

# 2021 Florida Legislative Session New Law Summary



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## BILLS THAT PASSED IMPACTING FLORIDA COLLEGES

### ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

#### Emergency Management SB 2006

**Summary:** The bill addresses protocols during a pandemic or other public health emergency. It provides for legislative oversight of the executive branch’s emergency powers, specifically limiting emergency orders, proclamations, and rules to 60-day durations that can be renewed as long as the emergency conditions persist; requiring the Governor, if he or she closes schools or businesses, to state specific reasons why the schools or businesses need to close and reassess the closure regularly; and authorizing the Legislature to pass a concurrent resolution to terminate orders and directives issued under a state of emergency, instead of just the state of emergency itself.

County and city emergency orders that address emergencies would be narrowly tailored to address a “compelling public health or safety purpose”. The bill further authorizes the Governor to invalidate an order that “unnecessarily restricts individual rights or liberties”; and limits the duration of emergency orders to 7 days, with the option to renew the orders up to 5 times.

Finally, the bill also prohibits requirements of COVID-19-vaccination documentation to access, enter, or receive service from businesses, governmental entities, and educational institutions. The bill prohibits such entities from requiring proof of vaccination or post-infection recovery from COVID-19 but does not restrict the use of screening protocols.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, May 3, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-8](#)

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)

#### Legal Notices HB 35

**Summary:** The bill provides an option for governmental agencies required by law to publish certain legal notices to publish those notices on a newspaper’s website in lieu of a paper-based publication. An agency wishing to exercise this option may only do so upon the agency finding, pursuant to a publicly-noticed hearing, that such an Internet-based publication is in the public interest and that residents have sufficient access to the Internet in order to review any legal notices published in this format. This determination must be made by a majority vote of the governing body.

If a governmental agency exercises the option to publish legal notices on a newspaper website, the agency must provide an additional notice at least once per week in a print edition newspaper of general circulation. This notice must contain a statement that legal notices pertaining to the agency do not all appear in the print edition of the local newspaper and that a full listing may be accessed on the statewide legal notice website located at the website managed by the Florida Press Association.

The bill expands the types of publications that qualify to publish legal notices. Currently, a newspaper must, among other requirements, be “for sale to the general public” and be qualified to be admitted and entered as a periodical matter by the local post office. By removing these two requirements, the bill will allow for legal notices to be published in some smaller publications that are free to the public.

**Effective Date:** January 1, 2022

**Last Action:** Approved by Governor, May 7, 2021

**Chapter No.** [Ch\\_2021-017.pdf](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)

### Civil Liability for Damages Relating to COVID-19 SB 72

**Summary:** The bill provides protections for any civil liability claim against a public or non-public educational institution for COVID-19 related claims. A COVID-19-related claim is defined as a civil liability claim for damages, injury, or death that arises from, or is related to, COVID-19. The bill requires certain preliminary steps from plaintiffs in order to bring claims.

Additionally, the trial judge must determine before trial whether the educational institution has made a good faith effort to substantially comply with authoritative or controlling government-issued health standards or guidance at the time that the cause of action accrued. Even if the court makes such a finding, plaintiffs must prove that the educational institution is grossly negligent by clear and convincing evidence. Finally, plaintiffs must bring their claims within one year of the accrual of their action.

Effective Date: July 1, 2021

Last Action: Approved by the Governor, March 29, 2021

Chapter No. [2021-1](#)

Bill Text: [PDF](#)

### Foreign Influence HB 7017

**Summary:** The bill requires state agencies and political subdivisions to disclose all foreign donations and grants of \$50,000 or more to the Department of Financial Services (DFS). This bill also requires public disclosure of foreign gifts, scrutiny of grant applicants and vendors with certain foreign connections, and thorough scrutiny of foreign applicants for research positions and of foreign travel and activities of employees of major research institutions.

The bill requires any state agency or political subdivision to disclose any gift or grant with a value of \$50,000 or more from any foreign source to the Department of Financial Services (DFS) within 30 days of receipt. Further, the bill requires applicants to a state agency or political subdivision for a grant, or those that propose a contract having a value of \$100,000 or more, to disclose any current or prior contract with, or grant or gift received from a specified foreign country of concern with a value of \$50,000 or more.

