

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

**BILL #:** PCB HEWS 14-01 Career Centers and Charter Technical Career Centers

**SPONSOR(S):** Higher Education & Workforce Subcommittee

**TIED BILLS:** **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
Orig. Comm.: Higher Education & Workforce Subcommittee		Ammel	Sherry

### SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The proposed committee bill promotes better utilization of career centers and charter technical career centers and increases student access to programs that will prepare graduates for current and emergent careers in the following ways:

- Authorizes career centers and charter technical career centers to offer college credit certificate programs and creates a process for approval to offer associate in applied science (AAS) degree programs.
- Authorizes career centers and charter technical career centers who offer college credit certificate programs or AAS degrees to request a name change to "technical college."
- Establishes fees for college credit programs at career centers commensurate with Florida College System fees.
- Requires only those students pursuing a career certificate, college credit certificate or associate in applied science degree (not adult general education students) to meet residency requirements.

The proposed committee bill does not have a fiscal impact on state or local governments.

The proposed committee bill has an effective date of July 1, 2014.

# FULL ANALYSIS

## I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

### A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

#### Career Centers

##### Present Situation

Current law defines a career center as an educational institution offering terminal courses of a technical nature, and courses for out-of-school youth and adults.<sup>1</sup> Any district school board is authorized to establish and operate a career center after obtaining approval from the Department of Education (DOE).<sup>2</sup> In addition, district school boards of contiguous districts may enter into an agreement to establish a career center after obtaining approval from DOE.<sup>3</sup>

There are currently 48 public career centers operating in 30 school districts in Florida.<sup>4</sup> Forty-seven of the career centers are accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE). Gadsden Technical Institute became a candidate for accreditation in 2013.<sup>5</sup> The COE is recognized as a national institutional accrediting agency by the United States Secretary of Education for participation in Title IV programs.<sup>6</sup> COE accredits educational institutions in 35 states, the District of Columbia, and two foreign countries,<sup>7</sup> and its current scope includes accreditation of non-degree-granting and applied associate degree-granting postsecondary occupational education institutions.<sup>8</sup>

Both school districts and Florida College System (FCS) institutions offer workforce education programs.<sup>9</sup> School districts may provide workforce education programs through one or more career centers, and may provide workforce education programs by sponsoring charter technical career centers in coordination with an FCS institution.<sup>10</sup> Workforce education programs include: adult general education programs; career certificate programs; applied technology diploma programs; continuing workforce education courses; degree career education programs; and apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.<sup>11</sup> The career centers enrolled 46,739 students in career and technical education programs in 2012-13.<sup>12</sup>

Career centers in Florida are not currently authorized to award college credit or degrees. However, if an associate in applied science (AAS) or an associate in science degree program contains within it an occupational completion point that confers a certificate or applied technology diploma, that portion of the program may be conducted by a school district career center.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Section 1001.44(3), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1001.44(1), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> Section 1001.44(2), F.S.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Education, District Technical Center Directors List, available at <http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/pdf/DistrictTechnicalCenterDirectors.pdf>, last visited (Nov. 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Council on Occupational Education, *Accredited Institutions – August 2013*, available at <http://www.council.org/accredited-institutions/>.

<sup>6</sup> Financial Aid for Postsecondary Students, Accreditation in the United States, available at [http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation\\_pg6.html](http://www2.ed.gov/admins/finaid/accred/accreditation_pg6.html).

<sup>7</sup> COE, *Accredited Institutions – August 2013*, available at <http://www.council.org/accredited-institutions/>.

<sup>8</sup> COE, *Handbook of Accreditation: 2013 Edition (Amended: 4-26-13)*, available at <http://www.council.org/manuals/>.

<sup>9</sup> Section 1011.80(2), F.S.

<sup>10</sup> Florida House of Representatives, Schools and Learning Council, *Use of the Designation “College” by Career Centers & Charter Technical Career Centers*, Interim Project Report (February 2008), available at <http://myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Documents/publications.aspx?Committeeld=2370>, hereafter “Interim Report”.

<sup>11</sup> Section 1011.80(1), F.S.

<sup>12</sup> Florida Department of Education Presentation, *Postsecondary Education in District Technical Centers*, available at [http://flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2012-2014/AED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket\\_2435.pdf](http://flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/Committees/2012-2014/AED/MeetingRecords/MeetingPacket_2435.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Section 1011.80(2), F.S.

For some time, career centers have advocated for a name change from “technical center” to “technical college”, to create a positive image and perception of the programs, services, staff, and students. However, there was concern that the designation “college” may be perceived as inappropriate for an educational institution that is not authorized to award college credit or college degrees.<sup>14</sup>

## **Charter Technical Career Centers**

### Present Situation

Current law defines a charter technical career center as a public school or a public technical center operated under a charter granted by a district school board, FCS institution board of trustees, or consortium of the above entities, and managed by a board of directors.<sup>15</sup> The purpose of a charter technical center is to:

- develop a competitive workforce to support local business and industry and economic development;
- create a training and education model that is reflective of marketplace realities;
- offer a continuum of career educational opportunities using a school-to-work, tech-prep, technical, academy, and magnet school model; and
- provide career pathways for lifelong learning and career mobility.<sup>16</sup>

