

1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; creating s. 413.0114,  
3           F.S.; requiring certain persons and entities to  
4           complete a written consumer disclosure for blind-  
5           related services; providing that specified violations  
6           constitute unfair or deceptive trade practices and are  
7           subject to specified penalties and enforcement;  
8           authorizing the State Board of Education to adopt  
9           rules; amending s. 413.208, F.S.; requiring certain  
10          service providers to apply to the Division of  
11          Vocational Rehabilitation; requiring the division to  
12          establish qualifications for certain service providers  
13          and an application process and period for such service  
14          providers; authorizing the division to approve or deny  
15          such service providers; providing division and service  
16          provider requirements relating to such process;  
17          providing reporting and evaluation system requirements  
18          for the division relating to service provider  
19          effectiveness; providing requirements for rates for  
20          vocational rehabilitation services; amending s.  
21          1001.7065, F.S.; revising certain academic and  
22          research excellence standards for preeminent state  
23          research universities; requiring such universities to  
24          maintain certain enrollment ratios; providing that  
25          such universities are ineligible for specified funding

26 | under certain circumstances beginning on a specified  
27 | date; amending s. 1001.92, F.S.; revising state  
28 | university performance-based metrics for the award of  
29 | a State University System Performance-Based Incentive;  
30 | amending s. 1003.437, F.S.; requiring the State Board  
31 | of Education to establish a uniform weighted grading  
32 | system for specified courses and articulated  
33 | acceleration mechanisms; requiring district school  
34 | boards to use such system for specified purposes;  
35 | amending s. 1004.06, F.S.; revising construction for  
36 | the prohibition of certain expenditures; creating s.  
37 | 1004.072, F.S.; providing limitations for student  
38 | enrollment in a state university; amending s. 1004.39,  
39 | F.S.; revising provisions relating to the College of  
40 | Law at Florida International University and removing a  
41 | specified association from certain provisions;  
42 | amending s. 1004.40, F.S.; revising provisions  
43 | relating to the College of Law at Florida Agricultural  
44 | and Mechanical University and removing a specified  
45 | association from certain provisions; amending s.  
46 | 1005.06, F.S.; prohibiting certain postsecondary  
47 | institutions from being exempt from the purview of the  
48 | Commission for Independent Education; amending s.  
49 | 1006.71, F.S.; deleting a requirement that public  
50 | postsecondary educational institutions develop a

51 gender equity plan; amending s. 1007.25, F.S.;

52 revising the number of days public postsecondary

53 educational institutions have to submit comments for

54 certain proposed degrees; prohibiting such

55 institutions from imposing certain institution-wide

56 graduation requirements; amending s. 1007.271, F.S.;

57 revising postsecondary institution eligibility for

58 participation in dual enrollment programs; revising

59 provisions relating to the calculation of student

60 grade point averages; amending s. 1008.47, F.S.;

61 revising the period of time in which a public

62 postsecondary institution must seek and obtain

63 specified accreditation; revising the accrediting

64 agencies such institutions may seek accreditation

65 from; providing that certain provisions apply to

66 programmatic accreditors for postsecondary education

67 institutions; amending s. 1009.25, F.S.; revising the

68 requirements for a student to meet the definition of

69 "homeless children and youths"; amending s. 1009.40,

70 F.S.; requiring a person to be a United States citizen

71 or lawfully present in the United States to receive

72 state financial aid awards and tuition assistance

73 grants; amending s. 1009.895, F.S.; conforming a

74 cross-reference to changes made by the act; amending

75 s. 1009.983, F.S.; authorizing a specified designee

76 with certain credentials to serve as director of the  
 77 direct-support organization for the Florida Prepaid  
 78 College Foundation, Inc.; amending s. 1009.986, F.S.;  
 79 revising the membership of the board of directors of  
 80 Florida ABLE, Inc.; amending s. 1011.62, F.S.;  
 81 revising the academic acceleration options supplement  
 82 within the Florida Education Finance Program to  
 83 include a method for calculating additional full-time  
 84 equivalent membership based on advanced courses and  
 85 test scores; providing specified bonuses; providing an  
 86 effective date.

87  
 88 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

89  
 90 **Section 1. Section 413.0114, Florida Statutes, is created**  
 91 **to read:**

92 413.0114 Consumer disclosure for blind-related services.-

93 (1) Any person, business, nonprofit, or other entity  
 94 offering fee-based services to persons who are blind or visually  
 95 impaired must, before entering into a contract or accepting  
 96 payment, disclose in writing if equivalent or substantially  
 97 similar services may be available at no cost through the  
 98 Division of Blind Services or another public agency.

