Career Education Services for Students with Disabilities

The DOE has adopted a curriculum framework specifically for career education services for students with disabilities through a structured sequence of courses designed to develop employability skills, technical training, and industry certification opportunities. This program is individualized for each student through that student’s IEP or other accommodations plan and allows students to gain the skills necessary for competitive employment in their desired occupation.<sup>10</sup>

The curriculum framework integrates competency-based applied learning, including instruction in:<sup>11</sup>

- Career Ready Practices;<sup>12</sup>
- Workplace safety;
- Job-seeking and employability skills;
- Self-advocacy and career planning; and
- Technical skills in industry-specific fields.

Students may earn multiple credits as they progress through career education courses, with their achievements documented through the Occupational Completion Point system. Some students may also participate in on-the-job training opportunities.<sup>13</sup>

## BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">Careers &amp; Workforce Subcommittee</a>	15 Y, 0 N, As CS	3/12/2025	Kiner	Wolff
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required the DOE to develop and implement a micro-credential program for students with disabilities by leveraging an existing curriculum framework.</li> <li>• Required that each course within the curriculum framework have at least one associated micro-credential that reflects a student’s demonstration of specified career ready practices or career and technical education standards.</li> <li>• Required the DOE to consult with both the Florida Center for Students with Unique Abilities and the Occupational Health and Safety Administration in the development of the micro-credentials.</li> <li>• Required that one member of instructional staff that specialized in ESE instruction and one member of the student’s IEP team validate micro-credential attainment.</li> </ul>			
<a href="#">Human Services Subcommittee</a>	17 Y, 0 N	3/18/2025	Mitz	Aderibigbe
<a href="#">PreK-12 Budget Subcommittee</a>	15 Y, 0 N	3/25/2025	Potvin	Bailey
<a href="#">Education &amp; Employment Committee</a>				

<sup>9</sup> Rule 6A-6.0331(6)(a), F.A.C.

<sup>10</sup> Florida Department of Education, *2024-25 CTE Curriculum Frameworks*, available at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/career-tech-edu/curriculum-frameworks/2024-25-frameworks/additional-cte-programs-courses.stml>, download “Career Education Services for Students with Disabilities (9603100) (RTF).” (last visited Mar. 20, 2025).

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> Career Ready Practices include, but are not limited to, acting as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee, applying appropriate academic and technical skills, communicating clearly, and using technology to enhance productivity. *Id.*

<sup>13</sup> *Id.*

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**THIS BILL ANALYSIS HAS BEEN UPDATED TO INCORPORATE ALL OF THE CHANGES DESCRIBED ABOVE.**  
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