

CHAPTER 2026-59

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for House Bill No. 1279

An act relating to education; creating s. 413.0114, F.S.; requiring entities that offer fee-based services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired to disclose in writing whether the services may be obtained elsewhere at no cost; specifying requirements for the disclosure; providing penalties for violations; authorizing the State Board of Education to adopt rules; amending s. 413.208, F.S.; requiring certain service providers to apply to, rather than register with, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation; requiring the division to establish minimum qualifications for service providers; requiring the division to establish an annual application period; authorizing the division to approve or deny any service provider application; providing that, as of a specified date, only certain service providers may participate in the vocational rehabilitation program; requiring the division to develop and make publicly available a certain annual report; requiring service providers to meet certain standards to maintain approved status; requiring that the rates for vocational rehabilitation services meet certain criteria; amending s. 491.005, F.S.; revising the date for a requirement to obtain a license as a marriage and family therapist; amending s. 1001.42, F.S.; revising public information requirements relating to virtual instruction options; removing certain schools from specified contract restrictions; revising the conditions considered an educational emergency; revising virtual instruction requirements; amending s. 1001.92, F.S.; revising certain performance-based metrics; amending s. 1002.20, F.S.; authorizing a student to carry a United States Food and Drug Administration-approved epinephrine delivery device; making conforming changes; amending s. 1002.42, F.S.; authorizing private schools to purchase a supply of Food and Drug Administration-approved epinephrine delivery devices, rather than epinephrine auto-injectors; making conforming changes; amending s. 1002.421, F.S.; revising circumstances under which regular and direct contact with teachers is satisfied for certain scholarship students; amending s. 1002.68, F.S.; deleting obsolete provisions relating to calculation of kindergarten readiness rates; revising cross-references and program accountability provisions for the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program; amending s. 1002.945, F.S.; requiring the Department of Children and Families to determine whether a child care provider is the primary cause of certain class I violations; deleting an exception; amending s. 1003.4203, F.S.; requiring that the Department of Education make CAPE Digital Tool certificates available to middle grades students; limiting the number of such certificates a middle grades student may earn each school year; amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; providing that completion of 2 years of marching band satisfies specified credit requirements; authorizing a dance techniques course to satisfy specified graduation credit requirements; revising requirements for mathematics pathways established by a Department

of Education workgroup; requiring the department to develop identified mathematics pathways and applied algebra courses by specified dates; requiring the department to collaborate with the Board of Governors of the State University System to ensure the courses are accepted as mathematics credits for state university admissions; amending s. 1003.437, F.S.; requiring the State Board of Education to establish a uniform weighted grading system for specified courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms; requiring district school boards to use the system for a specified purpose; amending s. 1003.5716, F.S.; requiring school districts to provide notice and a make-up plan when a related service in a student's individual education program is not provided as scheduled; authorizing parents or guardians to access certain service logs and progress notes within a specified timeframe; amending s. 1004.343, F.S.; revising the date the University of South Florida Trafficking in Persons - Risk to Resilience Lab must begin submitting a specified report relating to human trafficking; requiring consultation with the Department of Law Enforcement in the submission of such report; extending the date of the scheduled repeal of the Statewide Data Repository for Anonymous Human Trafficking Data; amending s. 1004.39, F.S.; revising provisions relating to the College of Law at Florida International University; deleting a specified association from certain provisions; amending s. 1004.40, F.S.; revising provisions relating to the College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University; deleting a specified association from certain provisions; amending s. 1005.06, F.S.; revising the list of institutions that are not under the jurisdiction of the Commission for Independent Education; amending s. 1006.12, F.S.; revising requirements for safe-school officers; authorizing charter schools to implement safe-school officer options notwithstanding certain local ordinances or development orders; amending s. 1007.25, F.S.; revising the timeframe for Florida College System institutions and state universities to submit comments in response to a specified notice of intent; amending s. 1007.271, F.S.; revising the list of postsecondary institutions that are eligible to participate in a dual enrollment program; amending s. 1008.2125, F.S.; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 1008.25, F.S.; requiring specified parent resources to include information about eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative; revising the score threshold for Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program summer bridge eligibility; requiring certain monthly written communications to include specified eligibility information; conforming a cross-reference; amending s. 1008.47, F.S.; revising the timeframe for a public postsecondary institution to seek and obtain accreditation; amending s. 1009.21, F.S.; providing that a person may not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes due to his or her parent serving outside this state in certain capacities; amending s. 1009.25, F.S.; revising the requirements for a student to meet the definition of "homeless children and youths"; providing that certain distance learning students are ineligible for specified fee exemptions; amending s. 1009.893, F.S.; authorizing a student to defer an award under the Benacquisto Scholarship Program; amending s. 1009.983, F.S.; authorizing a specified designee with certain credentials to serve as director of the direct-support

organization for the Florida Prepaid College Foundation, Inc.; amending s. 1009.986, F.S.; revising the membership of the board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc.; amending s. 1011.62, F.S.; revising the academic acceleration options supplement in the Florida Education Finance Program to include a method for calculating additional full-time equivalent membership based on a specified course and test score; requiring school districts to allocate at least a specified percentage of certain funds for a certain purpose; providing specified bonuses; amending s. 1011.69, F.S.; revising a category of Title I funds that a school district may withhold; authorizing a school district to reserve funds for certain STEM-related educational services; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 413.0114, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

413.0114 Consumer disclosure for blind-related services.—

(1) An individual, a business, a nonprofit, or other entity offering fee-based services to individuals who are blind or visually impaired shall, before entering into a contract or accepting payment, disclose in writing whether equivalent or substantially similar services may be available at no cost through the Division of Blind Services or another public agency.

(2) The written disclosure must:

(a) Be provided in plain language and, upon request, in an accessible format, such as braille, large print, or audio.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(1) Service providers must apply to register with the division. To qualify for approval, a registration, the division must ensure that the service provider must maintain maintains an internal system of quality assurance, have has proven functional systems, meet the minimum qualifications, and

be is subject to a due-diligence inquiry as to its fitness to undertake service responsibilities.

