

By Senator Yarborough

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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.

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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29 students who have officially withdrawn from high school before

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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 s.
40 1008.22 and in the state's education performance accountability
41 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

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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

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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.

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