The bill prohibits any grant or donation conditioned upon participation in such program or endeavor. The bill also requires applicants for grants or those proposing contracts with state agencies and political subdivisions to disclose all foreign financial connections with any of 7 countries of concern (the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Cuba, the Venezuelan regime of Nicolás Maduro, or the Syrian Arab Republic, including any agency of or any other entity under significant control of such foreign country of concern).

The bill also prohibits participation in an agreement with the foreign country of concern by any state college or university that is authorized to expend state-appropriated funds that constrains the freedom of contract, allows the curriculum or values of a program in the state to be directed or controlled by the foreign country of concern, or promotes an agenda detrimental to the safety or security of the United States or its residents.

Prior to execution of any cultural exchange agreement with a foreign country of concern, the substance of the agreement must be shared with federal agencies concerned with protecting national security or enforcing trade sanctions, embargoes, or other restrictions under federal law. If such federal agency provides information suggesting such agreement promotes an agenda detrimental to the safety or security of the United States or its residents, the public entity may not enter into the agreement.

The bill authorizes both DMS and DFS to adopt rules needed to carry out the new law.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by Governor, June 7, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-76](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)

## EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE PROGRAMMING

### Intellectual Freedom HB 233

#### **Summary:**

#### ***Intellectual Freedom Surveys***

The bill requires the State Board of Education (SBE) and Board of Governors of the State University System (BOG) to select or create a survey to be administered by all Florida College System (FCS) institutions and state universities annually. The surveys must be designed to capture the extent to which competing ideas and perspectives are presented on campus as well as the extent to which those surveyed feel free to express their beliefs and viewpoints on campus and in the classroom. The bill requires the surveys to be objective, nonpartisan, and “statistically valid.” All FCS institutions and state universities must conduct the survey annually. Beginning September 1, 2022, the results of this survey are to be compiled by the SBE and the BOG, respectively, and published each September.

#### ***No “Shielding”***

The bill prohibits FCS institutions, and the state universities from shielding students, faculty, or staff from protected free speech. The bill defines “shield” to mean to limit students’ access to or observation of ideas and opinions they may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or offensive.

#### ***Classroom Audio/Video Recording***

The bill authorizes the video and audio recording of class lectures and clarifies that the nonconsensual recording of video and audio of such lectures recorded in classrooms, subject to the privacy protections provided in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), is permissible. The bill makes it clear that this specified recording as authorized would not be a felony under Florida law, even if all the parties to the recording did not consent to be recorded.

A recording of a lecture made in a classroom may only be used for the following purposes:

- personal educational use;
- in connection with a complaint to the public institution of higher education where the recording was made; or
- as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. The bill further requires that a recording made in a classroom may only be published with the lecturer’s consent.

The bill provides for causes of action that may be brought by a student against an institution that violates this law, and by individuals (such as faculty members against a student who publishes recordings in violation of this law).

#### ***Student Codes of Conduct***

The bill proscribes certain requirements that now must be contained in the codes of student conduct maintained by FCS and SUS institutions, including:

- written notice of disciplinary proceeding, at least 7 business days prior to the proceeding, that includes the allegations, a specific citation to the code of conduct provision alleged violated, a description of the process to be used for the disciplinary proceeding, student’s or student organization’s rights in the proceeding, and the date, time, and location of the disciplinary proceeding;

- a student or student organization must be provided a list of witnesses who provided information to the institution or will provide information at the proceeding as well as all known inculpatory and exculpatory information at least 5 business days prior to the proceeding;
- a presumption of innocence of the accused student or student organization until the institution carries its burden of proof, as created by this bill, as at least a preponderance of the evidence;
- the right to an impartial hearing officer;
- the right to not self-incriminate and to remain silent and that such silence cannot be used against the accused student or student organization;
- the right to present relevant evidence and question witnesses;
- the right to an advocate or advisor provided by the institution to assist the student or student organization in understanding their rights;
- the right, at their own expense, to hire an advisor, advocate, or legal representative to be present and who can fully participate in the disciplinary proceeding;
- the right to appeal any initial determination to an appropriate senior administrator of the institution;
- a requirement that an accurate and complete recording be made of the disciplinary proceeding and any appeal and that such recording be made available to the student or student organization upon request; and
- a time limit for the charging of students under the code, including any exceptions to such time limit.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, June 23, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-159](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)

## Post-Secondary Education SB 52

### Summary:

#### *Fee Exemptions*

The bill clarifies that a specified postsecondary institution fee exemption applies to a student currently in Department of Children and Families (DCF) or relative or nonrelative custody, under a court guardianship, or adopted from DCF, or who was at the time the student turned 18 years of age.