99 (2) The written disclosure must:

100 (a) Be provided in plain language and an accessible

101 format, including, but not limited to, braille, large print, or  
 102 audio upon request.

103 (b) Include contact information for the Division of Blind  
 104 Services.

105 (c) Be signed or electronically acknowledged by the  
 106 consumer or his or her representative.

107 (3) A violation of this section constitutes an unfair or  
 108 deceptive trade practice under part II of chapter 501, and is  
 109 subject to penalties and enforcement as provided therein.

110 (4) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to  
 111 implement this section.

112 **Section 2. Subsection (1) of section 413.208, Florida**  
 113 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

114 413.208 Service providers; quality assurance; fitness for  
 115 responsibilities; background screening.—

116 (1) Service providers must apply to ~~register with~~ the  
 117 division. To qualify for approval, ~~a registration,~~ The division  
 118 ~~must ensure that the~~ service provider must maintain ~~maintains~~ an  
 119 internal system of quality assurance, have ~~has~~ proven functional  
 120 systems, meet the minimum qualifications, and be ~~is~~ subject to a  
 121 due-diligence inquiry as to its fitness to undertake service  
 122 responsibilities.

123 (a) The division shall establish minimum qualifications  
 124 for service providers. The division may approve or deny any  
 125 service provider application. The division shall establish an

126 annual application period for service providers to submit  
127 applications. Beginning January 1, 2027, only service providers  
128 that meet the minimum qualifications established by the  
129 division, and that have been approved to provide employment-  
130 related services to individuals with disabilities, may  
131 participate in the vocational rehabilitation program.

132 (b) The division shall develop and make publicly available  
133 an annual report of service provider effectiveness which  
134 includes an evaluation system measuring the effectiveness of all  
135 service providers that are approved by the division to provide  
136 employment-related services to individuals with disabilities.

137 (c) In order to maintain approved status with the  
138 division, service providers must meet minimum standards of  
139 effectiveness in the provision of vocational rehabilitation  
140 services, including placement of individuals in competitive and  
141 integrated employment.

142 (d) Rates for vocational rehabilitation services must be  
143 allocable, reasonable, and necessary, as determined by the  
144 division.

145 **Section 3. Paragraph (d) of subsection (2) and paragraph**  
146 **(c) of subsection (5) of section 1001.7065, Florida Statutes,**  
147 **are amended to read:**

148 1001.7065 Preeminent state research universities program.—

149 (2) ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH EXCELLENCE STANDARDS.—The  
150 following academic and research excellence standards are

151 established for the preeminent state research universities  
152 program and shall be reported annually in the Board of Governors  
153 Accountability Plan:

154 (d) A 4-year graduation rate of 60 percent or higher for  
155 full-time, first-time-in-college students, excluding those  
156 enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs in engineering that  
157 require more than 120 semester hours.

158 (5) PREEMINENT STATE RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES PROGRAM  
159 SUPPORT.—

160 (c) The award of funds under this subsection is contingent  
161 upon funding provided by the Legislature to support the  
162 preeminent state research universities program created under  
163 this section. Funding increases appropriated beyond the amounts  
164 funded in the previous fiscal year shall be distributed to each  
165 designated preeminent state research university that meets the  
166 criteria in paragraph (a). Each designated preeminent state  
167 research university shall receive an equal amount of funding.  
168 Each preeminent state research university must maintain a fall  
169 full-time, first-time-in-college enrollment ratio comprised of  
170 at least 95 percent Florida residents based on a 3-year average.  
171 Beginning July 1, 2030, a preeminent state research university  
172 that fails to meet this requirement is ineligible for funding  
173 under this section.

174 **Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section**  
175 **1001.92, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

176 1001.92 State University System Performance-Based  
 177 Incentive.—

178 (1) A State University System Performance-Based Incentive  
 179 shall be awarded to state universities using performance-based  
 180 metrics adopted by the Board of Governors of the State  
 181 University System. Beginning with the Board of Governors'  
 182 determination of each university's performance improvement and  
 183 achievement ratings, and the related distribution of annual  
 184 fiscal year appropriation, the performance-based metrics must  
 185 include:

186 (a) The 4-year graduation rate for first-time-in-college  
 187 students, excluding those enrolled in baccalaureate degree  
 188 programs in engineering that require more than 120 semester  
 189 hours;

190  
 191 The Board of Governors may approve other metrics in a publicly  
 192 noticed meeting. The board shall adopt benchmarks to evaluate  
 193 each state university's performance on the metrics to measure  
 194 the state university's achievement of institutional excellence  
 195 or need for improvement and minimum requirements for eligibility  
 196 to receive performance funding. Benchmarks and metrics may not  
 197 be adjusted after university performance data has been received  
 198 by the Board of Governors.

