

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

**BILL #:** HB 1111 Teacher Certification  
**SPONSOR(S):** Plasencia  
**TIED BILLS:** None **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** SB 1474

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) PreK-12 Quality Subcommittee	14 Y, 0 N	Brink	Duncan
2) PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee	13 Y, 0 N	Seifert	Potvin
3) Education Committee		Brink	Hassell

### SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill revises the requirements for a district professional development certification and educator competence program. Under the bill, a temporary certificate holder who completes a Florida Department of Education (DOE) approved program and earns a highly effective rating will qualify for a renewable professional certificate without having to complete additional classwork or pass the Professional Education Test.

The bill allows charter schools and charter management organizations to offer a professional development certification and educator competence program and requires the mentorship and induction component of the program to, at a minimum, provide weekly opportunities for mentoring and induction activities, including:

- common planning time;
- ongoing professional development targeted to the teacher's needs;
- opportunities to observe other teachers;
- co-teaching experiences; and
- reflection and follow-up discussions.

The mentorship and induction activities must be provided for a teacher's first year in the program and may be provided until the teacher attains his or her professional certificate.

The bill requires the DOE to adopt standards for approving a professional development certification and educator competence program, including the mentorship and induction component.

With respect to professional development, the bill allows mentoring activities, including serving as a mentor, to count towards a teacher's inservice requirements for certification renewal. The bill requires professional development activities to provide training to mentors. The training must include components on teacher development, peer coaching, time management, and other related topics as determined by the DOE. The bill requires model professional development programs disseminated by the DOE to include effective mentorship activities to new teachers and training to mentors.

The bill also streamlines the temporary certificate application process.

The bill has no state fiscal impact.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017.

## FULL ANALYSIS

### I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

#### A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

##### Present Situation

##### Educator Certification

In order for a person to serve as an educator in a traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, or other publicly operated school, the person must hold a certificate issued by the Florida Department of Education (DOE).<sup>1</sup> Persons seeking employment at a public school as a school supervisor, principal, teacher, library media specialist, counselor, athletic coach, or in another instructional capacity must be certified.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel to “possess the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools.”<sup>3</sup>

The DOE issues three types of educator certificates:

- **Professional Certificate.** The professional certificate is Florida’s highest type of full-time educator certification.<sup>4</sup> The professional certificate is valid for five years and is renewable.<sup>5</sup>
- **Temporary Certificate.** The temporary certificate covers employment in full-time positions for which educator certification is required.<sup>6</sup> The temporary certificate is valid for three years and is nonrenewable.<sup>7</sup>
- **Athletic Coaching Certificate.** The athletic coaching certificate covers full-time and part-time employment as a public school’s athletic coach.<sup>8</sup> DOE issues two types of athletic coaching certificates – one is valid for five years and may be issued for subsequent five-year periods while the other is valid for three years and may be issued only once.<sup>9</sup> The five-year certificate requires satisfaction of certain specialization requirements established in rule.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, school districts are authorized to issue adjunct teaching certificates to part-time teachers who have expertise in the subject area to be taught. An adjunct teaching certificate is valid through the term of the annual contract between the educator and the school district.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Sections 1002.33(12)(f) (charter school teachers) and 1012.55(1), F.S. District school boards and charter school governing boards are authorized to hire non-certified individuals who possess expertise in a given field to serve in an instructional capacity. Rule 6A-1.0502, F.A.C.; ss. 1002.33(12)(f) and 1012.55(1)(c), F.S. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and speech therapists are not required to be certified educators. Rule 6A-1.0502(10) and (11), F.A.C.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1012.54, F.S.; see rule 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

<sup>4</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(2), F.A.C.

<sup>5</sup> Section 1012.56(7)(a), F.S.; see rule 6A-4.0051(3)(c), F.A.C. (validity period is expressed as 5 years from July 1 of the school fiscal year). DOE also issues a nonrenewable 5-year professional certificate that allows an applicant with a bachelor’s degree in the area of speech-language impairment to complete a master’s degree in speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.004(3), F.A.C.

<sup>6</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.

<sup>7</sup> Section 1012.56(7), F.S. (flush-left provisions at end of subsection; validity period is expressed in school fiscal years); rule 6A-4.004(1)(a), F.A.C. DOE also issues a nonrenewable temporary certificate, which is valid for 2 years, in the area of speech-language impairment. Sections 1012.56(7)(c) and 1012.54, F.S.; rule 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

<sup>8</sup> Section 1012.55(2), F.S.