#### *Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program*

The bill establishes the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program, administered by the Department of Education, to support postsecondary institutions in providing dual enrollment. The bill requires the program:

- Beginning the 2021 fall term, to reimburse eligible postsecondary institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by private school or home education program secondary students during the fall or spring terms.

- Beginning the 2022 summer term, to reimburse institutions for tuition and related instructional materials costs for dual enrollment courses taken by public school, private school, or home education program secondary students during the summer term.

The bill specifies reimbursement rates for Florida College System (FCS) institutions, state universities, and independent postsecondary institutions, as well as reimbursements for instructional materials costs.

### ***Early College Program***

The bill renames the collegiate high school program as the early college program, and defines the program to mean a structured high school acceleration program in which a cohort of students is enrolled full time in postsecondary courses toward an associate degree. The bill requires early college programs to prioritize courses applicable as general education core courses for an associate degree or a baccalaureate degree.

The bill authorizes a charter school to execute a contract directly with the local FCS institution or another authorized institution to establish an early college program.

### ***Bonuses for State University System Employees***

The bill authorizes a university board of trustees to implement a bonus scheme based on awards for work performance or employee recruitment and retention. The bill requires the board of trustees to submit to the Board of Governors (BOG) the bonus scheme, including specified criteria, and requires BOG to approve any bonus scheme so created before its implementation.

### ***School Community Professional Development Act***

The bill authorizes a public or private college or university with an approved teacher preparation program to develop a professional development system that includes a master plan for in-service activities.

### ***Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program***

This bill removes the specification that Florida Postsecondary Comprehensive Transition Program grant funds must be used for start-up and enhancement, and removes the institutional cap on annual grant awards.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, June 28, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-160](#)

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)



## Literacy (Education) HB 7011

### Summary:

This bill includes requirements to identify student deficiencies in literacy and intervene as early as prekindergarten, support students in transitioning to kindergarten, and monitor student progress.

The bill also requires, in part:

- Participants who enter specified teacher preparation programs and institutes in the 2022-2023 school year, for coverage areas that include reading instruction or intervention for any students in kindergarten through grade 6, to complete all of the competencies for a reading endorsement, including the practicum, prior to graduation or completion of the program. The bill also requires personnel who supervise such students to hold a certificate or endorsement in reading.
- The Department of Education (DOE) to review the competencies for the reading endorsement and provide a new pathway for teachers to achieve the reading endorsement.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, May 4, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-9](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)

## Workforce Related Programs and Services HB 1507

**Summary:** The bill creates a system-wide approach to workforce development and education in Florida. Specifically, the bill:

- Authorizes the Governor to seek federal waivers to create greater flexibility and strategic investment in Florida’s implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- Creates the Office of Reimagining Education and Career Help (Office) in the Executive Office of the Governor to provide coordination and alignment in Florida’s workforce development system.
- Requires the Office to create a “no-wrong-door” entry strategy whereby Floridians may access services from any workforce partner with a common intake form and case management system.
- Creates an online opportunity portal to provide Floridians with access to available state, federal, and local services and evaluative tools to determine short-term employability and long-term self-sufficiency. In addition, the portal will provide broader access to education and training options, real-time labor market information, career planning and career services tools, and other support available for workforce training and education linked to middle- and high-wage in-demand jobs.
- Requires the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and the Department of Children and Families to evaluate the impact of workforce services on participants receiving benefits and welfare transition programs, to include performance reports on participant earnings.
- Requires local workforce development boards to be assigned a letter grade, which must be made public, based on improvement of participant long-term self-sufficiency and return on investment.