199 **Section 5. Section 1003.437, Florida Statutes, is amended**  
 200 **to read:**



201 1003.437 Middle and high school grading system.—The  
 202 grading system and interpretation of letter grades used to  
 203 measure student success in grade 6 through grade 12 courses for  
 204 students in public schools shall be as follows:

205 (1) Grade "A" equals 90 percent through 100 percent, has a  
 206 grade point average value of 4, and is defined as "outstanding  
 207 progress."

208 (2) Grade "B" equals 80 percent through 89 percent, has a  
 209 grade point average value of 3, and is defined as "above average  
 210 progress."

211 (3) Grade "C" equals 70 percent through 79 percent, has a  
 212 grade point average value of 2, and is defined as "average  
 213 progress."

214 (4) Grade "D" equals 60 percent through 69 percent, has a  
 215 grade point average value of 1, and is defined as "lowest  
 216 acceptable progress."

217 (5) Grade "F" equals zero percent through 59 percent, has  
 218 a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as  
 219 "failure."

220 (6) Grade "I" equals zero percent, has a grade point  
 221 average value of zero, and is defined as "incomplete."  
 222

223 The State Board of Education must establish a statewide uniform  
 224 weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated  
 225 acceleration mechanisms identified in s. 1007.27. ~~For the~~

226 ~~purposes of class ranking,~~ District school boards shall use the  
 227 ~~may exercise a~~ weighted grading system to calculate weighted  
 228 high school grade point averages pursuant to s. 1007.271.

229 **Section 6. Subsection (3) of section 1004.06, Florida**  
 230 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

231 1004.06 Prohibited expenditures.—

232 (3) Subsection (2) does not prohibit programs, campus  
 233 activities, or functions required for compliance with general or  
 234 federal laws or regulations; ~~for obtaining or retaining~~  
 235 ~~institutional or discipline-specific accreditation with the~~  
 236 ~~approval of either the State Board of Education or the Board of~~  
 237 ~~Governors;~~ or for access programs for military veterans, Pell  
 238 Grant recipients, first generation college students,  
 239 nontraditional students, "2+2" transfer students from the  
 240 Florida College System, students from low-income families, or  
 241 students with unique abilities.

242 **Section 7. Section 1004.072, Florida Statutes, is created**  
 243 **to read:**

244 1004.072 Enrollment of noncitizen and nonresident students  
 245 at state universities.—Based on the limitation on systemwide  
 246 enrollment of nonresident degree-seeking students established by  
 247 regulation of the Board of Governors, a state university must  
 248 limit, within its enrollment of nonresident students, the number  
 249 of enrolled nonresident degree-seeking students who are  
 250 noncitizens and who are not permanent residents of the United

251 States to no more than 5 percent from any specific country.

252 **Section 8. Subsections (3), (4), and (5) of section**  
253 **1004.39, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

254 1004.39 College of law at Florida International  
255 University.—

256 (3) The college of law at Florida International  
257 University, to the extent consistent with the standards required  
258 by a ~~the American Bar Association or any other~~ nationally  
259 recognized association for the accreditation of colleges of law,  
260 shall develop a law library collection utilizing electronic  
261 formats and mediums.

262 (4) The college of law at Florida International University  
263 shall develop and institute a program that is consistent with  
264 sound legal education principles as determined by a ~~the American~~  
265 ~~Bar Association or any other~~ nationally recognized association  
266 for the accreditation of colleges of law and that, to the extent  
267 consistent with such sound legal education principles, is  
268 structured to serve the legal needs of traditionally underserved  
269 portions of the population by providing an opportunity for  
270 participation in a legal clinic program or pro bono legal  
271 service.

272 (5) The Florida International University Board of Trustees  
273 and the Board of Governors may accept grants, donations, gifts,  
274 and moneys available for this purpose, including moneys for  
275 planning and constructing the college. The Florida International

276 University Board of Trustees may procure and accept any federal  
 277 funds that are available for the planning, creation, and  
 278 establishment of the college of law. If a ~~the American Bar~~  
 279 ~~Association or any other~~ nationally recognized association for  
 280 the accreditation of colleges of law issues a third disapproval  
 281 of an application for provisional approval or for full approval  
 282 or fails to grant, within 5 years following the graduation of  
 283 the first class, a provisional approval, to the college of law  
 284 at Florida International University, the Board of Governors  
 285 shall make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature  
 286 as to whether the college of law will cease operations at the  
 287 end of the full academic year subsequent to the receipt by the  
 288 college of law of any such third disapproval, or whether the  
 289 college of law will continue operations and any conditions for  
 290 continued operations. If the college of law ceases operations  
 291 pursuant to this section, the following conditions apply:  
 292 (a) The authority for the college of law at Florida  
 293 International University and the authority of the Florida  
 294 International University Board of Trustees and the Board of  
 295 Governors provided in this section shall terminate upon the  
 296 cessation of operations of the college of law at Florida  
 297 International University. The college of law at Florida  
 298 International University shall receive no moneys allocated for  
 299 the planning, construction, or operation of the college of law  
 300 after its cessation of operations other than moneys to be