<sup>9</sup> Rule 6A-4.004(4), F.A.C. (validity periods expressed in school fiscal years).

<sup>10</sup> See rule 6A-4.0282, F.A.C.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1012.57(1) and (4), F.S. An additional annual certification and an additional annual contract may be awarded by the district at its discretion only if the adjunct teacher is rated effective or highly effective during each year of teaching under the adjunct certification. Section 1012.57(4), F.S.

To be eligible for an educator certificate, a person must:<sup>12</sup>

- be at least 18 years of age;
- sign an affidavit attesting that the applicant will uphold the U.S. and State Constitutions;
- earn a bachelor's or higher degree from an accredited institution of higher learning<sup>13</sup> or from a nonaccredited institution identified by the DOE as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's or higher degree;<sup>14</sup>
- submit to fingerprinting and background screening and not have a criminal history that requires the applicant's disqualification from certification or employment;
- be of good moral character; and
- be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of a teacher.

In addition, each applicant must submit an application and the required fee to the DOE.<sup>15</sup> Although most of the application process is conducted electronically, certain portions of the process, like notifications of deficiencies in an application and supporting documentation, are sent through conventional postal delivery services which can delay the process. These notices are expected to be fully electronic by November of 2017.<sup>16</sup>

To receive a temporary certificate, an applicant must:

- meet the basic eligibility requirements for certification;<sup>17</sup>
- obtain full-time employment in a position that requires a Florida educator certificate by a school district or private school that has a DOE-approved professional education competence demonstration program;<sup>18</sup> and
- do one of the following:
  - demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge (e.g., passage of the appropriate subject area test);<sup>19</sup> or
  - complete the required degree or content courses specified in state board rule for subject area specialization<sup>20</sup> and attain at least a 2.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the subject area courses.<sup>21</sup>

An educator who is employed under a temporary certificate must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge within one calendar year after employment in order to remain employed in a position that requires a certificate.<sup>22</sup> If the educator is employed under contract, the calendar year deadline for demonstrating mastery of general knowledge may be extended through the end of the school year.<sup>23</sup> A temporary certificate is valid for 3 years and is nonrenewable.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.

<sup>13</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(1), F.A.C. (approved accrediting agencies); *see also* 34 C.F.R. ss. 602.1-602.50; U.S. Department of Education, *Regional and National Institutional Accrediting Agencies*, [https://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation\\_pg6.html#NationallyRecognized](https://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html#NationallyRecognized) (last visited Mar. 9, 2017) (list of accrediting agencies approved by the U.S. Department of Education).

<sup>14</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C. (criteria for approval of nonaccredited institutions of higher learning). For initial certification, an applicant must attain at least a 2.5 overall grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the applicant's major field of study. Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.

<sup>15</sup> Section 1012.56(1), F.S.; *see s.* 1012.59, F.S. The fee for initial certification is \$75 per subject area. Rule 6A-4.0012(1)(a)1. and 2., F.A.C.

<sup>16</sup> Telephone interview with Bureau Chief, Florida Department of Education, Bureau of Educator Certification (Feb. 23, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f) and (7)(b), F.S.

<sup>18</sup> Section 1012.56(1)(b), F.S.; rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.

<sup>19</sup> Section 1012.56(7)(b), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Subject Area Knowledge*, [http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast\\_sub.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast_sub.asp) (last visited April 28, 2016).

<sup>20</sup> Section 1012.56(7)(b), F.S. The degree and content requirements are specified in ch. 6A-4, F.A.C.

<sup>21</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(c), F.S.; *see* Florida Department of Education, *Certificate Types and Requirements*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/certification/general-cert-requirements/index.shtml> (last visited Mar. 9, 2017).

<sup>22</sup> Section 1012.56(7), F.S. (flush-left provisions at end of subsection).