- Charges the Labor Market Estimating Conference as the entity responsible for determining Florida’s real-time supply and demand in the labor market.
- Requires the Talent Development Council to coordinate Florida’s efforts to meet state healthcare workforce needs, by conducting a gap analysis and providing trend information on nursing programs.
- Requires the DEO to establish WIOA-eligible training provider criteria focused on participant outcomes.
- Requires the CareerSource state board to appoint a Credentials Review Committee to identify degree and non-degree credentials of value, develop a Master Credentials List for performance funding, and establish policy direction for funding which prioritizes outcomes and leverages resources to support vulnerable populations.
- Creates the Open-Door Workforce Grant Program to provide grants to school districts and Florida College System (FCS) institutions to cover up to two-thirds of the cost of short-term, high-demand programs.
- Creates the Money-Back Guarantee Program, requiring each school district and FCS institution to refund the cost of tuition to students who are not able to find a job within 6 months of completing select programs.
- Creates a new workforce performance funding model for school district and FCS institution workforce programs, requiring one-third of performance funding to be based on rewarding student job placement and the remaining two-thirds to be based on student earnings, with a focus on increasing the economic mobility of underserved populations.
- Requires that students entering a public postsecondary institution in 2022-2023, and thereafter, must be able to earn nationally recognized digital credentials for competencies within the general education core courses which demonstrate career readiness.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, June 24, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-164](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)

### **Educational to Employment SB 1028**

The bill modifies policies related to, among others, charter schools, schools of hope, high-performing charter schools, student retention, and transgender student athletes.

#### ***Florida College System and State University Charter Schools***

The bill authorizes state universities and Florida College System (FCS) institutions to solicit applications and sponsor charter schools, upon approval by the Department of Education (DOE).

The bill specifies funding for such charter schools through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) similar to other charter schools, but requires the DOE to develop a tool to calculate the funding amount for each eligible charter school student.

The bill specifies that the limitation of one developmental research (laboratory) school per university does not apply to a university that establishes a lab school to serve families of a military installation within the same county.

### *Charter School Operations*

The bill provides additional requirements relating to charter school sponsors, applications, contracts, enrollment, and termination of a charter. Specifically, the bill:

Relating to charter school sponsors:

- Requires the DOE to develop a sponsor evaluation framework with specified components, with results of the evaluation included in the annual charter school report.
- Specifies a sponsor's administrative fee for an exceptional student education center.

Relating to charter school applications:

- Removes the February 1 deadline for the submission of charter school applications, and specifies that the applicant determines when the charter school will open.
- Authorizes reasonable attorney fees related to application disputes, and establishes a financial penalty for school districts that fail to implement a court decision.

Relating to charter school contracts:

- Authorizes a charter school to forgo DOE mediation and immediately appeal to an administrative law judge in a dispute regarding a charter contract.
- Specifies that changes to a charter school's curriculum consistent with state standards are deemed approved, unless the sponsor and the DOE determines in writing that the curriculum is inconsistent with state standards.

Relating to charter school enrollment:

- Provides an enrollment preference for students who complete a VPK program at a provider with which the charter school has a written agreement.
- Expands the criteria by which a charter school may limit enrollment to include students living in a development in which a developer or charitable foundation contributes to a charter school with a specified value.

Relating to termination of a charter, provides requirements for a sponsor to immediately terminate a charter; authorizes a sponsor to seek an injunction in circuit court to prohibit continued operation of a charter school for health, safety, or welfare of the students; and authorizes reasonable attorney fees and costs in specified circumstances.

### ***High-Performing Charter Schools***

The bill replaces the annual limit on the establishment of high-performing charter schools to specify that a high-performing charter school may have open two applications at a time. Additionally, the bill provides that a charter school may be designated as high performing if it receives funding through the National Fund of the Charter School Growth Fund, and has received no school grade lower than a “C,” during each of the previous 3 school years for the years that the school received a grade.

### ***Schools of Hope***

The bill specifies a school of hope or a nonprofit entity that operates more than one school of hope can be designated as an (Local Education Agency) LEA by the DOE and authorizes the nonprofit to report its students to the DOE, rather than the school district, and:

- Specifies that a school of hope operated by a nonprofit entity designated as an LEA may comply with financial reporting requirements by submitting specified financial statements to the school district regarding all schools of hope in that district.
- Authorizes a not for profit entity designated by the DOE as an LEA to use unrestricted current and capital assets at any of its schools of hope within the same district.
- Authorizes a charter school operated as a school of hope to be eligible to receive charter school capital outlay funding.

Additionally, the bill authorizes personnel at a school of hope to complete background screening requirements by filing a set of fingerprints with the school of hope, rather than the school district.

