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LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate	.	House
Comm: RCS	.	
02/12/2026	.	
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The Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education (Simon) recommended the following:

**Senate Amendment (with title amendment)**

Delete lines 679 - 1132

and insert:

Section 12. Present subsection (8) of section 1007.2616, Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (9), and a new subsection (8) is added to that section, to read:

1007.2616 Computer science and technology instruction.—

(8) (a) To align educator credentials with instructional practice across grade levels, the State Board of Education shall



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11 establish by rule or maintain the following computer science  
12 subject area coverages:

- 13 1. Computer science (grades K-5);  
14 2. Computer science (grades 6-12); and  
15 3. Computer science (K-12).

16 (b) For the coverages in paragraph (a), the State Board of  
17 Education shall adopt competencies and skills and designate  
18 corresponding examinations by rule. The comprehensive computer  
19 science (K-12) coverage and its examination shall remain  
20 available unless amended by rule of the state board.

21 (c)1. The Department of Education shall present recommended  
22 competencies and skills for the grades K-5 and grades 6-12  
23 coverages to the State Board of Education for approval by  
24 September 1, 2026.

25 2. Following approval under subparagraph 1., the department  
26 shall coordinate development, piloting, and standard-setting for  
27 the examinations. The examinations for both grade-band coverages  
28 must be available for administration no later than January 1,  
29 2028.

30 Section 13. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4), paragraphs (b)  
31 and (d) of subsection (5), and paragraph (a) of subsection (9)  
32 of section 1008.25, Florida Statutes, are amended, and paragraph  
33 (d) is added to subsection (4) of that section, to read:

34 1008.25 Public school student progression; student support;  
35 coordinated screening and progress monitoring; reporting  
36 requirements.—

37 (4) ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT.—

38 (c) A student who has a substantial reading deficiency as  
39 determined in paragraph (5)(a) or a substantial mathematics



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40 deficiency as determined in paragraph (6)(a) must be covered by  
41 a federally required student plan, such as an individual  
42 education plan or an individualized progress monitoring plan, or  
43 both, as necessary. The individualized progress monitoring plan  
44 must be developed within 45 days after the results of the  
45 coordinated screening and progress monitoring system become  
46 available. The plan must, at a minimum, include:

47 1. The student's specific, identified reading or  
48 mathematics skill deficiency.

49 2. Goals and benchmarks for student growth in reading or  
50 mathematics.

51 3. A description of the specific measures that will be used  
52 to evaluate and monitor the student's reading or mathematics  
53 progress.

54 4. For a substantial reading deficiency, the specific  
55 evidence-based literacy instruction grounded in the science of  
56 reading which the student will receive.

57 5. Strategies, resources, and materials that will be  
58 provided to the student's parent to support the student to make  
59 reading or mathematics progress. For a student with a  
60 substantial reading deficiency, resources must include  
61 information about the student's eligibility for the New Worlds  
62 Reading Initiative under s. 1003.485.

63 6. Any additional services the student's teacher deems  
64 available and appropriate to accelerate the student's reading or  
65 mathematics skill development.

66 (d) If the coordinated screening and progress monitoring  
67 system under subsection (9), or any district-approved screening  
68 instrument, identifies a student as exhibiting characteristics



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69 of dyslexia or dyscalculia, the school district shall:

70 1. Ensure that the student is covered by a plan under  
71 paragraph (b) which includes evidence-based interventions that  
72 are specific to the identified characteristics of dyslexia or  
73 dyscalculia and that are aligned, as appropriate, with the  
74 interventions required under subsections (5) and (6).

75 2. Treat the screening result as reasonable suspicion that  
76 the student may be a student with a disability for purposes of  
77 s. 1003.57 and promptly seek parental consent to conduct an  
78 initial evaluation consistent with State Board of Education rule  
79 and applicable federal law.

80 3. Ensure that screening activities and intervention  
81 procedures, including interventions required under this  
82 subsection and subsections (5) and (6), occur concurrently with  
83 the evaluation process and are not used to delay or deny an  
84 appropriate evaluation.