301 expended for the cessation of operations of the college of law.  
 302 Any moneys allocated to the college of law at Florida  
 303 International University not expended prior to or scheduled to  
 304 be expended after the date of the cessation of the college of  
 305 law shall be appropriated for other use by the Legislature of  
 306 the State of Florida.

307 (b) Any buildings of the college of law at Florida  
 308 International University constructed from the expenditure of  
 309 capital outlay funds appropriated by the Legislature shall be  
 310 owned by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust  
 311 Fund and managed by the Florida International University Board  
 312 of Trustees upon the cessation of the college of law.

313 **Section 9. Subsections (3), (4), and (5) of section**  
 314 **1004.40, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

315 1004.40 College of law at Florida Agricultural and  
 316 Mechanical University.—

317 (3) The college of law at Florida Agricultural and  
 318 Mechanical University, to the extent consistent with the  
 319 standards required by a ~~the American Bar Association or any~~  
 320 ~~other~~ nationally recognized association for the accreditation of  
 321 colleges of law, shall develop a law library collection  
 322 utilizing electronic formats and mediums.

323 (4) The college of law at Florida Agricultural and  
 324 Mechanical University shall develop and institute a program that  
 325 is consistent with sound legal education principles as

326 determined by a ~~the American Bar Association or any other~~  
327 nationally recognized association for the accreditation of  
328 colleges of law and that, to the extent consistent with such  
329 sound legal education principles, is structured to serve the  
330 legal needs of traditionally underserved portions of the  
331 population by providing an opportunity for participation in a  
332 legal clinic program or pro bono legal service.

333 (5) The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University  
334 Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors may accept grants,  
335 donations, gifts, and moneys available for this purpose,  
336 including moneys for planning and constructing the college. The  
337 Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Board of Trustees  
338 may procure and accept any federal funds that are available for  
339 the planning, creation, and establishment of the college of law.  
340 If a ~~the American Bar Association or any other~~ nationally  
341 recognized association for the accreditation of colleges of law  
342 issues a third disapproval of an application for provisional  
343 approval or for full approval or fails to grant, within 5 years  
344 following the graduation of the first class, a provisional  
345 approval, to the college of law at Florida Agricultural and  
346 Mechanical University, the Board of Governors shall make  
347 recommendations to the Governor and Legislature as to whether  
348 the college of law will cease operations at the end of the full  
349 academic year subsequent to the receipt by the college of law of  
350 any such third disapproval, or whether the college of law will

351 continue operations and any conditions for continued operations.  
352 If the college of law ceases operations of the college of law  
353 pursuant to this section, the following conditions apply:

354 (a) The authority for the college of law at Florida  
355 Agricultural and Mechanical University and the authority of the  
356 Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Board of Trustees  
357 and the Board of Governors provided in this section shall  
358 terminate upon the cessation of operations of the college of law  
359 at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. The college  
360 of law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University shall  
361 receive no moneys allocated for the planning, construction, or  
362 operation of the college of law after its cessation of  
363 operations other than moneys to be expended for the cessation of  
364 operations of the college of law. Any moneys allocated to the  
365 college of law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University  
366 not expended prior to or scheduled to be expended after the date  
367 of the cessation of the college of law shall be appropriated for  
368 other use by the Legislature of the State of Florida.

369 (b) Any buildings of the college of law at Florida  
370 Agricultural and Mechanical University constructed from the  
371 expenditure of capital outlay funds appropriated by the  
372 Legislature shall be owned by the Board of Trustees of the  
373 Internal Improvement Trust Fund and managed by the Florida  
374 Agricultural and Mechanical University Board of Trustees upon  
375 the cessation of the college of law.