### ***Other Charter School Provisions***

The bill provides additional charter school provisions, which:

- Specify that an interlocal agreement between a school district and a governmental entity which prohibits or limits the creation of a charter school within the geographic borders of the school district is void and unenforceable.
- Authorize a charter school that is an exceptional student education center and receives two consecutive ratings of “maintaining” or higher to replicate its educational program, subject to verification by the Commissioner of Education.
- Authorize a virtual charter school to provide part-time instruction.
- Authorize career and professional academies to be offered by charter schools.

### ***Student Retention***

The bill authorizes, effective upon becoming a law, a parent or guardian to submit a written request, by June 30, 2021, that his or her K-5 public school student be retained, for academic reasons, for the 2021-2022 school year in the grade level to which the student was assigned at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

The bill requires the principal to collaboratively discuss the request with the parent or guardian any basis for agreement or disagreement with the request. However, the bill specifies that the parent or guardian has the final decision whether to retain the student.

### ***Fairness in Women's Sports Act***

The bill creates the Fairness in Women's Sports Act to provide female athletes opportunities to demonstrate their skill, strength, and athletic abilities and also provide other opportunities that result from participating in athletic endeavors.

The bill requires interscholastic, intercollegiate, intramural, or club athletic teams or sports sponsored by a public secondary school or public postsecondary institution to be designated as male, female, or coed based on the biological sex at birth of team members.

The bill specifies athletic teams or sports designated for females, women, or girls may not be open to students of the male sex. A statement of a student's biological sex on the student's official birth certificate is considered to have correctly stated the student's biological sex if the statement was filed at or near the time of the student's birth.

### ***Other Provisions***

The bill modifies other educational provisions, which:

- Authorize high-performing school districts to provide up to two days of virtual instruction as a part of the 180 days, under specified circumstances.
- Authorize district school board special and advisory committees to meet remotely.
- Authorize that students at aviation maintenance schools that are certified by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and are licensed by the Commission on Independent Education may receive Florida Student Assistance Grant (FSAG) awards.
- Require, beginning in 2022-2023 academic year, public schools to provide information on the important role water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving lives.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021, except as otherwise provided

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, 6/2/2021; companion bill(s) passed, see [CS/HB 845](#) (Ch. [2021-217](#)), [CS/HB 1159](#) (Ch. [2021-228](#)), [CS/CS/SB 52](#) (Ch. [2021-160](#)), [CS/CS/SB 366](#) (Ch. [2021-162](#))

**Chapter No.** [2021-35](#)

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)

## Education (Civic Literacy) SB 1108

**Summary:** The bill amends Florida Statute 1003.4282 to require every student who takes the United States Government course in high school to take a civic literacy assessment, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year. Students who earn a passing score on the course assessment are exempt from the postsecondary civic literacy requirement. The bill amends Florida Statute 1007.25 to require students who initially enter a SUS or FCS institution during or after the 2021-2022 school year to demonstrate civic literacy by passing an assessment and taking a course on civic literacy. Students in high school may complete the civic literacy requirement through an accelerated mechanism, such as dual enrollment.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, June 23, 2021

**Chapter:** [2021-157](#)

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)

## Higher Education HB 1261

**Summary:** The bill provides liability protections for educational institutions for actions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the bill:

- Defines an educational institution as a preschool through secondary school, or postsecondary school, whether public or nonpublic. The Board of Governors (BOG) of the State University System and the State Board of Education (SBE) are also included within these immunity protections.
- Extends the protections to an educational institution that has taken reasonably necessary actions, such as providing online instruction or modifying services, in compliance with federal, state, or local guidance to diminish the impact or the spread of COVID-19 and provides specified immunity relating to such actions.

The bill specifies that in any action against an educational institution, the BOG, or the SBE for the reimbursement of tuition or fees, certain documents and publications of the institution are not evidence of an express or implied contract to provide in-person or on-campus education and related services or access to facilities during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The bill specifies that to bring an action against an educational institution for compliance with a federal, state, local, BOG, or SBE order or directive to alter the mode of instruction, the burden of proof must be clear and convincing evidence for damages against the institution.

### *Tuition and Fee Exemptions and Waivers*

The bill clarifies that a specified postsecondary education tuition and fee exemption applies to a student currently in the custody of the Department of Children and Families (DCF), in foster care, under a court guardianship, or adopted from DCF, or who was when the student turned 18 years of age.