85 (5) READING DEFICIENCY AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.—

86 (b) A Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program student  
87 who exhibits a substantial deficiency in early literacy skills  
88 based upon the results of the administration of the midyear or  
89 final coordinated screening and progress monitoring under  
90 subsection (9) shall be referred to the local school district  
91 and may be eligible to receive instruction in early literacy  
92 skills before participating in kindergarten. A Voluntary  
93 Prekindergarten Education Program student who scores below the  
94 25th ~~10th~~ percentile on the final administration of the  
95 coordinated screening and progress monitoring under subsection  
96 (9) shall be referred to the local school district and is  
97 eligible to receive early literacy skill instructional support



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98 through a summer bridge program the summer before participating  
99 in kindergarten. The summer bridge program must meet  
100 requirements adopted by the department and shall consist of 4  
101 hours of instruction per day for a minimum of 100 total hours. A  
102 student with an individual education plan who has been retained  
103 pursuant to paragraph (2) (g) and has demonstrated a substantial  
104 deficiency in early literacy skills must receive instruction in  
105 early literacy skills.

106 (d) The parent of any student who exhibits a substantial  
107 deficiency in reading, as described in paragraph (a), must be  
108 immediately notified in writing of the following:

109 1. That his or her child has been identified as having a  
110 substantial deficiency in reading, including a description and  
111 explanation, in terms understandable to the parent, of the exact  
112 nature of the student's difficulty in learning and lack of  
113 achievement in reading.

114 2. A description of the current services that are provided  
115 to the child.

116 3. A description of the proposed intensive interventions  
117 and supports that will be provided to the child that are  
118 designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency.

119 4. The student progression requirements under paragraph  
120 (2) (h) and that if the child's reading deficiency is not  
121 remediated by the end of grade 3, the child must be retained  
122 unless he or she is exempt from mandatory retention for good  
123 cause.

124 5. Strategies, including multisensory strategies and  
125 programming, through a read-at-home plan the parent can use in  
126 helping his or her child succeed in reading. The read-at-home



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127 plan must provide access to the resources identified in  
128 paragraph (e).

129         6. That the statewide, standardized English Language Arts  
130 assessment is not the sole determiner of promotion and that  
131 additional evaluations, portfolio reviews, and assessments are  
132 available to the child to assist parents and the school district  
133 in knowing when a child is reading at or above grade level and  
134 ready for grade promotion.

135         7. The district's specific criteria and policies for a  
136 portfolio as provided in subparagraph (7)(b)4. and the evidence  
137 required for a student to demonstrate mastery of Florida's  
138 academic standards for English Language Arts. A school must  
139 immediately begin collecting evidence for a portfolio when a  
140 student in grade 3 is identified as being at risk of retention  
141 or upon the request of the parent, whichever occurs first.

142         8. The district's specific criteria and policies for  
143 midyear promotion. Midyear promotion means promotion of a  
144 retained student at any time during the year of retention once  
145 the student has demonstrated ability to read at grade level.

146         9. Information about the student's eligibility for the New  
147 Worlds Reading Initiative under s. 1003.485 and the New Worlds  
148 Scholarship Accounts under s. 1002.411 and information on parent  
149 training modules and other reading engagement resources  
150 available through the initiative.

151  
152 After initial notification, the school shall apprise the parent  
153 at least monthly of the student's progress in response to the  
154 intensive interventions and supports and the student's  
155 eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative under s.



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156 1003.485. Such communications must be in writing and must  
157 explain any additional interventions or supports that will be  
158 implemented to accelerate the student's progress if the  
159 interventions and supports already being implemented have not  
160 resulted in improvement. Upon the request of the parent, the  
161 teacher or school administrator shall meet to discuss the  
162 student's progress. The parent may request more frequent  
163 notification of the student's progress, more frequent  
164 interventions or supports, and earlier implementation of the  
165 additional interventions or supports described in the initial  
166 notification.

167 (9) COORDINATED SCREENING AND PROGRESS MONITORING SYSTEM.—

168 (a) The Department of Education, in collaboration with the  
169 Office of Early Learning, shall procure and require the use of a  
170 statewide, standardized coordinated screening and progress  
171 monitoring system for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education  
172 Program and public schools. The system must:

173 1. Measure student progress in meeting the appropriate  
174 expectations in early literacy and mathematics skills and in  
175 English Language Arts and mathematics standards as required by  
176 ss. 1002.67(1)(a) and 1003.41 and identify the educational  
177 strengths and needs of students.