376           **Section 10. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section**  
 377 **1005.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

378           1005.06 Institutions not under the jurisdiction or purview  
 379 of the commission.—

380           (1) Except as otherwise provided in law, the following  
 381 institutions are not under the jurisdiction or purview of the  
 382 commission and are not required to obtain licensure:

383           (b) Any college or, school, ~~or course~~ licensed or approved  
 384 for establishment and operation by another agency of the state.  
 385 Colleges or schools approved by another state agency to offer  
 386 one or more courses or programs under part I of chapter 464,  
 387 chapter 466, or chapter 475, or any other chapter of the Florida  
 388 Statutes may not qualify for an exemption from the commission's  
 389 jurisdiction under this subsection ~~requiring licensing or~~  
 390 ~~approval as defined in this chapter.~~

391           **Section 11. Subsection (1) of section 1006.71, Florida**  
 392 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

393           1006.71 Gender equity in intercollegiate athletics.—

394           (1) PENALTIES FOR FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH TITLE IX AND THE  
 395 FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ACT ~~GENDER EQUITY PLAN.~~—

396           ~~(a) Each Florida College System institution and state~~  
 397 ~~university shall develop a gender equity plan pursuant to s.~~  
 398 ~~1000.05.~~

399           ~~(b) The plan shall include consideration of equity in~~  
 400 ~~sports offerings, participation, availability of facilities,~~



401 ~~scholarship offerings, and funds allocated for administration,~~  
402 ~~recruitment, comparable coaching, publicity and promotion, and~~  
403 ~~other support costs.~~

404 ~~(c) The Commissioner of Education shall annually assess~~  
405 ~~the progress of each Florida College System institution's plan~~  
406 ~~and advise the State Board of Education and the Legislature~~  
407 ~~regarding compliance.~~

408 ~~(d) The Chancellor of the State University System shall~~  
409 ~~annually assess the progress of each state university's plan and~~  
410 ~~advise the Board of Governors and the Legislature regarding~~  
411 ~~compliance.~~

412 ~~(e) Each board of trustees of a Florida College System~~  
413 ~~institution or state university shall annually evaluate the~~  
414 ~~presidents on the extent to which the gender equity goals have~~  
415 ~~been achieved.~~

416 ~~(f) To determine the proper level of support for women's~~  
417 ~~athletic scholarships, an equity plan may determine, where~~  
418 ~~appropriate, that support for women's scholarships may be~~  
419 ~~disproportionate to the support of scholarships for men.~~

420 (a)(g)1. If a Florida College System institution is not in  
421 compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and  
422 the Florida Educational Equity Act, the State Board of Education  
423 shall:

424 1.a. Declare the Florida College System institution  
425 ineligible for competitive state grants.

426        2.b. Withhold funds sufficient to obtain compliance.

427

428        The Florida College System institution shall remain ineligible  
 429        and the funds shall not be paid until the Florida College System  
 430        institution comes into compliance or the Commissioner of  
 431        Education approves a plan for compliance.

432        (b)2. If a state university is not in compliance with  
 433        Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Florida  
 434        Educational Equity Act, the Board of Governors shall:

435        1.a. Declare the state university ineligible for  
 436        competitive state grants.

437        2.b. Withhold funds sufficient to obtain compliance.

438

439        The state university shall remain ineligible and the funds shall  
 440        not be paid until the state university comes into compliance or  
 441        the Board of Governors approves a plan for compliance.

442        **Section 12. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section**  
 443        **1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (15) is**  
 444        **added to that section, to read:**

445        1007.25 General education courses; common prerequisites;  
 446        other degree requirements.—

447        (9)

448        (b) An associate in arts specialized transfer degree must  
 449        include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and  
 450        require 60 semester hours or more of college credit. Specialized

451 transfer degrees are designed for Florida College System  
452 institution students who need supplemental lower-level  
453 coursework in preparation for transfer to another institution.  
454 The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for the  
455 review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees. The  
456 approval process must require:

457 1. A Florida College System institution to submit a notice  
458 of its intent to propose a new associate in arts specialized  
459 degree program to the Division of Florida Colleges. The notice  
460 must include the recommended credit hours, the rationale for the  
461 specialization, the demand for students entering the field, and  
462 the coursework being proposed to be included beyond the 60  
463 semester hours required for the general transfer degree, if  
464 applicable. Notices of intent may be submitted by a Florida  
465 College System institution at any time.

466 2. The Division of Florida Colleges to forward the notice  
467 of intent within 10 business days after receipt to all Florida  
468 College System institutions and to the Chancellor of the State  
469 University System, who shall forward the notice to all state  
470 universities. State universities and Florida College System  
471 institutions shall have 30 ~~60~~ days after receipt of the notice  
472 to submit comments to the proposed associate in arts specialized  
473 transfer degree.