The bill creates a fee waiver for Florida students who enroll in one of eight Programs of Strategic Emphasis identified by the BOG. A state university must waive tuition and fees for one upper-level course in that program for every upper-level course in which the student is enrolled.

- The bill also provides that students who receive the fee waiver for these courses will receive their standard award from the Bright Futures Florida Academic Scholars or Florida Medallion Scholars program.
- The waiver is available for up to 110 percent of the degree program credit hours.

The bill creates the State University Free Seat Program for Florida veterans and active duty personnel, and nontraditional students who have been out of school for five years, to enroll in an online baccalaureate program.

- Under the program a state university must waive tuition and fees for one online course. For all other courses in the online program, the state university may not charge more than 75 percent of the standard tuition rate and tuition differential fee.
- The discount is available for up to 110 percent of the program credit hours, and the program is capped at 1,000 student systemwide.

The bill creates an out-of-state fee waiver for nonresident students, starting in the 2022-2023 academic year, who:

- Have a grandparent who is a legal resident of Florida;
- Earn a high school diploma comparable to Florida;
- Achieve an SAT score in the 89th percentile, or a score on another comparable admissions test; and
- Enroll as a full-time undergraduate student at a state university in the fall academic term immediately following high school graduation.

The waiver is available for up to 110 percent of the degree program credit hours, and is capped at 350 students systemwide.

### ***Financial Aid Programs***

The bill makes technical and substantive changes to state financial aid programs, which:

- Modifies the Benacquisto Scholarship Program to remove initial eligibility for non-resident students beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year.
- Codifies existing requirements and establishes additional responsibilities for institutions that receive state financial aid and tuition assistance funds, with penalties for noncompliance.
- Removes from the Florida Student Assistance Grant program obsolete or unused provisions.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, July 6, 2021

**Chapter:** [2021-232](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)

### Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network HB 847

**Summary:** This bill establishes the Florida Postsecondary Academic Library Network (Network) under the joint oversight of the Board of Governors (BOG) and the Department of Education (DOE), in place of the Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative (FALSC).

The bill generally assigns to the Network the functions of the FALSC, with modifications, which include recommending the use of low cost, no cost, or open-access textbooks and innovative pricing techniques; negotiating statewide licensing of electronic library resources; and managing a single library automation system.

The bill repeals the Complete Florida Plus Program (Complete Florida Plus) but retains in the Network purposes from Complete Florida Plus regarding access to distance learning courses and degree programs, and the provision of online academic support services. The bill also assigns to the Network functions formerly under Complete Florida Plus, with modifications, including:

- A statewide Internet-based catalog of distance learning courses, which includes courses, degree programs, and resources offered by public postsecondary institutions.
- Statewide online student advising services and support with specified functions, limited to public postsecondary institutions.

The bill assigns responsibility for determining the host entity for these specified services to the Office of the BOG and the DOE, and requires the Chancellors of the FCS and the BOG to provide oversight for successful delivery of these services. The host entity is required to:

- Develop and disseminate guidelines for the statewide Internet-based catalog of distance learning courses.
- Submit a report to the Chancellors of the FCS and the BOG, by December 31, 2021, and annually thereafter, regarding the implementation and operation of the Network. The Chancellors must provide this report to the Governor, the Legislature, the BOG, and the State Board of Education.

The bill further requires the Commissioner of Education and Chancellor of the BOG to provide, by June 1, 2022, a joint recommendation for a process by which school district career centers and charter technical career centers would access appropriate Network services.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, June 14, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-85](#)

**Bill Text:** [PDF](#)



## Educational Opportunities Leading to Employment SB 366

**Summary:** The bill enhances work-based learning opportunities for students. The bill provides:

- That a student 18 years of age or younger who is in a paid work-based learning opportunity must be covered by the workers' compensation insurance of his or her employer.
- That a student 18 years of age or younger who is providing unpaid services under a work-based learning opportunity provided by a school district or Florida College System (FCS) institution is considered to be employed by the school district or FCS institution.
- Authority for the Department of Education (DOE) to reimburse employers, including school districts and FCS institutions, for the proportionate cost of workers' compensation insurance premiums for students in work-based learning opportunities in accordance with DOE rules, and appropriates \$2 million to the DOE for this purpose.