178 2. For students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education  
179 Program through grade 3, measure student performance in oral  
180 language development, phonological and phonemic awareness,  
181 knowledge of print and letters, decoding, fluency, vocabulary,  
182 and comprehension, as applicable by grade level, and, at a  
183 minimum, provide interval level and norm-referenced data that  
184 measures equivalent levels of growth.



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185           3. Be a valid, reliable, and developmentally appropriate  
186 computer-based direct instrument that provides screening and  
187 diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress;  
188 identifies students who have a substantial deficiency in reading  
189 or mathematics, including identifying students with  
190 characteristics of dyslexia, dyscalculia, and other learning  
191 disorders; and informs instruction. Any student identified by  
192 the system as having characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia  
193 shall undergo further screening. Any student whose performance  
194 in the system meets thresholds established by State Board of  
195 Education rule in circumstances in which the system is not  
196 capable of identifying characteristics of dyslexia or  
197 dyscalculia must undergo further screening. The further  
198 screening required under this subparagraph is used to refine  
199 instructional planning and parental communication and is not a  
200 prerequisite for the interventions or evaluation obligations  
201 described in subsection (4). The State Board of Education shall  
202 adopt rules establishing timelines, performance thresholds, and  
203 parental notification requirements for further screening under  
204 this subparagraph. Screening activities under this subsection  
205 shall occur concurrently with the interventions and evaluation  
206 obligations described in subsection (4) and may not be used to  
207 delay or deny an appropriate evaluation. Beginning with the  
208 2023-2024 school year, the coordinated screening and progress  
209 monitoring system must be computer-adaptive.

210           4. Provide data for Voluntary Prekindergarten Education  
211 Program accountability as required under s. 1002.68.

212           5. Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program  
213 providers, school districts, schools, teachers, and parents with



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214 data and resources that enhance differentiated instruction and  
215 parent communication.

216 6. Provide baseline data to the department of each  
217 student's readiness for kindergarten. The determination of  
218 kindergarten readiness must be based on the results of each  
219 student's initial progress monitoring assessment in  
220 kindergarten. The methodology for determining a student's  
221 readiness for kindergarten must be developed by the department  
222 and aligned to the methodology adopted pursuant to s. 1002.68(3)  
223 ~~s. 1002.68(4)~~.

224 7. Assess how well educational goals and curricular  
225 standards are met at the provider, school, district, and state  
226 levels and provide information to the department to aid in the  
227 development of educational programs, policies, and supports for  
228 providers, districts, and schools.

229 Section 14. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section  
230 1008.2125, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

231 1008.2125 The Council for Early Grade Success.—

232 (1) The Council for Early Grade Success, a council as  
233 defined in s. 20.03(7), is created within the Department of  
234 Education to oversee the coordinated screening and progress  
235 monitoring program under s. 1008.25(9) for students in the  
236 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program through grade 3 and,  
237 except as otherwise provided in this section, shall operate  
238 consistent with s. 20.052.

239 (a) The council shall be responsible for reviewing the  
240 implementation of, training for, and outcomes from the  
241 coordinated screening and progress monitoring program to provide  
242 recommendations to the department that support grade 3 students



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243 reading at or above grade level. The council, at a minimum,  
244 shall:

245 1. Provide recommendations on the implementation of the  
246 coordinated screening and progress monitoring program, including  
247 reviewing any procurement solicitation documents and criteria  
248 before being published.

249 2. Develop training plans and timelines for such training.

250 3. Identify appropriate personnel, processes, and  
251 procedures required for the administration of the coordinated  
252 screening and progress monitoring program.

253 4. Provide input on the methodology for calculating a  
254 provider's or school's performance metric and designations under  
255 s. 1002.68(3) ~~s. 1002.68(4)~~.

256 5. Work with the department to review the methodology for  
257 determining a child's kindergarten readiness.

258 6. Review data on age-appropriate learning gains by grade  
259 level that a student would need to attain in order to  
260 demonstrate proficiency in reading by grade 3.