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

An applicant seeking a professional certificate must:

- meet the basic eligibility requirements for certification;<sup>25</sup>
- demonstrate mastery of general knowledge;<sup>26</sup>
- demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge;<sup>27</sup> and
- demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence.<sup>28</sup>

A professional certificate is valid for five years and is renewable.<sup>29</sup>

Pathways to a professional certificate include:

- successfully completing an approved teacher preparation program at a postsecondary educational institution in Florida or a teacher preparation program from an out-of-state accredited or DOE-approved institution and achieving a passing score on the Professional Education Test (PET), Subject Area Examination (SAE), and General Knowledge Test (GKT) required by state board rule;<sup>30</sup>
- successfully completing a competency-based professional development certification program offered by a school district or an educator preparation institute (EPI) and passing the PET, SAE, and GKT;<sup>31</sup>
- completing 15 semester hours in professional preparation courses specified in state board rule<sup>32</sup> or completing the Professional Training Option for Content Majors;<sup>33</sup> completing requirements for practical experience in teaching;<sup>34</sup> completing an approved professional education competence demonstration program;<sup>35</sup> and passing the PET, SAE, and GKT;<sup>36</sup>
- providing documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by another U.S. state or by the National Board Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS);<sup>37</sup>
- providing documentation of a valid professional standard teaching certificate issued by the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) and completing an approved professional education competence demonstration program;<sup>38</sup> or
- completing two semesters of part-time or full-time college teaching experience at an accredited community college, state university, or private college or university that awards associate's or

<sup>25</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(a)-(f), F.S.; *see supra* text accompanying notes 12-15.

<sup>26</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(g) and (3), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *General Knowledge*, [http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast\\_gen.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast_gen.asp) (last visited Mar. 9, 2017).

<sup>27</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(h) and (5), F.S.

<sup>28</sup> Section 1012.56(2)(i) and (6), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, [http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast\\_prof.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/edcert/mast_prof.asp) (last visited Mar. 9, 2017) [hereinafter *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*].

<sup>29</sup> Sections 1012.56(7)(a) and 1012.585, F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051(1), F.A.C. *See supra* text accompanying note 5.

<sup>30</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(a) and (b), F.S.; *see s.* 1004.04, F.S.; rule 6A-4.003(1) and (4), F.A.C. (accreditation of teacher education programs). The Professional Education Test is part of the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations. Rule 6A-4.0021(8), F.A.C.

<sup>31</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(g)-(h), F.S.; *see ss.* 1004.85 and 1012.56(8), F.S.; rule 6A-5.066(2)(b)1.d. and (c)1.d., F.A.C.

<sup>32</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(f), F.S.; rule 6A-4.006(2)(a), F.A.C. Separate professional preparation course requirements are established for certification in Agriculture (grades 6-12). Rule 6A-4.006(3)(a), F.A.C.

<sup>33</sup> The Professional Training Option for Content Majors authorizes an approved teacher preparation program at a postsecondary institution in Florida to allow students who do not major in education but do major or minor in a content area (*e.g.*, English major) to satisfy professional preparation course requirements. Rule 6A-5.066(3), F.A.C.

<sup>34</sup> *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 28; *see rules* 6A-4.002(5) and 6A-4.006(2)(b), F.A.C.

<sup>35</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(f), F.S. Each school district must, and a state-supported public or private school may, establish a professional education competence demonstration program that allows the district's or school's instructional staff to demonstrate mastery of professional preparation and education competence through a performance evaluation plan, which documents the staff's classroom application and instructional performance. *See s.* 1012.56(8)(b), F.S.

<sup>36</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(f), F.S.

<sup>37</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(c)-(d), F.S.; *see rule* 6A-4.002(1)(i)-(j), F.A.C.

<sup>38</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(d), F.S.; rule 6A-4.002(1)(j), F.A.C.; *Professional Preparation and Education Competence*, *supra* note 28; *see supra* notes 34 (American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence certificate satisfies all requirements for a professional certificate, except the professional education competence demonstration requirement) and 48 (description of professional education competence demonstration program).

higher degrees or at a nonaccredited institution of higher education identified by the DOE as having a quality program and passing the SAE and PET.<sup>39</sup>

In 2016, the law was amended to allow an individual to earn a professional certificate covering grades 6 through 12 in a Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) subject without having to complete coursework associated with professional preparation and education competence, if the individual:

- meets the basic eligibility requirements for certification;
- demonstrates mastery of general knowledge;
- holds a master's or higher degree in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics;
- passes the PET and the SAE for the correlated educator certificate;
- teaches a high school course in the subject area of the advanced degree; and
- is rated highly effective under the school district's performance evaluation system based in part on student performance as measured by a statewide standardized assessment or an Advanced Placement, Advance International Certificate of Education, or International Baccalaureate examination.<sup>40</sup>

Several of the pathways allow a temporary certificate holder to complete the general knowledge and professional preparation and education competence requirements for a professional certificate while serving as a classroom teacher. These include the college coursework option, EPIs, district professional development certification and education competency programs (professional development certification program), professional training option programs, and the STEM secondary certification pathway. Data from the DOE show that 35 percent of temporary certificate holders do not complete the requirements for a professional certificate by the end of their 3-year temporary certificate.<sup>41</sup>

A professional certificate must be renewed every five years.<sup>42</sup> An educator must submit an application,<sup>43</sup> pay a fee,<sup>44</sup> and earn at least six college credits or 120 inservice points to renew professional certification.<sup>45</sup> At least three college credits or 60 inservice points must be earned in each subject area for which renewal is sought.<sup>46</sup> The renewal period may be extended to include two successive renewal periods up to 10 years to enable educators who are certified in three or more subject areas to earn the required credits or inservice points in each subject area.<sup>47</sup> In addition to credits or inservice points required in the subject area, credits or inservice points may be earned in

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<sup>39</sup> Section 1012.56(6)(e), F.S. A non-accredited institution of higher learning is approved as having a quality program if the institution meets one of the following criteria: is accepted for certification purposes by the state department of education where the institution is located; holds a certificate of exemption pursuant to s. 1005.06, F.S.; is a newly created Florida public college or university that offers a bachelor's or higher degree program; is located outside the U.S. and awards a degree that is the equivalent to a bachelor's or higher degree awarded by an accredited or approved institution in the U.S.; or the degree from the institution was accepted by an accredited or approved institution either in transfer or as a basis for admission into the graduate program which resulted in the conferral of a higher degree. Rule 6A-4.003(2), F.A.C.

<sup>40</sup> Chapter 2016-117, L.O.F.

<sup>41</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Pathways to the Professional Certificate: hearing before the House PreK-12 Quality Subcommittee* (Feb. 15, 2017), available at <http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/loadoc.aspx?PublicationType=Committees&CommitteeId=2909&Session=2017&DocumentType=Meeting%20Packets&FileName=pkq%202-15-17.pdf>.

<sup>42</sup> Section 1012.585(2)(a), F.S.

<sup>43</sup> Rule 6A-4.0051(3)(b), F.A.C. The DOE processes certification renewals for individuals who are not employed by district school boards. Section 1012.585(1)(b), F.S. District school boards are responsible for processing certificate renewals for school district employees. Section 1012.585(1)(a), F.S.

<sup>44</sup> The fee for a certification renewal is \$75. Rules 6A-4.0051(3)(b), F.A.C. and 6A-4.0012(1)(a)1.

<sup>45</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(a), F.S. Applicants may combine college credits and inservice points to meet this requirement. One semester hour of college credit is equivalent to 20 inservice points. Rule 6A-4.0051(1)(a)2., F.A.C. College credits must be earned at an accredited or state board-approved institution. Inservice points must be earned through participation in state board-approved school district inservice activities. Rule 6A-4.0051(1)(a), F.A.C.; see rule 6A-4.003(1) and (2), F.A.C. (list of approved accrediting agencies and guidelines for nonaccredited approved institutions).

<sup>46</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>47</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(c), F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051(2)(c), F.A.C.

courses in clinical educator training, literacy and computational skills acquisition, exceptional student education, child development, drug abuse, child abuse, limited English proficiency, dropout prevention, and other topics.<sup>48</sup>

State board rule includes special provisions for teachers of limited English proficient students, teachers of students with disabilities and teachers of reading.<sup>49</sup> The law allows a professional certificate holder to use college credits or inservice points earned through training in teaching students of limited English proficiency or students with disabilities and training in teaching reading in excess of six semester hours during one certificate validity period toward renewal of the professional certificate during the subsequent validity periods.<sup>50</sup> Temporary certificate holders may use college credits or inservice points earned through training in teaching students of limited English proficiency or students with disabilities and training in teaching reading toward renewal of the teacher's first professional certificate; however, the training must not have been included within the degree program, and the temporary and professional certificates must be issued for consecutive school years.<sup>51</sup>