(a) The division shall establish minimum qualifications for service providers. The division shall establish an annual application period for service providers to submit applications. The division may approve or deny any service provider application. Beginning January 1, 2027, only service providers that meet the minimum qualifications established by the division and that have been approved to provide employment-related services to individuals with disabilities may participate in the vocational rehabilitation program.

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

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

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

Section 3. Paragraph (c) of subsection (3) of section 491.005, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

491.005 Licensure by examination.—

(3) MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY.—Upon verification of documentation and payment of a fee not to exceed \$200, as set by board rule, the department shall issue a license as a marriage and family therapist to an applicant whom the board certifies has met all of the following criteria:

(c)1. Attained one of the following:

a. A minimum of a master's degree in marriage and family therapy from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education.

b. A minimum of a master's degree with a major emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field from a university program accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs and graduate courses approved by the board.

c. A minimum of a master's degree with an emphasis in marriage and family therapy or a closely related field, with a degree conferred before September 1, ~~2032~~ 2027, from an institutionally accredited college or university and graduate courses approved by the board.

2. If the course title that appears on the applicant's transcript does not clearly identify the content of the coursework, the applicant provided additional documentation, including, but not limited to, a syllabus or catalog description published for the course. The required master's degree must have been received in an institution of higher education that, at the time the applicant graduated, was fully accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization or was a member in good standing with Universities Canada, or an institution of higher education located outside the United States and Canada which, at the time the applicant was enrolled and at the time the applicant graduated, maintained a standard of training substantially equivalent to the standards of training of those institutions in the United States which are accredited by an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or its successor organization. Such foreign education and training must have been received in an institution or program of higher education officially recognized by the government of the country in which it is located as an institution or program to train students to practice as professional marriage and family therapists or psychotherapists. The applicant has the burden of establishing that the requirements of this provision have been met, and the board shall require documentation, such as an evaluation by a foreign equivalency determination service, as evidence that the applicant's graduate degree program and education were equivalent to an accredited program in this country. An applicant with a master's degree from a program that did not emphasize marriage and family therapy may complete the coursework requirement in a training institution fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education recognized by the United States Department of Education.

For the purposes of dual licensure, the department shall license as a marriage and family therapist any person who meets the requirements of s. 491.0057. Fees for dual licensure may not exceed those stated in this subsection.

Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (17) and subsections (21) and (23) of section 1001.42, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below:

(17) PUBLIC INFORMATION AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM.—

(a) Adopt procedures whereby the general public can be adequately informed of the educational programs, needs, and objectives of public education within the district, including educational opportunities available through approved virtual instruction program providers under s. 1002.45 or the school district's virtual instruction program the Florida Virtual School.

(21) EDUCATIONAL EMERGENCY.—To free schools ~~that have with~~ a school grade of “D” or “F” or are persistently low-performing schools as described in s. 1002.333 from contract restrictions that limit the ~~school district’s school’s~~ ability to implement programs and strategies needed to improve student performance, a district school board may adopt salary incentives or other strategies that address the selection, placement, compensation, and expectations of instructional personnel and provide principals with the autonomy described in s. 1012.28(8). For purposes of this subsection, an educational emergency exists in a school district if one or more schools in the district have a school grade of “D” or “F” or are persistently low-performing schools as described in s. 1002.333. “F.” Notwithstanding chapter 447, relating to collective bargaining, a district school board may:

(a) Provide salary incentives that differentiate based on a teacher’s certification, subject area taught, or grade level taught. Such incentives are not subject to collective bargaining requirements.

(b) Notwithstanding s. 1012.2315, relating to assignment of teachers, adopt strategies to assign high-quality teachers more equitably across schools in the district to low-performing schools as a management right. Such strategies are not subject to collective bargaining requirements.

(23) VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION.—Provide students with access to courses, based on the students’ choice, available through the school district’s a virtual instruction program option or an approved virtual instruction program provider under s. 1002.45, ~~including the Florida Virtual School and other approved providers,~~ and award credit for successful completion of such courses.

Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 1001.92, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1001.92 State University System Performance-Based Incentive.—

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

(a) The 4-year graduation rate and adjusted cohort graduation rate for engineering programs for first-time-in-college students;

(b) Beginning in fiscal year 2022-2023, the 3-year graduation rate for associate in arts transfer students;

(c) Retention rates;

- (d) Postgraduation education rates;
- (e) Degree production;
- (f) Affordability;
- (g) Postgraduation employment and salaries, including wage thresholds that reflect the added value of a baccalaureate degree;
- (h) Access rate, based on the percentage of first-year undergraduate students enrolled during the fall term who received a Pell Grant during the fall term; and
- (i) Beginning in fiscal year 2021-2022, the 6-year graduation rate for students who are awarded a Pell Grant in their first year.

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

Section 6. Paragraph (i) of subsection (3) of section 1002.20, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.20 K-12 student and parent rights.—Parents of public school students must receive accurate and timely information regarding their child's academic progress and must be informed of ways they can help their child to succeed in school. K-12 students and their parents are afforded numerous statutory rights including, but not limited to, the following:

(3) HEALTH ISSUES.—

(i) *Epinephrine use and supply.*—

1. A student who has experienced or is at risk for life-threatening allergic reactions may carry a United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved an epinephrine delivery device auto-injector and self-administer epinephrine by such FDA-approved delivery device auto-injector while in school, participating in school-sponsored activities, or in transit to or from school or school-sponsored activities if the school has been provided with parental and physician authorization. The State Board of Education, in cooperation with the Department of Health, shall adopt rules for such use of FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices which must auto-injectors that ~~shall~~ include provisions to protect the safety of all students from the misuse or abuse of such delivery devices auto-injectors. A school district, county health department, public-private partner, and their employees and volunteers shall be indemnified by the parent of a student authorized to carry an FDA-approved epinephrine delivery device auto-injector for any

and all liability with respect to the student's use of an FDA-approved epinephrine delivery device ~~auto-injector~~ pursuant to this paragraph.