261 7. Continually review anonymized data from the results of  
262 the coordinated screening and progress monitoring program for  
263 students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program  
264 through grade 3 to help inform recommendations to the department  
265 that support practices that will enable grade 3 students to read  
266 at or above grade level.

267 Section 15. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section  
268 1011.69, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

269 1011.69 Equity in School-Level Funding Act.—

270 (4) After providing Title I, Part A, Basic funds to schools  
271 above the 75 percent poverty threshold, which may include high



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272 schools above the 50 percent threshold as permitted by federal  
273 law, school districts shall provide any remaining Title I, Part  
274 A, Basic funds directly to all eligible schools as provided in  
275 this subsection. For purposes of this subsection, an eligible  
276 school is a school that is eligible to receive Title I funds,  
277 including a charter school. The threshold for identifying  
278 eligible schools may not exceed the threshold established by a  
279 school district for the 2016-2017 school year or the statewide  
280 percentage of economically disadvantaged students, as determined  
281 annually.

282 (a) Prior to the allocation of Title I funds to eligible  
283 schools, a school district may withhold funds only as follows:

284 1. One percent for parent involvement, in addition to the  
285 one percent the district must reserve under federal law for  
286 allocations to eligible schools for parent involvement;

287 2. A necessary and reasonable amount for administration  
288 which includes the district's indirect cost rate, not to exceed  
289 a total of 10 percent;

290 3. A reasonable and necessary amount to provide:

291 a. Homeless programs;

292 b. Delinquent and neglected programs;

293 c. Prekindergarten programs and activities;

294 d. Private school equitable services; and

295 e. Transportation for foster care children to their school  
296 of origin or choice programs; and

297 4. A necessary and reasonable amount, not to exceed 1  
298 percent, for eligible schools to provide educational services in  
299 accordance with the approved Title I plan. Such educational  
300 services may include the provision of STEM curricula,



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301 instructional materials, and related learning technologies that  
302 support academic achievement in science, technology,  
303 engineering, and mathematics in Title I schools, including, but  
304 not limited to, technologies related to drones, coding,  
305 animation, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data science,  
306 the engineering design process, mobile development, and  
307 robotics. Funds may be reserved under this subparagraph only to  
308 the extent that all required reservations under federal law have  
309 been met and that such reservation does not reduce school-level  
310 allocations below the levels required under federal law.

311 Section 16. Section 1011.804, Florida Statutes, is amended  
312 to read:

313 1011.804 GATE Startup Grant Program.—

314 (1) The GATE Startup Grant Program is established within  
315 the Department of Education to fund and support the startup and  
316 implementation of the GATE Program, subject to legislative  
317 appropriation. The purpose of the grant program is to increase  
318 access to programs that support adult learners earning a high  
319 school credential, either a high school diploma or its  
320 equivalent, and a workforce credential aligned to statewide or  
321 regional demand. The department shall administer the grants,  
322 determine eligibility, and distribute grant awards.

323 (2) As used in this section, the term "institution" means a  
324 school district career center established under s. 1001.44, a  
325 charter technical career center established under s. 1002.34, or  
326 a Florida College System institution identified in s. 1000.21  
327 which offers the GATE Program pursuant to s. 1004.933.

328 (3) The department may solicit proposals from institutions  
329 ~~without programs that meet the requirements of s. 1004.933.~~ Such



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330 institutions must be located in or serve a rural area of  
331 opportunity , as defined in s. 288.0656(2) (d) ~~as designated by~~  
332 ~~the Governor.~~ For purposes of this subsection, an institution  
333 serves a rural area of opportunity if the institution's service  
334 area includes one or more counties or municipalities included  
335 within a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.  
336 288.0656(2) (d). An institution's principal place of business,  
337 main campus, or administrative offices are not required to be  
338 located within a rural area of opportunity in order to satisfy  
339 the service requirement.

340 (a) The department may award a grant to an institution  
341 that, at the time of application, does not offer programs that  
342 meet the requirements of s. 1004.933 to support startup and  
343 implementation activities.

344 (b) The department may award a grant to an institution  
345 that, at the time of application, offers programs that meet the  
346 requirements of s. 1004.933 only for costs authorized in  
347 subsection (6), excluding new construction, structural  
348 expansion, and major renovation.