474 3. After the submission of comments pursuant to  
475 subparagraph 2., the requesting Florida College System

476 institution to submit a proposal that, at a minimum, includes:  
477       a. Evidence that the coursework for the associate in arts  
478 specialized transfer degree includes demonstration of competency  
479 in a foreign language pursuant to s. 1007.262 and demonstration  
480 of civic literacy competency as provided in subsection (5).  
481       b. Demonstration that all required coursework will count  
482 toward the associate in arts degree or the baccalaureate degree.  
483       c. An analysis of demand and unmet need for students  
484 entering the specialized field of study at the baccalaureate  
485 level.  
486       d. Justification for the program length if it exceeds 60  
487 credit hours, including references to the common prerequisite  
488 manual or other requirements for the baccalaureate degree. This  
489 includes documentation of alignment between the exit  
490 requirements of a Florida College System institution and the  
491 admissions requirements of a baccalaureate program at a state  
492 university to which students would typically transfer.  
493       e. Articulation agreements for graduates of the associate  
494 in arts specialized transfer degree.  
495       f. Responses to the comments received under subparagraph  
496 2.  
497       (15) A Florida College System institution or state  
498 university may not impose an institution-wide graduation  
499 requirement that includes a course that is in conflict with  
500 paragraph (3)(c).

501           **Section 13. Subsections (1), (16), and (18) of section**  
 502 **1007.271, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

503           1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

504           (1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an  
 505 eligible Florida secondary student or Florida home education  
 506 student in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school  
 507 completion and a career certificate or an associate or  
 508 baccalaureate degree. Postsecondary institutions eligible to  
 509 participate in the dual enrollment program are Florida College  
 510 System institutions, state universities, and eligible not-for-  
 511 profit, independent colleges and universities pursuant to s.  
 512 1011.62(1)(i). A student who is enrolled in postsecondary  
 513 instruction that is not creditable toward a high school diploma  
 514 may not be classified as a dual enrollment student.

515           (16) Students who ~~meet the eligibility requirements of~~  
 516 ~~this section and who choose to~~ participate in dual enrollment  
 517 programs are exempt from the payment of registration, tuition,  
 518 and laboratory fees.

519           (18) School districts and postsecondary Florida College  
 520 ~~System~~ institutions must weigh dual enrollment courses pursuant  
 521 to s. 1003.437 ~~the same as advanced placement, International~~  
 522 ~~Baccalaureate, and Advanced International Certificate of~~  
 523 ~~Education~~ courses when grade point averages are calculated. High  
 524 school grade point averages must be calculated based on the high  
 525 school credit earned by the student in each course. Alternative

526 grade calculation systems, alternative grade weighting systems,  
527 and information regarding student education options that  
528 discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.

529 **Section 14. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (2) and**  
530 **subsection (3) of section 1008.47, Florida Statutes, are amended**  
531 **to read:**

532 1008.47 Postsecondary education institution  
533 accreditation.—

534 (2) ACCREDITATION.—

535 (a) ~~By September 1, 2022,~~ The Board of Governors or the  
536 State Board of Education, as applicable, shall identify and  
537 determine the accrediting agencies or associations best suited  
538 to serve as an accreditor for public postsecondary institutions.  
539 Such accrediting agencies or associations must be recognized by  
540 the database created and maintained by the United States  
541 Department of Education. Within 3 years ~~In the year~~ following  
542 reaffirmation or fifth-year review by its accrediting agencies  
543 or associations, each public postsecondary institution must seek  
544 and obtain accreditation from an accrediting agency or  
545 association identified by the Board of Governors or State Board  
546 of Education, respectively, before its next reaffirmation or  
547 fifth-year review date. The requirements in this section are  
548 limited to a one-time change in accreditation. The requirements  
549 of this subsection are not applicable to those professional,  
550 graduate, departmental, or certificate programs at public

551 postsecondary institutions that have specific accreditation  
552 requirements or best practices, including, but not limited to,  
553 law, pharmacy, engineering, or other similarly situated  
554 educational programs.

555 (b) Once a public postsecondary institution is required to  
556 seek and obtain accreditation from an agency or association  
557 identified pursuant to paragraph (a), the institution shall seek  
558 accreditation from an ~~a regional~~ accrediting agency or  
559 association and provide quarterly reports of its progress to the  
560 Board of Governors or State Board of Education, as applicable.  
561 If each ~~regional~~ accreditation agency or association identified  
562 pursuant to paragraph (a) has refused to grant candidacy status  
563 to an institution, the institution must seek and obtain  
564 accreditation from any accrediting agency or association that is  
565 different from its current accrediting agency or association and  
566 is recognized by the database created and maintained by the  
567 United States Department of Education. If a public postsecondary  
568 institution is not granted candidacy status before its next  
569 reaffirmation or fifth-year review date, the institution may  
570 remain with its current accrediting agency or association.

571 (3) PROHIBITION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of  
572 law, an accrediting agency or association, including  
573 programmatic accreditors, may not compel any public  
574 postsecondary institution to violate state law, and any adverse  
575 action upon the institution based upon the institution's

576 compliance with state law constitutes a violation of this  
577 section that may be enforced through subsection (4), except to  
578 the extent that state law is preempted by a federal law that  
579 recognizes the necessity of the accreditation standard or  
580 requirement.