2. A public school may purchase a supply of FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ from a wholesale distributor as defined in s. 499.003 or may enter into an arrangement with a wholesale distributor or manufacturer as defined in s. 499.003 for the FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ at fair-market, free, or reduced prices for use in the event a student has an anaphylactic reaction. The FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ must be maintained in a secure location on the public school's premises. The participating school district shall adopt a protocol developed by a licensed physician for the administration by school personnel who are trained to recognize an anaphylactic reaction and to administer an epinephrine by an FDA-approved delivery device ~~auto-injection~~. The supply of FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ may be provided to and used by a student authorized to self-administer epinephrine by FDA-approved delivery device ~~auto-injector~~ under subparagraph 1. or trained school personnel.

3. The school district and its employees, agents, and the physician who provides the standing protocol for school FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ are not liable for any injury arising from the use of such an epinephrine delivery device ~~auto-injector~~ administered by trained school personnel who follow the adopted protocol and whose professional opinion is that the student is having an anaphylactic reaction:

- a. Unless the trained school personnel's action is willful and wanton;
- b. Notwithstanding that the parents or guardians of the student to whom the epinephrine is administered have not been provided notice or have not signed a statement acknowledging that the school district is not liable; and
- c. Regardless of whether authorization has been given by the student's parents or guardians or by the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse.

Section 7. Subsection (17) of section 1002.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.42 Private schools.—

(17) EPINEPHRINE SUPPLY.—

(a) A private school may purchase a supply of United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ from a wholesale distributor as defined in s. 499.003 or may enter into an arrangement with a wholesale distributor or manufacturer as defined in s. 499.003 for the FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ at fair-market, free, or reduced prices for use in the event a student has an anaphylactic reaction. The FDA-approved epinephrine

delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ must be maintained in a secure location on the private school's premises. The participating private school shall adopt a protocol developed by a licensed physician for the administration by private school personnel who are trained to recognize an anaphylactic reaction and to administer epinephrine by an FDA-approved epinephrine delivery device ~~auto-injection~~. The supply of FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ may be provided to and used by a student authorized to self-administer epinephrine by an FDA-approved delivery device ~~auto-injector~~ under s. 1002.20(3)(i) or trained school personnel.

(b) The private school and its employees, agents, and the physician who provides the standing protocol for school FDA-approved epinephrine delivery devices ~~auto-injectors~~ are not liable for any injury arising from the use of an FDA-approved epinephrine delivery device ~~auto-injector~~ administered by trained school personnel who follow the adopted protocol and whose professional opinion is that the student is having an anaphylactic reaction:

1. Unless the trained school personnel's action is willful and wanton;
2. Notwithstanding that the parents or guardians of the student to whom the epinephrine is administered have not been provided notice or have not signed a statement acknowledging that the school district is not liable; and
3. Regardless of whether authorization has been given by the student's parents or guardians or by the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse.

Section 8. Paragraph (i) of subsection (1) of section 1002.421, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.421 State school choice scholarship program accountability and oversight.—

(1) PRIVATE SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY AND OBLIGATIONS.—A private school participating in an educational scholarship program established pursuant to this chapter must be a private school as defined in s. 1002.01 in this state, be registered, and be in compliance with all requirements of this section in addition to private school requirements outlined in s. 1002.42, specific requirements identified within respective scholarship program laws, and other provisions of Florida law that apply to private schools, and must:

(i) Maintain a physical location in the state at which each student has regular and direct contact with teachers. Regular and direct contact with teachers may be satisfied for students enrolled in a personalized education program or for students eligible for a scholarship under s. 1002.394(3)(b) if students have regular and direct contact with teachers at the physical location at least 2 school days per week and the student learning plan addresses the remaining instructional time.

The department shall suspend the payment of funds to a private school that knowingly fails to comply with this subsection, and shall prohibit the school from enrolling new scholarship students, for 1 fiscal year and until the school complies. If a private school fails to meet the requirements of this subsection or has consecutive years of material exceptions listed in the report required under paragraph (q), the commissioner may determine that the private school is ineligible to participate in a scholarship program.

Section 9. Subsection (3), paragraph (e) of subsection (4), paragraph (a) of subsection (5), and paragraph (e) of subsection (6) of section 1002.68, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1002.68 Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program accountability.

~~(3)(a) For the 2020-2021 program year, the department shall calculate a kindergarten readiness rate for each private prekindergarten provider and public school participating in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program based upon learning gains and the percentage of students assessed as ready for kindergarten. The department shall require that each school district administer the statewide kindergarten screening in use before the 2021-2022 school year to each kindergarten student in the school district within the first 30 school days of the 2021-2022 school year. Private schools may administer the statewide kindergarten screening to each kindergarten student in a private school who was enrolled in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program. Learning gains shall be determined using a value added measure based on growth demonstrated by the results of the preassessment and postassessment in use before the 2021-2022 program year. However, a provider may not be newly placed on probationary status under this paragraph. A provider currently on probationary status may only be removed from such status if the provider earns the minimum rate, determined pursuant to subsection (5). The methodology for calculating a provider's readiness rate may not include students who are not administered the statewide kindergarten screening.~~

~~(b) For the 2021-2022 program year, kindergarten screening results may not be used in the calculation of readiness rates. Any private prekindergarten provider or public school participating in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program which fails to meet the minimum kindergarten readiness rate for the 2021-2022 program year is subject to the probation requirements of subsection (5).~~

(3)(4)

(e) Subject to an appropriation, the department shall provide for a differential payment to a private prekindergarten provider and public school based on the provider's designation. The maximum differential payment may not exceed a total of 15 percent of the base student allocation per full-time equivalent student under s. 1002.71 attending in the consecutive program year for that program. A private prekindergarten provider or public school may not receive a differential payment if it receives a designation of

~~“proficient” or lower. Before the adoption of the methodology, the department shall confer with the Council for Early Grade Success under s. 1008.2125 before receiving approval from the State Board of Education for the final recommendations on the designation system and differential payments.~~

~~(4)(a)(5)(a)~~ If a public school’s or private prekindergarten provider’s program assessment composite score for its prekindergarten classrooms fails to meet the minimum program assessment composite score for contracting adopted in rule by the department, the private prekindergarten provider or public school may not participate in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program beginning in the consecutive program year and thereafter until the public school or private prekindergarten provider meets the minimum composite score for contracting. A public school or private prekindergarten provider may request one program assessment per program year in order to requalify for participation in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, provided that the public school or private prekindergarten provider is not excluded from participation under ss. 1002.55(6), 1002.61(10)(b), 1002.63(9)(b), or paragraph ~~(b) (5)(b) of this section~~. If a public school or private prekindergarten provider would like an additional program assessment completed within the same program year, the public school or private prekindergarten provider shall be responsible for the cost of the program assessment.