The bill requires the development of pathways to college credit programs. Specifically, the bill

- Requires the State Board of Education to develop, by January 31, 2022, alternative methods for assessing communication and computation skills. FCS institutions and dual enrollment programs may use a common placement test or the developed alternative methods for admissions and program eligibility.
- Requires a representative committee of public postsecondary institutions to identify three mathematics pathways aligned to programs, meta-majors, and careers.

The bill authorizes an institution to participate in the Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant (FSAG) Postsecondary program if the institution is an aviation maintenance school in Florida, is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration, and is licensed by the Commission for Independent Education.

The bill renames the Florida Ready to Work Certification Program as the Florida Ready to Work Credential Program (Credential Program) and revises the purpose of the program to enhance the employability skills of Floridians and to better prepare them for successful employment.

Specifically, the bill removes the award of scaled-level credentials and requires:

- The Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and the DOE to conduct a comprehensive identification of employability skills currently in demand by employers.
- An employability credential to be awarded to a Credential Program participant who successfully passes assessments which measure the employability skills identified by DEO and DOE.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2021

**Last Action:** Approved by the Governor, June 24, 2021

**Chapter No.** [2021-162](#), companion bill(s) passed, see [CS/CS/SB 1028](#) (Ch. [2021-35](#))

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)

## Bills Potentially Impacting the FCS that Failed

### **House Bill 135 / Senate Bill 532: School District Career Center Workforce Education Programs**

The bill authorizes a school district career center to prepare students for employment as a registered nurse (RN) by offering an Associate in Applied Science (AAS) or Associate in Science (AS) nursing degree program. The career center may only offer the AAS or AS nursing degree program to graduates of a Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) program offered by the same center.

**Effective Date:** 7/1/2021

**Last Action:** 4/30/2021 Senate - Died in Rules

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)

### **Senate Bill 1014: Employee Organizations**

The right to work and the right for public employees to unionize is a right established in Article I, Section 6 of the Florida Constitution, which is implemented in Chapter 447 of the Florida Statutes. Public employees can either be represented or not at their own choosing by a certified bargaining agent. A certified bargaining agent is typically an employee organization (i.e. UFF, SEIU, FOPE) wherein employees have authorized that entity to represent public employees within the definition provided to Public Employees Relations Commission (“PERC”). If that certified bargaining agent is approved, the agent must annually renew its registration with PERC.

**Effective Date:** 7/1/2021

**Last Action:** 4/30/2021 Senate - Died in Rules

**Bill Text:** [Web Page](#) | [PDF](#)

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS/DEFINITIONS

<b>ACC</b>	Articulation Coordinating Council
<b>BOG</b>	Board of Governors for the State University System
<b>BOT</b>	Board of Trustees
<b>CAPE</b>	Career and Professional Education
<b>CIE</b>	Council for Independent Education
<b>COP</b>	Council of Presidents
<b>CS</b>	Committee Substitute
<b>DBPR</b>	Department of Business and Professional Regulation
<b>DCF</b>	Department of Children and Families
<b>DMS</b>	Department of Management Services
<b>DOE</b>	Department of Education
<b>EOC</b>	End of Course (exam)
<b>FCS</b>	Florida College System
<b>FCSPF</b>	Florida College System Program Fund
<b>FCO</b>	Fixed Capital Outlay
<b>FALSC</b>	Florida Academic Library Services Cooperative
<b>FAFSA</b>	Free Application for Federal Student Assistance
<b>FERPA</b>	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
<b>FS</b>	Florida Statutes
<b>FSAG</b>	Florida Postsecondary Student Assistance Grant
<b>GAA</b>	General Appropriations Act, also referred to as the budget
<b>HB</b>	House Bill
<b>HECC</b>	Higher Education Coordinating Council
<b>ICUF</b>	Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida
<b>Line Item</b>	The number attached to an appropriation or proviso in the GAA
<b>PECO</b>	Public Education Capital Outlay
<b>PECO Sum of Digits</b>	Funds provided to the colleges for maintenance that is based upon square feet of facility space at the institution
<b>Proviso</b>	Language that directs specific instructions regarding an appropriation in the GAA
<b>SACS</b>	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (accreditation body)
<b>SB</b>	Senate Bill
<b>SBE</b>	State Board of Education
<b>SCCSORP</b>	State Community College System Optional Retirement Program
<b>SMSOAP</b>	Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program
<b>SPC</b>	St. Petersburg College
<b>VTC</b>	Vocational Technical Center



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