349 (4) The department shall prioritize grant proposals that  
350 combine adult basic education, adult secondary education, and  
351 career education programs at one location or allow students to  
352 complete programs through distance learning. An applicant may  
353 not receive more than 10 percent of the total amount  
354 appropriated for the program.

355 (5) The department shall make the grant application  
356 available to potential applicants no later than August 15 of  
357 each year in which funds are appropriated for the program, 2024.

358 A grant proposal must include:



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- 359 (a) The institution or institutions that will provide the  
360 adult basic education, adult secondary education, and career  
361 education programs;
- 362 (b) The proposed adult basic education and adult secondary  
363 education program or programs the institution or institutions  
364 will provide, and the projected enrollment for such program or  
365 programs;
- 366 (c) The proposed career education program or programs the  
367 institution or institutions will provide and the projected  
368 enrollment for such program or programs;
- 369 (d) The credential or credentials associated with the  
370 career education program or programs. Such credential or  
371 credentials must be included on the Master Credentials List  
372 under s. 445.004(4);
- 373 (e) The cost of instruction for all programs contemplated  
374 in the proposal, including costs for tuition, fees,  
375 registration, and laboratory, examination, and instructional  
376 materials costs;
- 377 (f) Outreach strategies, including collaboration with local  
378 workforce development boards; and
- 379 (g) A plan or timeline for implementing s. 1004.933 and  
380 enrolling students.
- 381 (h) Documentation identifying the counties or  
382 municipalities within the institution's service area which are  
383 included in a rural area of opportunity as defined in s.  
384 288.0656(2)(d).
- 385 (6) Grant funds may be used for planning activities and  
386 other expenses associated with the creation and implementation  
387 of the GATE Program, such as expenses related to program



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388 instruction, instructional equipment, supplies, instructional  
389 personnel, and student services, minor facility modifications  
390 necessary to install or operate instructional equipment used for  
391 the GATE Program, and marketing and outreach activities to  
392 recruit and enroll eligible students. Marketing and outreach  
393 activities and minor facility modifications authorized under  
394 this subsection are allowable direct costs of program  
395 implementation. Grant funds may not be used for indirect costs.  
396 Grant recipients must submit an annual report in a format  
397 prescribed by the department. The department shall consolidate  
398 such annual reports and include the reports in the report  
399 required by s. 1004.933(6).

400 (7) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to  
401 administer this section.

402

403 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

404 And the title is amended as follows:

405 Delete lines 63 - 95

406 and insert:

407 coursework simultaneously; amending s. 1007.2616,  
408 F.S.; requiring the State Board of Education to  
409 establish by rule or maintain specified computer  
410 science subject area coverages; requiring the state  
411 board to adopt competencies and skills and designate  
412 corresponding examinations; requiring the Department  
413 of Education to submit recommended competencies and  
414 skills for certain coverages to the state board for  
415 approval by a specified date; requiring the department  
416 to coordinate development and availability of certain



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417 examinations by a specified date; amending s. 1008.25,  
418 F.S.; requiring specified resources for certain  
419 students to include information about the student's  
420 eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative;  
421 requiring school districts to take specified actions  
422 when screening identifies a student as exhibiting  
423 characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia; revising  
424 the score threshold for Voluntary Prekindergarten  
425 Education Program eligibility for specified  
426 instructional support; requiring monthly written  
427 communications to include specified eligibility  
428 information; providing circumstances under which a  
429 student must undergo further screening for dyslexia or  
430 dyscalculia; providing that such screening has a  
431 specified purpose; requiring the State Board of  
432 Education to adopt rules; conforming cross-references;  
433 amending s. 1008.2125, F.S.; conforming a cross-  
434 reference; amending s. 1011.69, F.S.; revising a  
435 category of funding which a school district is  
436 authorized to withhold; amending s. 1011.804, F.S.;  
437 revising the GATE Startup Grant Program; specifying  
438 what constitutes service to a rural area of  
439 opportunity for purposes of specified provisions;  
440 revising eligibility and award authority for grants;  
441 revising application availability and application  
442 requirements; revising allowable uses of grant funds  
443 to include specified implementation-related costs;  
444 requiring the