~~(5)(6)~~

(e) A private prekindergarten provider or public school granted a good cause exemption shall continue to implement its improvement plan and continue the corrective actions required under paragraph ~~(4)(b) (5)(b)~~ until the provider or school meets the minimum performance metric.

Section 10. Paragraphs (a) and (d) of subsection (4) of section 1002.945, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1002.945 Gold Seal Quality Care Program.—

(4) In order to obtain and maintain a designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider, a child care facility, large family child care home, or family day care home must meet the following additional criteria:

(a) The child care provider must not have had any class I violations, as defined by rule of the Department of Children and Families, for which the Department of Children and Families determines that the child care provider is the primary cause of the violation within the 2 years preceding its application for designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider. Commission of a class I violation for which the Department of Children and Families determines that the child care provider is the primary cause of the violation shall be grounds for termination of the designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider until the provider has no class I violations for a period of 2 years.

~~(d) Notwithstanding paragraph (a), if the Department of Education determines through a formal process that a provider has been in business for at least 5 years and has no other class I violations recorded, the department may recommend to the state board that the provider maintain its Gold Seal Quality Care status. The state board's determination regarding such provider's status is final.~~

Section 11. Subsection (2) of section 1003.4203, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1003.4203 Digital materials, CAPE Digital Tool certificates, CAPE industry certifications, and technical assistance.—

(2) CAPE DIGITAL TOOL CERTIFICATES.—The department shall identify, in the CAPE Industry Certification Funding List under ss. 1003.492 and 1008.44, CAPE Digital Tool certificates that indicate a student's digital skills. The department shall notify each school district when the certificates are available. The certificates shall be made available to all public elementary and middle grades students. Targeted skills to be mastered for the certificate include digital skills that are necessary to the student's academic work and skills the student may need in future employment. CAPE Digital Tool certificates earned by students are eligible for additional funding pursuant to s. 1011.62(17). Middle grade students may not earn more than two CAPE Digital Tools certificates per school year.

Section 12. Paragraph (f) of subsection (3) and subsection (10) of section 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school diploma.—

(3) STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; COURSE AND ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS.—

(f) *One credit in physical education.*—Physical education must include the integration of health. Participation in an interscholastic sport at the junior varsity or varsity level for two full seasons shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education. A district school board may not require that the one credit in physical education be taken during the 9th grade year. Completion of 2 years of marching band shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and ~~or~~ the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an individual education plan (IEP) or 504 plan. Completion of 1.0 credit with a grade of "C" or better in a dance techniques course, a significant component of which is activities designed to maintain or improve health-related fitness and lifelong fitness, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education or the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an IEP or 504 plan. Completion of one semester with a grade of "C" or better in a marching band class, in a physical

activity class that requires participation in marching band activities as an extracurricular activity, or in a dance class shall satisfy one-half credit in physical education or one-half credit in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an IEP or 504 plan. Completion of 2 years in a Reserve Officer Training Corps (R.O.T.C.) class, a significant component of which is drills, shall satisfy the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing arts. This credit may not be used to satisfy the personal fitness requirement or the requirement for adaptive physical education under an IEP or 504 plan.

(10) CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CREDIT.—The Department of Education shall convene a workgroup, ~~no later than December 1, 2024,~~ to:

(a) Identify best practices in career and technical education pathways from middle school to high school to aid middle school students in career planning and facilitate their transition to high school programs. The career pathway must be linked to postsecondary programs.

(b) Establish three mathematics pathways for students enrolled in secondary grades by aligning mathematics courses to programs, postsecondary education, and careers. The workgroup shall collaborate to identify the three mathematics pathways and the mathematics course sequence within each pathway that which align to the mathematics skills needed for success in the corresponding academic programs, postsecondary education, and careers.

1. The mathematics pathways must be identified no later than September 1, 2026. The Department of Education shall submit identified mathematics pathways to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

2. The mathematics pathways must incorporate an applied algebra course that aligns with established career and technical education career clusters.

3. The Department of Education shall develop applied algebra courses aligned with the identified mathematics pathways and the established career and technical education career clusters by January 1, 2027, with availability for district implementation in the 2029-2030 school year.

a. The applied algebra for engineering and technology course must incorporate content and contexts that apply to the following career clusters: energy, engineering and technology education, and information technology.

b. The applied algebra for health science course must incorporate content and contexts that apply to the health science career cluster.

c. The applied algebra for business and finance course must incorporate content and contexts that apply to the following career clusters: business

management and administration; finance; government and public administration; and marketing, sales, and service.

d. The applied algebra for industrial pathways course must incorporate content and contexts that apply to the following career clusters: architecture and construction; manufacturing; and transportation, distribution, and logistics.

e. The applied algebra for agriculture and natural resources course must incorporate content and contexts that apply to the agriculture, food, and natural resources career cluster.

4. Each mathematics pathway must offer flexibility and the ability to move between pathways if necessary.

5. Mathematics pathways must create clear links between secondary mathematics and postsecondary mathematics pathways, as established in State Board of Education rule, and support student progression into postsecondary academic programs, state college career and technical education programs, career center programs, industry certification programs, and high-skill, high-wage occupations.

6. Each applied algebra course must prepare students to take the statewide, standardized Algebra I end-of-course assessment required under s. 1008.22.

7. Each applied algebra course must meet all requirements for a mathematics credit required for high school graduation under s. 1003.4282(3)(b) or for middle grades promotion pursuant to s. 1003.4156(1)(b).

8. The Department of Education shall collaborate with the Board of Governors of the State University System to ensure that each applied algebra course is accepted as a mathematics credit for state university admissions.