581 **Section 15. Paragraph (e) of subsection (1) of section**  
582 **1009.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

583 1009.25 Fee exemptions.—

584 (1) The following students are exempt from the payment of  
585 tuition and fees, including lab fees, at a school district that  
586 provides workforce education programs, Florida College System  
587 institution, or state university:

588 (e) A student who meets the definition of homeless  
589 children and youths in s. 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless  
590 Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. s. 11434a(2), as previously determined  
591 by a public school in the state, and whose physical presence is  
592 in the state for the duration of the tuition and fee exemption.  
593 This includes a student who would otherwise meet the  
594 requirements of this paragraph, as determined by a college or  
595 university, but for his or her residence in college or  
596 university dormitory housing. The State Board of Education may  
597 adopt rules and the Board of Governors may adopt regulations  
598 regarding documentation and procedures to implement this  
599 paragraph. Such rules and regulations must consider  
600 documentation of a student's circumstance to be adequate if such



601 documentation meets the standards under 20 U.S.C. s. 1087uu-  
602 2(a). Any student who is determined to be a homeless child or  
603 youth for a preceding award year is presumed to be a homeless  
604 child or youth for each subsequent year unless the student  
605 informs the institution that the student's circumstances have  
606 changed or the institution has specific conflicting information  
607 about the student's independence, and has informed the student  
608 of this information.

609 **Section 16. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section**  
610 **1009.40, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

611 1009.40 General requirements for student eligibility for  
612 state financial aid awards and tuition assistance grants.—

613 (1) (a) The general requirements for eligibility of  
614 students for state financial aid awards and tuition assistance  
615 grants consist of the following:

616 1. United States citizenship or lawful presence in the  
617 United States.

618 ~~2.1.~~ Achievement of the academic requirements of and  
619 acceptance at a state university or Florida College System  
620 institution; a nursing diploma school approved by the Florida  
621 Board of Nursing; a Florida college or university which is  
622 accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the State  
623 Board of Education; a Florida institution the credits of which  
624 are acceptable for transfer to state universities; a career  
625 center; or a private career institution accredited by an

626 accrediting agency recognized by the State Board of Education.

627 ~~3.2-~~ Residency in this state for no less than 1 year  
628 preceding the award of aid or a tuition assistance grant for a  
629 program established pursuant to s. 1009.50, s. 1009.505, s.  
630 1009.51, s. 1009.52, s. 1009.521, s. 1009.53, s. 1009.60, s.  
631 1009.62, s. 1009.72, s. 1009.73, s. 1009.75, s. 1009.77, s.  
632 1009.89, or s. 1009.894. Residency in this state must be for  
633 purposes other than to obtain an education. Resident status for  
634 purposes of receiving state financial aid awards shall be  
635 determined in the same manner as resident status for tuition  
636 purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21.

637 ~~4.3-~~ Submission of certification attesting to the  
638 accuracy, completeness, and correctness of information provided  
639 to demonstrate a student's eligibility to receive state  
640 financial aid awards or tuition assistance grants. Falsification  
641 of such information shall result in the denial of a pending  
642 application and revocation of an award or grant currently held  
643 to the extent that no further payments shall be made.  
644 Additionally, students who knowingly make false statements in  
645 order to receive state financial aid awards or tuition  
646 assistance grants commit a misdemeanor of the second degree  
647 subject to the provisions of s. 837.06 and shall be required to  
648 return all state financial aid awards or tuition assistance  
649 grants wrongfully obtained.

650 **Section 17. Paragraph (a) of subsection (2) of section**

651 **1009.895, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

652 1009.895 Open Door Grant Program.—

653 (2) ELIGIBILITY.—In order to be eligible for the program,  
654 a student must:

655 (a) Meet the requirements under s. 1009.40(1)(a)3. and 4.  
656 ~~s. 1009.40(1)(a)2. and 3.~~;

657  
658 An institution may not impose additional criteria to determine a  
659 student's eligibility to receive a grant under this section.

660 **Section 18. Subsection (5) of section 1009.983, Florida**  
661 **Statutes, is amended to read:**

662 1009.983 Direct-support organization; authority.—

663 (5) The chair of the board or a designee who possesses  
664 knowledge, skill, and experience in the areas of accounting,  
665 risk management, or investment management shall serve as a  
666 director of the direct-support organization. The chair and the  
667 executive director of the board shall jointly name, at a  
668 minimum, four other individuals to serve as directors of the  
669 organization.