Applicants for renewal of a professional certificate must earn at least one college credit or the equivalent amount of inservice points in the area of instruction for teaching students with disabilities.<sup>52</sup>

Certification in subject areas may also be renewed by earning a passing score on the corresponding Florida-developed subject area test or standardized examination specified in state board rule.<sup>53</sup>

Certification by NBPTS is deemed to meet certification renewal requirements for the life of the certificate, in the corresponding certification subject area.<sup>54</sup>

### Teacher Preparation

There are various teacher preparation programs that individuals may use to receive the training needed to attain teaching credentials, including:<sup>55</sup>

- **Initial Teacher Preparation programs** are “traditional” teacher preparation programs that require candidates to demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge in one or more specific subject areas(s), mastery of general knowledge, and mastery of professional preparation and education competence. Such programs result in qualification for a professional educator certificate.<sup>56</sup>
- **Educator Preparation Institutes** are alternative certification programs offered by postsecondary institutions and private providers for baccalaureate degree holders. These programs provide professional preparation for career-changers and recent college graduates who do not already possess a Professional Educator Certificate and require mastery of general knowledge, mastery of subject area knowledge and mastery of professional preparation and education competence.
- **District Professional Development Certification and Education Competency Programs** are cohesive, competency-based professional preparation certification programs offered by Florida public school districts, by which a school district's instructional staff can satisfy the mastery of professional preparation and education competence requirements. In addition to completing the

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<sup>48</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>49</sup> Rule 6A-4.0051(5), F.S.

<sup>50</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(d)1., F.S.

<sup>51</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(d)2., F.S.

<sup>52</sup> Section 1012.585(4), F.S. This required training may not add to the total hours required by the DOE for continuing education or inservice training. *Id.*

<sup>53</sup> Section 1012.585(3)(b), F.S. For the purposes of renewing a professional certificate, passage of a subject area examination is equivalent to three semester hours of college credit. Rule 6A-4.0051(1)(b), F.A.C.

<sup>54</sup> Section 1012.585(2)(b), F.S.; rule 6A-4.0051(1)(c), F.A.C.

<sup>55</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Educator Preparation*, <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/preparation> (last visited Mar. 9, 2017). *See also* rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

<sup>56</sup> Rule 6A-5.066, F.A.C.

district program, candidates must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge and subject area knowledge.

### Professional Development

Florida law requires a number of entities, including the DOE, public postsecondary educational institutions, public school districts, public schools, state education foundations, consortia, and professional organizations, to work collaboratively to develop a coordinated system of professional development. The purpose of the system is to increase student achievement, enhance classroom instructional strategies that promote rigor and relevance throughout the curriculum, and prepare students for continuing education and the workforce.<sup>57</sup>

Part of the DOE's responsibility in the professional development system is to disseminate to the school community research-based professional development methods and programs that have demonstrated success in meeting identified student needs.<sup>58</sup> At least one method of dissemination must be through a web-based statewide performance support system, including a database of exemplary professional development activities, a listing of available professional development resources, training programs, and available assistance.<sup>59</sup> In addition, the DOE must disseminate, using the web-based statewide performance-support system, proven model professional development programs that have demonstrated success in increasing rigorous and relevant content, increasing student achievement and engagement, and meeting identified school needs.<sup>60</sup> The DOE must also disseminate, using web-based technology, research-based best practice methods by which the state and district school boards may evaluate and improve the professional development system.<sup>61</sup>

Each school district is required to develop a professional development system in consultation with teachers, teacher-educators of Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities, business and community representatives, and local education foundations, consortia, and professional organizations.<sup>62</sup> The system must:

- be approved by the DOE, with all substantial revisions thereto also approved by the DOE;
- be based on analyses of student achievement data and instructional strategies and methods that support rigorous, relevant, and challenging curricula for all students;
- provide in-service activities with follow-up support appropriate to accomplish district-level and school-level improvement goals and standards;
- include a master plan for inservice activities, which must be aligned to and support school-based inservice plans and school improvement plans and be approved annually by the district school board;
- include inservice activities for school administrative personnel that address updated skills necessary for instructional leadership and effective school management;
- provide for systematic consultation with regional and state personnel designated to provide technical assistance and evaluation of local professional development programs;
- provide for delivery of professional development by distance learning and other technology-based delivery systems to reach more educators at lower costs;
- provide for the continuous evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of professional developmental programs in order to eliminate ineffective programs and strategies and expand effective ones; and
- for middle grades, emphasize:
  - interdisciplinary planning, collaboration, and instruction;

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<sup>57</sup> Section 1012.98(1), F.S.