9. The Department of Education shall provide professional learning, instructional resources, and technical assistance to support district implementation for the 2029-2030 school year.

Section 13. Section 1003.437, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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

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

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

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

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

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

(6) Grade “I” equals zero percent, has a grade point average value of zero, and is defined as “incomplete.”

The State Board of Education shall establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms identified in s. 1007.27. For the purposes of class ranking, District school boards shall use the may exercise a weighted grading system to calculate weighted high school grade point averages pursuant to s. 1007.271.

Section 14. Subsection (5) is added to section 1003.5716, Florida Statutes, to read:

1003.5716 Transition to postsecondary education and career opportunities.—All students with disabilities who are 3 years of age to 21 years of age have the right to a free, appropriate public education. As used in this section, the term “IEP” means individual education plan.

(5)

(a) If a related service identified in a student’s IEP is not provided as scheduled, the school district must notify the parent or guardian in writing or by electronic means within 10 school days, explain the reason the service was not provided, and discuss a plan for make-up services.

(b) A parent or guardian has the right to access, upon request, all service provider logs or progress notes within 15 school days after such service is provided. The school district shall inform parents of this right at each IEP meeting.

Section 15. Subsections (5) and (6) of section 1004.343, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1004.343 Statewide Data Repository for Anonymous Human Trafficking Data.—

(5) Beginning January 31, 2027 July 1, 2025, and annually thereafter, the University of South Florida Trafficking in Persons - Risk to Resilience Lab, in consultation with the Department of Law Enforcement, shall submit an annual report and analysis on its findings to the Governor, the Attorney General, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(6) This section is repealed July 1, 2027 ~~2026~~, unless reviewed and reenacted by the Legislature before that date.

Section 16. Subsections (3), (4), and (5) of section 1004.39, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1004.39 College of Law at Florida International University.—

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

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

(5) The Florida International University Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors may accept grants, donations, gifts, and moneys available for this purpose, including moneys for planning and constructing the college. The Florida International University Board of Trustees may procure and accept any federal funds that are available for the planning, creation, and establishment of the college of law. If a ~~the American Bar Association or any other~~ nationally recognized association for the accreditation of colleges of law issues a third disapproval of an application for provisional approval or for full approval or fails to grant, within 5 years following the graduation of the first class, a provisional approval, to the College of Law at Florida International University, the Board of Governors shall make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature as to whether the college of law will cease operations at the end of the full academic year subsequent to the receipt by the college of law of any such third disapproval, or whether the college of law will continue operations and any conditions for continued operations. If the college of law ceases operations pursuant to this section, the following conditions apply:

(a) The authority for the College of Law at Florida International University and the authority of the Florida International University Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors provided in this section shall terminate upon the cessation of operations of the College of Law at Florida International University. The College of Law at Florida International University shall receive no moneys allocated for the planning, construction, or operation of the college of law after its cessation of operations other than moneys to be expended for the cessation of operations of the college of law. Any moneys allocated to the College of Law at Florida

International University not expended prior to or scheduled to be expended after the date of the cessation of the college of law shall be appropriated for other use by the Legislature of the State of Florida.

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

Section 17. Subsections (3), (4), and (5) of section 1004.40, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1004.40 College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.—

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

(4) The College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University shall develop and institute a program that is consistent with sound legal education principles as determined by a ~~the American Bar Association or any other~~ nationally recognized association for the accreditation of colleges of law and that, to the extent consistent with such sound legal education principles, is structured to serve the legal needs of traditionally underserved portions of the population by providing an opportunity for participation in a legal clinic program or pro bono legal service.

(5) The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors may accept grants, donations, gifts, and moneys available for this purpose, including moneys for planning and constructing the college. The Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Board of Trustees may procure and accept any federal funds that are available for the planning, creation, and establishment of the college of law. If a ~~the American Bar Association or any other~~ nationally recognized association for the accreditation of colleges of law issues a third disapproval of an application for provisional approval or for full approval or fails to grant, within 5 years following the graduation of the first class, a provisional approval, to the College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, the Board of Governors shall make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature as to whether the college of law will cease operations at the end of the full academic year subsequent to the receipt by the college of law of any such third disapproval, or whether the college of law will continue operations and any conditions for continued operations. If the college of law ceases operations of the college of law pursuant to this section, the following conditions apply:

(a) The authority for the College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and the authority of the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University Board of Trustees and the Board of Governors provided in this section shall terminate upon the cessation of operations of the College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. The College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University shall receive no moneys allocated for the planning, construction, or operation of the college of law after its cessation of operations other than moneys to be expended for the cessation of operations of the college of law. Any moneys allocated to the College of Law at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University not expended prior to or scheduled to be expended after the date of the cessation of the college of law shall be appropriated for other use by the Legislature of the State of Florida.

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

Section 18. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section 1005.06, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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

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

(b) Any college or, school, or course licensed or approved as an institution for establishment and operation by another state agency. A college or school, or any of its programs or courses, does not qualify for exemption from the commission's jurisdiction under this paragraph solely because another state agency licenses or approves one or more of its programs or courses. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to limit or affect the exemptions for contract training, continuing education, or professional development programs or courses under paragraph (d), even if such programs or courses are approved under chapter 466 for establishment and operation under part I of chapter 464, chapter 466, or chapter 475, or any other chapter of the Florida Statutes requiring licensing or approval as defined in this chapter.

Section 19. Section 1006.12, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1006.12 Safe-school officers at each public school.—For the protection and safety of school personnel, property, students, and visitors, each district school board and school district superintendent shall partner with law enforcement agencies or security agencies to establish or assign one or more safe-school officers at each school facility within the district, including

charter schools. A district school board must collaborate with charter school governing boards to facilitate charter school access to all safe-school officer options available under this section. Notwithstanding any local ordinance or development order, the school district or charter school may implement any combination of the options in subsections (1)-(4) to best meet the needs of the school district and charter schools.

(1) **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER.**—A school district may establish school resource officer programs through a cooperative agreement with law enforcement agencies.