670 **Section 19. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section**  
671 **1009.986, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

672 1009.986 Florida ABLE program.—

673 (3) DIRECT-SUPPORT ORGANIZATION; FLORIDA ABLE, INC.—

674 (d)1. The board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., shall  
675 consist of:

676 a. The chair of the Florida Prepaid College Board, ~~or a~~  
677 ~~his or her~~ designee who possesses knowledge, skill, and  
678 experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or  
679 investment management.

680 b. Up to three individuals who possess knowledge, skill,  
681 and experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or  
682 investment management, one of whom may be a current member of  
683 the Florida Prepaid College Board, who shall be appointed by the  
684 Florida Prepaid College Board.

685 c. One individual who possesses knowledge, skill, and  
686 experience in the areas of accounting, risk management, or  
687 investment management, who shall be appointed by the Governor.

688 d. Two individuals who are advocates of persons with  
689 disabilities, one of whom shall be appointed by the President of  
690 the Senate and one of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of  
691 the House of Representatives. At least one of the individuals  
692 appointed under this sub-subparagraph must be an advocate of  
693 persons with developmental disabilities, as that term is defined  
694 in s. 393.063.

695 2.a. The term of the appointees under sub-subparagraph  
696 1.b. shall be up to 3 years as determined by the Florida Prepaid  
697 College Board. Such appointees may be reappointed.

698 b. The term of the appointees under sub-subparagraphs 1.c.  
699 and d. shall be 3 years. Such appointees may be reappointed.

700 3. Unless authorized by the board of directors of Florida

701 ABLE, Inc., an individual director has no authority to control  
 702 or direct the operations of Florida ABLE, Inc., or the actions  
 703 of its officers and employees.

704 4. The board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc.:

705 a. Shall meet at least quarterly and at other times upon  
 706 the call of the chair.

707 b. May use any method of telecommunications to conduct, or  
 708 establish a quorum at, its meetings or the meetings of a  
 709 subcommittee or other subdivision if the public is given proper  
 710 notice of the telecommunications meeting and provided reasonable  
 711 access to observe and, if appropriate, to participate.

712 c. Shall annually elect a board member to serve as chair.

713 5. A majority of the total current membership of the board  
 714 of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., constitutes a quorum of the  
 715 board.

716 6. Members of the board of directors of Florida ABLE,  
 717 Inc., and the board's subcommittees or other subdivisions shall  
 718 serve without compensation; however, the members may be  
 719 reimbursed for reasonable, necessary, and actual travel expenses  
 720 pursuant to s. 112.061.

721 **Section 20. Paragraphs (h) and (i) of subsection (17) of**  
 722 **section 1011.62, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as**  
 723 **paragraphs (i) and (j), respectively, and a new paragraph (h) is**  
 724 **added to that subsection, to read:**

725 1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual

726 allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each  
727 district for operation of schools is not determined in the  
728 annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing  
729 the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as  
730 follows:

731 (17) ACADEMIC ACCELERATION OPTIONS SUPPLEMENT.—The  
732 academic acceleration options supplement is created to assist  
733 school districts in providing academic acceleration options,  
734 career-themed courses, and courses that lead to digital tool  
735 certificates and industry certifications for prekindergarten  
736 through grade 12 students and shall be allocated annually in the  
737 General Appropriations Act.

738 (h) Calculation of additional full-time equivalent  
739 membership based on Florida advanced courses and tests scores of  
740 students.—A value of 0.16 full-time equivalent student  
741 membership shall be calculated for each student in a Florida  
742 advanced course who achieves a minimum score on an assessment  
743 identified by the Department of Education pursuant to s.  
744 1007.27(2) and added to the total full-time equivalent student  
745 membership in basic programs for grades 9 through 12 in the  
746 subsequent fiscal year. Each district shall allocate at least 80  
747 percent of the funds provided to the district for advanced  
748 course instruction, in accordance with this paragraph, to the  
749 high school that generates the funds. The school district shall  
750 distribute to each classroom teacher who provided advanced

751 course instruction:

752 1. A bonus in the amount of \$50 for each student taught by  
753 the Florida advanced course teacher in each Florida advanced  
754 course who achieves a minimum score on an assessment identified  
755 by the Department of Education pursuant to s. 1007.27(2).

756 2. An additional bonus of \$500 to each Florida advanced  
757 course teacher in a school designated with a grade of "D" or "F"  
758 who has at least one student who achieves a minimum score on an  
759 assessment identified by the Department of Education pursuant to  
760 s. 1007.27(2), regardless of the number of classes taught or of  
761 the number of students who achieve a minimum score on an  
762 assessment identified by the Department of Education pursuant to  
763 s. 1007.27(2).

764 **Section 21.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.