<sup>58</sup> Section 1012.98(4)(a), F.S. The web-based statewide performance support system can be accessed at <https://www.floridaschoolleaders.org>.

<sup>59</sup> *Id.*

<sup>60</sup> Section 1012.98(11), F.S.

<sup>61</sup> Section 1012.98(7), F.S.

<sup>62</sup> Section 1012.98(4)(b), F.S.

- alignment of curriculum and instructional materials to the state academic standards; and
- use of small learning communities; problem-solving, inquiry-driven research and analytical approaches for students; strategies and tools based on student needs; competency-based instruction; integrated digital instruction; and project-based instruction.<sup>63</sup>

A district school board may contract with independent entities for professional development services and inservice education if the district school board can demonstrate to the Commissioner of Education that, through such a contract, a better product can be acquired or its goals for education improvement can be better met.<sup>64</sup>

### Teacher Mentoring and Induction

Teacher induction programs “aim to improve the performance and retention of new hires and to enhance the skills and prevent the loss of new teachers with the ultimate goal of improving student’s growth and learning.”<sup>65</sup> Data show that recent concerns over staffing shortages are primarily related to retaining new teachers rather than recruiting them, as beginning teachers leave the profession at a higher clip than experienced ones or teachers who retire.<sup>66</sup> Beginning teachers who leave the profession often report a lack of adequate administrative support as a motivating factor.<sup>67</sup> This has led to a significant portion of the teacher workforce consisting more of beginning teachers as well as an increase in participation in teacher induction programs.<sup>68</sup> However, there is great variation in the quality of induction opportunities offered to new teachers between states and school districts.<sup>69</sup>

Generally, teacher induction has a positive effect on retaining new teachers. Further, participation in certain activities is correlated with higher rates of retention, including having a peer mentor in the subject area and having common planning time.<sup>70</sup>

Florida law has no provisions related to new teacher induction other than requiring the assignment of a peer mentor as part of a district program.<sup>71</sup> Although a peer mentor must hold a valid professional certificate, have at least 3 years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12, and have a rating of effective or highly effective on the prior year’s performance evaluation,<sup>72</sup> the law does not expressly establish mentor training and mentoring activities requirements.

### **Effect of Proposed Changes**

To help districts recruit and retain new teachers, the bill enhances requirements for the peer mentor component of a district program and establishes a mentorship and induction-based pathway to a professional educator certificate. Under the bill, a temporary certificate holder who completes a DOE-approved district program and who has a highly effective district performance evaluation rating will receive a professional certificate without having to sit for additional coursework or take the Professional Education Test (PET).

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<sup>63</sup> Section 1012.98(4)(b), F.S.

<sup>64</sup> Section 1012.98(9), F.S.

<sup>65</sup> Richard Ingersoll, *Beginning Teacher Induction: What the Data Tell Us*, [http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/16/kappan\\_ingersoll.h31.html](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/16/kappan_ingersoll.h31.html) (last visited Mar. 6, 2017).

<sup>66</sup> *See id.*

<sup>67</sup> *Id.*

<sup>68</sup> *See id.*

<sup>69</sup> *See id.* *See also* The New Teacher Center, *Support from the Start: A 50-State Review of Policies on New Educator Induction and Mentoring* (2016) at iii-iv, available at <https://newteachercenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2016ExecSummaryStatePolicies.pdf>.

<sup>70</sup> *See* RICHARD INGERSOLL, *Beginning Teacher Induction: What the Data Tell Us*, [http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/16/kappan\\_ingersoll.h31.html](http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2012/05/16/kappan_ingersoll.h31.html) (last visited Mar. 6, 2017).

<sup>71</sup> *See* s. 1012.56(8)(a)3., F.S.

<sup>72</sup> *Id.* School district personnel evaluation systems differentiate among four levels of performance: Highly Effective; Effective; Needs improvement (or Developing for instructional personnel in their first 3 years of employment who need improvement); and Unsatisfactory. Section 1012.34(2)(e), F.S.