(a) School resource officers shall undergo criminal background checks, drug testing, and a psychological evaluation and be certified law enforcement officers, as defined in s. 943.10(1), who are employed by a law enforcement agency as defined in s. 943.10(4). The powers and duties of a law enforcement officer shall continue throughout the employee's tenure as a school resource officer.

(b) School resource officers shall abide by district school board policies and shall consult with and coordinate activities through the school principal, but shall be responsible to the law enforcement agency in all matters relating to employment, subject to agreements between a district school board and a law enforcement agency. The agreements shall identify the entity responsible for maintaining records relating to training. Activities conducted by the school resource officer which are part of the regular instructional program of the school shall be under the direction of the school principal.

(2) **SCHOOL SAFETY OFFICER.**—A school district may commission one or more school safety officers for the protection and safety of school personnel, property, and students within the school district. The district school superintendent may recommend, and the district school board may appoint, one or more school safety officers.

(a) School safety officers shall undergo criminal background checks, drug testing, and a psychological evaluation and be law enforcement officers, as defined in s. 943.10(1), certified under chapter 943 and employed by either a law enforcement agency or by the district school board. If the officer is employed by the district school board, the district school board is the employing agency for purposes of chapter 943, and must comply with that chapter.

(b) A school safety officer has and shall exercise the power to make arrests for violations of law on district school board property or on property owned or leased by a charter school under a charter contract, as applicable, and to arrest persons, whether on or off such property, who violate any law on such property under the same conditions that deputy sheriffs are authorized to make arrests. A school safety officer has the authority to carry weapons when performing his or her official duties.

(c) School safety officers must complete mental health crisis intervention training using a curriculum developed by a national organization with expertise in mental health crisis intervention. The training shall improve officers' knowledge and skills as first responders to incidents involving students with emotional disturbance or mental illness, including de-escalation skills to ensure student and officer safety.

(d) A district school board may enter into mutual aid agreements with one or more law enforcement agencies as provided in chapter 23. A school safety officer's salary may be paid jointly by the district school board and the law enforcement agency, as mutually agreed to.

(3) SCHOOL GUARDIAN.—

(a) At the school district's or the charter school governing board's discretion, as applicable, pursuant to s. 30.15, a school district or charter school governing board may participate in the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program to meet the requirement of establishing a safe-school officer. The following individuals may serve as a school guardian, in support of school-sanctioned activities for purposes of s. 790.115, upon satisfactory completion of the requirements under s. 30.15(1)(k) and certification by a sheriff:

1. A school district employee or personnel, as defined under s. 1012.01, or a charter school employee, as provided under s. 1002.33(12)(a), who volunteers to serve as a school guardian in addition to his or her official job duties; or

2. An employee of a school district or a charter school who is hired for the specific purpose of serving as a school guardian.

(b) Before appointing an individual as a school guardian, the school district or charter school shall contact the Department of Law Enforcement and review all information maintained under s. 30.15(1)(k)3.c. related to the individual.

(c) The department shall provide to the Department of Law Enforcement any information relating to a school guardian received pursuant to subsection (5).

(4) SCHOOL SECURITY GUARD.—A school district or charter school governing board may contract with a security agency as defined in s. 493.6101(18) to employ as a school security guard an individual who holds a Class "D" and Class "G" license pursuant to chapter 493, provided the following training and contractual conditions are met:

(a) An individual who serves as a school security guard, for purposes of satisfying the requirements of this section, must:

1. Demonstrate completion of 144 hours of required training conducted by a sheriff pursuant to s. 30.15(1)(k)2.

2. Pass a psychological evaluation administered by a psychologist licensed under chapter 490 and designated by the Department of Law Enforcement and submit the results of the evaluation to the sheriff's office and school district, charter school governing board, or employing security agency, as applicable. The Department of Law Enforcement is authorized to provide the sheriff's office, school district, charter school governing board, or employing security agency with mental health and substance abuse data for compliance with this paragraph.

3. Submit to and pass an initial drug test and subsequent random drug tests in accordance with the requirements of s. 112.0455 and the sheriff's office, school district, charter school governing board, or employing security agency, as applicable.

4. Be approved to work as a school security guard by the sheriff of each county in which the school security guard will be assigned to a school before commencing work at any school in that county. The sheriff's approval authorizes the security agency to assign the school security guard to any school in the county, and the sheriff's approval is not limited to any particular school.

5. Successfully complete ongoing training, weapon inspection, and fire-arm qualification conducted by a sheriff pursuant to s. 30.15(1)(k)2.e. on at least an annual basis and provide documentation to the sheriff's office, school district, charter school governing board, or employing security agency, as applicable.

(b) The contract between a security agency and a school district or a charter school governing board regarding requirements applicable to school security guards serving in the capacity of a safe-school officer for purposes of satisfying the requirements of this section shall define the entity or entities responsible for maintaining records relating to training, inspection, and firearm qualification.

(c) School security guards serving in the capacity of a safe-school officer pursuant to this subsection are in support of school-sanctioned activities for purposes of s. 790.115, and must aid in the prevention or abatement of active assailant incidents on school premises.

(d) The Office of Safe Schools shall provide the Department of Law Enforcement any information related to a school security guard that the office receives pursuant to subsection (5).

(5) NOTIFICATION.—The district school superintendent or charter school administrator, or a respective designee shall notify the county sheriff and the Office of Safe Schools immediately after, but no later than 72 hours after:

(a) A safe-school officer is dismissed for misconduct or is otherwise disciplined.

(b) A safe-school officer discharges his or her firearm in the exercise of the safe-school officer's duties, other than for training purposes.

(6) **CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING.**—Each safe-school officer who is also a sworn law enforcement officer shall complete mental health crisis intervention training using a curriculum developed by a national organization with expertise in mental health crisis intervention. The training must improve the officer's knowledge and skills as a first responder to incidents involving students with emotional disturbance or mental illness, including de-escalation skills to ensure student and officer safety.

(7) **LIMITATIONS.**—An individual must satisfy the background screening, psychological evaluation, and drug test requirements and be approved by the sheriff before participating in any training required by s. 30.15(1)(k), which may be conducted only by a sheriff.

(8) **EXEMPTION.**—Any information that would identify whether a particular individual has been appointed as a safe-school officer pursuant to this section held by a law enforcement agency, school district, or charter school is exempt from s. 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution.

If a district school board, through its adopted policies, procedures, or actions, denies a charter school access to any safe-school officer options pursuant to this section, the school district must assign a school resource officer or school safety officer to the charter school. Under such circumstances, the charter school's share of the costs of the school resource officer or school safety officer may not exceed the safe school allocation funds provided to the charter school pursuant to s. 1011.62(12) and shall be retained by the school district.

Section 20. Paragraph (b) of subsection (9) of section 1007.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

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

(9)

(b) An associate in arts specialized transfer degree must include 36 semester hours of general education coursework and require 60 semester hours or more of college credit. Specialized transfer degrees are designed for Florida College System institution students who need supplemental lower-level coursework in preparation for transfer to another institution. The State Board of Education shall establish criteria for the review and approval of new specialized transfer degrees. The approval process must require:

1. A Florida College System institution to submit a notice of its intent to propose a new associate in arts specialized degree program to the Division of Florida Colleges. The notice must include the recommended credit hours, the rationale for the specialization, the demand for students entering the field, and the coursework being proposed to be included beyond the 60 semester

hours required for the general transfer degree, if applicable. Notices of intent may be submitted by a Florida College System institution at any time.

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

3. After the submission of comments pursuant to subparagraph 2., the requesting Florida College System institution to submit a proposal that, at a minimum, includes:

a. Evidence that the coursework for the associate in arts specialized transfer degree includes demonstration of competency in a foreign language pursuant to s. 1007.262 and demonstration of civic literacy competency as provided in subsection (5).

b. Demonstration that all required coursework will count toward the associate in arts degree or the baccalaureate degree.

c. An analysis of demand and unmet need for students entering the specialized field of study at the baccalaureate level.

d. Justification for the program length if it exceeds 60 credit hours, including references to the common prerequisite manual or other requirements for the baccalaureate degree. This includes documentation of alignment between the exit requirements of a Florida College System institution and the admissions requirements of a baccalaureate program at a state university to which students would typically transfer.

e. Articulation agreements for graduates of the associate in arts specialized transfer degree.

f. Responses to the comments received under subparagraph 2.

Section 21. Subsections (1) and (16) of section 1007.271, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

1007.271 Dual enrollment programs.—

(1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student in this state or home education student in this state in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and a career certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree. Postsecondary institutions that are eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-for-profit independent colleges and universities pursuant to s. 1011.62(1)(i). A student ~~who is~~ enrolled in postsecondary instruction that is not creditable toward a high school diploma may not be classified as a dual enrollment student.

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

Section 22. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 1008.2125, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1008.2125 The Council for Early Grade Success.—

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

(a) The council shall be responsible for reviewing the implementation of, training for, and outcomes from the coordinated screening and progress monitoring program to provide recommendations to the department that support grade 3 students reading at or above grade level. The council, at a minimum, shall:

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

2. Develop training plans and timelines for such training.

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

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

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

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

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

Section 23. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4), paragraphs (b) and (d) of subsection (5), and paragraph (a) of subsection (9) of section 1008.25, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

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

(4) ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT.—

(c) A student who has a substantial reading deficiency as determined in paragraph (5)(a) or a substantial mathematics deficiency as determined in paragraph (6)(a) must be covered by a federally required student plan, such as an individual education plan or an individualized progress monitoring plan, or both, as necessary. The individualized progress monitoring plan must be developed within 45 days after the results of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system become available. The plan must, at a minimum, include:

1. The student's specific, identified reading or mathematics skill deficiency.
2. Goals and benchmarks for student growth in reading or mathematics.
3. A description of the specific measures that will be used to evaluate and monitor the student's reading or mathematics progress.
4. For a substantial reading deficiency, the specific evidence-based literacy instruction grounded in the science of reading which the student will receive.
5. Strategies, resources, and materials that will be provided to the student's parent to support the student to make reading or mathematics progress. For a student with a substantial reading deficiency, resources must include information about the student's eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative under s. 1003.485.
6. Any additional services the student's teacher deems available and appropriate to accelerate the student's reading or mathematics skill development.

(5) READING DEFICIENCY AND PARENTAL NOTIFICATION.—

(b) A Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in early literacy skills based upon the results of the administration of the midyear or final coordinated screening and progress monitoring under subsection (9) shall be referred to the local school district and may be eligible to receive instruction in early literacy skills before participating in kindergarten. A Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program student who scores below the 25th ~~10th~~ percentile on the final administration of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring under subsection (9) shall be referred to the local school district and is

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

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

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

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

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

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

5. Strategies, including multisensory strategies and programming, through a read-at-home plan the parent can use in helping his or her child succeed in reading. The read-at-home plan must provide access to the resources identified in paragraph (e).

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

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

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

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

After initial notification, the school shall apprise the parent at least monthly of the student's progress in response to the intensive interventions and supports and the student's eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative under s. 1003.485. Such communications must be in writing and must explain any additional interventions or supports that will be implemented to accelerate the student's progress if the interventions and supports already being implemented have not resulted in improvement. Upon the request of the parent, the teacher or school administrator shall meet to discuss the student's progress. The parent may request more frequent notification of the student's progress, more frequent interventions or supports, and earlier implementation of the additional interventions or supports described in the initial notification.

(9) COORDINATED SCREENING AND PROGRESS MONITORING SYSTEM.—

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

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

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

3. Be a valid, reliable, and developmentally appropriate computer-based direct instrument that provides screening and diagnostic capabilities for monitoring student progress; identifies students who have a substantial deficiency in reading or mathematics, including identifying students with characteristics of dyslexia, dyscalculia, and other learning disorders; and informs instruction. Any student identified by the system as having characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia shall undergo further screening. Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system must be computer-adaptive.

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

5. Provide Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program providers, school districts, schools, teachers, and parents with data and resources that enhance differentiated instruction and parent communication.