The bill requires that the mentorship and induction component of a district's professional development certification program, at a minimum, provide weekly opportunities for mentoring and induction activities, including:

- common planning time;
- ongoing professional development targeted to a mentee teacher's needs;
- opportunities to observe other teachers;
- co-teaching experiences; and
- reflection and follow-up discussions.

The bill requires that the mentorship and induction activities must be provided for the teacher's first year in the program and may be provided until the teacher attains his or her professional certificate. The bill requires that a principal who is rated highly effective must be provided flexibility in selecting professional development activities for the mentorship and induction component so long as they are approved by the DOE.

The bill allows charter schools and charter management organizations to offer a DOE-approved professional development certification program.

The bill requires the DOE to adopt standards for the approval of professional development certification programs, including standards for the teacher mentorship and induction component, by December 31, 2017. The standards for the teacher mentorship and induction component must include:

- program administration and evaluation;
- mentor roles, selection, and training;
- beginning teacher assessment and professional development; and
- teacher content knowledge and practices aligned to the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices.

Each school district, charter school, or charter management organization, wishing to provide a professional development certification program must submit its program, including the teacher mentorship and induction component, to the DOE for approval no later than June 30, 2018. Beginning January 1, 2019, a teacher may not satisfy requirements for a professional certificate through a professional development certification program unless the program has been approved by the DOE. As a result, teachers can complete the requirements for a professional certificate based on current program requirements through December 31, 2018, at the latest.

The bill allows participation in a district program as a mentor or a mentee to count toward a teacher's inservice specialization requirements for renewal of a professional certificate. The bill also requires each district professional development system to provide inservice activities and support targeted to the individual needs of teachers participating in the district program.

The bill requires professional development activities designed to implement the School Community Professional Development Act to provide training to mentors as part of the district program. The training must include components on teacher development, peer coaching, time management, and other related topics as determined by the DOE. The bill requires model professional development programs disseminated by the DOE to include effective mentorship activities to new teachers and training to mentors.

The bill also streamlines the temporary certificate application process by requiring the DOE to electronically issue a temporary certificate to a qualifying applicant within 14 calendar days after it receives a request from the applicant's employing school district or private school. The DOE must also electronically provide an official statement of status of eligibility at the time the certificate is issued. The statement must include each method by which an applicant can complete the qualifications for a professional certificate.

**B. SECTION DIRECTORY:**

Section 1. Amends s. 1012.56, F.S.; requiring the Department of Education to issue a temporary educator certificate within a specified period; requiring the department to provide electronic notice of the issuance of a temporary certificate to specified entities; requiring the department to provide the applicant an official statement of status of eligibility upon issuance of a temporary certificate; providing content requirements for the statement of status of eligibility; revising the criteria instructional personnel must meet to be issued a professional certificate; providing that an applicant for professional certification is not required to take or pass a specified examination under certain circumstances; authorizing charter schools and charter management organizations to develop a professional development certification and education competency program; revising program requirements; requiring the department to adopt standards for the approval of such programs by a specified date; providing requirements for such standards; requiring each school district and charter school to submit its program for approval by a specified date; providing that certification requirements may not be met in a program that is not approved by the department after a specified date.

Section 2. Amends s. 1012.585, F.S.; revising college credit and inservice hour requirements for renewal of a professional certificate to include participation in specified activities.

Section 3. Amends s. 1012.98, F.S.; revising the activities designed to implement the school community professional development act to include specified training relating to a professional development certification and education competency program; revising requirements for school district professional development systems; requiring the department to disseminate professional development programs that meet specified criteria.

Section 4. Provides an effective date.

**II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

**A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:**

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

**B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:**

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

**C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:**

The bill may result in cost savings to teachers who participate in a professional development certification program because they would not be required to enroll in additional college coursework or take the Professional Education Test to earn their professional certificate.

**D. FISCAL COMMENTS:**

While the Department of Education indicated an additional FTE would be required to review and approve districts' professional development certification programs, insufficient data was provided to substantiate the request.

**III. COMMENTS**

**A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:**

**1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:**

None.

**2. Other:**

None.

**B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:**

None.

**C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:**

None.

**IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES**

None.