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

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

Section 24. Subsection (2) of section 1008.47, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1008.47 Postsecondary education institution accreditation.—

(2) ACCREDITATION.—

(a) ~~By September 1, 2022,~~ The Board of Governors or the State Board of Education, as applicable, shall identify and determine the accrediting agencies or associations best suited to serve as an accreditor for public postsecondary institutions. Such accrediting agencies or associations must be recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education. Within 3 years ~~In the year~~ following reaffirmation or fifth-year review by its accrediting agencies or associations, each public postsecondary institution must seek and obtain accreditation from an accrediting agency or association identified by the Board of Governors or State Board of Education, respectively, before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date. The requirements in this section are limited to a one-time change in accreditation. The requirements of this subsection are not applicable to those professional, graduate, departmental, or certificate programs at public postsecondary institutions that have specific accreditation requirements or best practices, including, but not limited to, law, pharmacy, engineering, or other similarly situated educational programs.

(b) Once a public postsecondary institution is required to seek and obtain accreditation from an agency or association identified pursuant to paragraph (a), the institution shall seek accreditation from an ~~a regional~~ accrediting agency or association and provide quarterly reports of its progress to the Board of Governors or State Board of Education, as applicable. If each ~~regional~~ accreditation agency or association identified pursuant to paragraph (a) has refused to grant candidacy status to an

institution, the institution must seek and obtain accreditation from any accrediting agency or association that is different from its current accrediting agency or association and is recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education. If a public postsecondary institution is not granted candidacy status before its next reaffirmation or fifth-year review date, the institution may remain with its current accrediting agency or association.

(c) This subsection expires December 31, 2032.

Section 25. Subsection (7) of section 1009.21, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.21 Determination of resident status for tuition purposes.—Students shall be classified as residents or nonresidents for the purpose of assessing tuition in postsecondary educational programs offered by charter technical career centers or career centers operated by school districts, in Florida College System institutions, and in state universities.

(7) A person may ~~shall~~ not lose his or her resident status for tuition purposes solely by reason of his or her serving, or, if such person is a dependent child, by reason of his or her parent's or parents' serving outside this state as active duty or civilian personnel;

(a) In the Armed Forces ~~outside this state~~.

(b) On assignment for the United States Department of State or Department of Defense.

(c) Teaching at a Department of Defense Dependent School.

Section 26. Paragraph (e) of subsection (1) of section 1009.25, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.25 Fee exemptions.—

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

(e) A student who meets the definition of homeless children and youths in s. 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. s. 11434a(2), as previously determined by a public school in this state. This includes a student who would otherwise meet the requirements of this paragraph, as determined by a college or university, but for his or her residence in college or university dormitory housing. The State Board of Education may adopt rules and the Board of Governors may adopt regulations regarding documentation and procedures to implement this paragraph. Such rules and regulations must consider documentation of a student's circumstance to be adequate if such documentation meets the standards under 20 U.S.C. s. 1087uu-2(a). Any student who is determined to

be a homeless child or youth for a preceding award year is presumed to be a homeless child or youth for each subsequent year unless the student informs the institution that the student's circumstances have changed or the institution has specific conflicting information about the student's independence, and has informed the student of this information. A distance learning student residing out-of-state is ineligible for the exemption in this paragraph.

Section 27. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section 1009.893, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.893 Benacquisto Scholarship Program.—

(4) In order to be eligible for an initial award under the scholarship program, a student must meet the requirements of paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

(a) A student who is a resident of this state, as determined in s. 1009.40 and rules of the State Board of Education, must:

1. Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its equivalent pursuant to s. 1002.3105, s. 1003.4281, s. 1003.4282, or s. 1003.435 unless:

a. The student completes a home education program according to s. 1002.41; or

b. The student earns a high school diploma from a non-Florida school while living with a parent who is on military or public service assignment out of this state;

2. Be accepted by and enroll in a Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution that is regionally accredited; and

3. Be enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate degree program at an eligible regionally accredited Florida public or independent postsecondary educational institution during the fall academic term following high school graduation. A student may defer the initial scholarship award for up to 1 year.

Section 28. Subsection (5) of section 1009.983, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.983 Direct-support organization; authority.—

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

Section 29. Paragraph (d) of subsection (3) of section 1009.986, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1009.986 Florida ABLE program.—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Unless authorized by the board of directors of Florida ABLE, Inc., an individual director has no authority to control or direct the operations of Florida ABLE, Inc., or the actions of its officers and employees.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 30. Present paragraphs (h) and (i) of subsection (17) of section 1011.62, Florida Statutes, are redesignated as paragraphs (i) and (j), respectively, and a new paragraph (h) is added to that subsection, to read:

1011.62 Funds for operation of schools.—If the annual allocation from the Florida Education Finance Program to each district for operation of schools is not determined in the annual appropriations act or the substantive bill implementing the annual appropriations act, it shall be determined as follows:

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

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

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

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

Section 31. Paragraph (a) of subsection (4) of section 1011.69, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1011.69 Equity in School-Level Funding Act.—

(4) After providing Title I, Part A, Basic funds to schools above the 75 percent poverty threshold, which may include high schools above the 50 percent threshold as permitted by federal law, school districts shall provide any remaining Title I, Part A, Basic funds directly to all eligible schools as provided in this subsection. For purposes of this subsection, an eligible school is a school that is eligible to receive Title I funds, including a charter school. The threshold for identifying eligible schools may not exceed the threshold established by a school district for the 2016-2017 school year or the statewide percentage of economically disadvantaged students, as determined annually.

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

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

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

3. A reasonable and necessary amount to provide:

a. Homeless programs;

b. Delinquent and neglected programs;

c. Prekindergarten programs and activities;

d. Private school equitable services; and

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

4. A necessary and reasonable amount, not to exceed 1 percent, for eligible schools to provide educational services in accordance with the approved Title I plan. Such educational services may include the provision of STEM curricula, instructional materials, and related learning technologies that support academic achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics in Title I schools, including, but not limited to, technologies related to drones, coding, animation, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data science, the engineering design process, mobile development, and robotics. Funds may be reserved under this subparagraph only to the extent that all required reservations under federal law have been met and that such reservation does not reduce school-level allocations below the levels required under federal law.

Section 32. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor May 1, 2026.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 1, 2026.