Charter technical career centers are authorized, through charters with their school district or FCS institution, to offer workforce education programs.<sup>17</sup> Charter technical career centers are not currently authorized to award college credit or degrees. However, if an associate in applied science or an associate in science degree program contains within it an occupational completion point that confers a certificate or applied technology diploma, that portion of the program may be conducted by a charter technical career center.<sup>18</sup>

There are currently two charter technical career centers operating in Florida, Lake Technical Center in Eustice and First Coast Technical College in St. Augustine. Both are accredited by COE.<sup>19</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The proposed committee bill authorizes career centers and charter technical career centers to offer college credit certificate programs and establishes a process by which they can seek approval from the State Board of Education (state board) to offer AAS degrees. The center must submit a notice of its intent to propose an AAS degree program to the Division of Career and Adult Education (DCAE) within the DOE and to the FCS institution within its service area. Among other requirements, the intent must include evidence that the center engaged in need, demand, and impact discussions with the FCS institution in its service area. The notice must be submitted 45 days before the proposal to offer an AAS degree program is submitted to the state board. The proposal must be submitted to DCAE, and include, at a minimum, the following:

- a description of the planning process and timeline for implementation;
- an analysis of workforce demand and unmet need for graduates of the program on a district or regional basis, as appropriate;
- identification of the facilities, equipment, and library and academic resources to be used;
- a cost analysis of creating a new AAS degree program;

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<sup>14</sup> Interim Report, pg. 1

<sup>15</sup> Section 1002.34(3)(a), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Section 1002.34(2), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Section 1011.80(2), F.S.

<sup>18</sup> *Id.*

<sup>19</sup> Office of Program Policy and Governmental Accountability, *Technical Centers*, presentation to Higher Education and Workforce Subcommittee (Jan. 8, 2014), available at <http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/Presentations.aspx>.

- the program’s admission requirements, academic content, curriculum, faculty credentials, student-to-teacher ratios, and accreditation plan;
- the program’s enrollment projections and funding requirements;
- a description of outcome measures used to determine success;
- a plan that describes how the career center’s college credit courses will meet the equivalent faculty credentials for inclusion in the statewide course numbering system; and
- a plan of action if the program is terminated.

DCAE shall review the proposal, and the Commissioner of Education shall make a recommendation to the state board. If approved by the state board, the center must obtain accreditation as an associate-in-applied-science-degree-granting institution from an accrediting agency that is recognized by the United States Department of Education.

The center must annually, and upon request of the state board, the Chancellor of DCAE, or the Legislature, submit a status report regarding the center’s AAS degree programs. The proposed committee bill outlines specific performance and compliance indicators that must be included in the report.

The proposed committee bill authorizes a career center or a charter technical career center that offers college credit certificates or AAS degree programs to use the designation “technical college” with appropriate approval of their local school boards and accrediting agency.

## **Applied Technology Diploma**

### Present Situation

An applied technology diploma (ATD) is currently defined as a course of study that is part of a technical degree program, is less than 60 credit hours, and leads to employment in a specific occupation. It may consist of either technical (clock hour) or college credit; however a public school district (through a career center or charter technical career center), may offer the ATD only as technical credit, and college credit can be awarded to the student only upon articulation to an FCS institution.<sup>20</sup> As of October 2013, ten of the 30 districts in which career centers operate, were offering ATD programs with a statewide enrollment of 1,301 students.<sup>21</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The proposed committee bill renames and redefines “applied technology diploma” to “college credit certificate” to align with the centers’ authority to offer college credit. ATDs, currently offered as clock hour programs, will be converted to college credit. College credit courses may be offered by a career center only as part of a college credit certificate or AAS degree program, and faculty credentials must meet guidelines required in the state course numbering system to ensure appropriate transfer of credit.

## **Workforce Education Postsecondary Student Fees**

### Present Situation

In 2011, the Legislature established a single block tuition for adult general education that resulted in a block tuition of \$45 per half year or \$30 per term for residents and nonresidents, and an additional out-of-state fee of \$135 per half year or \$90 per term. The fee exemptions previously outlined in s.

<sup>20</sup> Section 1004.02(8), F.S.

<sup>21</sup> Email, Florida Department of Education, Division of Career and Adult Education (Jan. 28, 2014).

1009.25(1), F.S., for students enrolled in adult basic, adult secondary, and career-preparatory instruction from payment of tuition and fees, were also repealed, creating an additional requirement to verify the residency status of all students enrolling in adult general education. The legislation required adult general education students to meet the residency documentation requirements outlined in 1009.21, F.S.<sup>22</sup>

### Effect of Proposed Changes

The proposed committee bill establishes one block tuition and fees for all students enrolling in adult general education programs. This change will reduce the administrative burden on institutions to verify student residency, increase affordability, and promote access for students by eliminating cumbersome documentation requirements.

The proposed committee bill also establishes fees for college credit courses at career centers commensurate with those charged at FCS institutions.

#### B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

**Section 1.** Amends s. 1001.44 F.S., authorizing a career center to offer college credit certificate programs and providing a process for approval to offer associate in applied science (AAS) degree programs upon approval of the State Board of Education and their accrediting agency; outlining the application and approval process for offering such programs; and allowing a career center that does offer college credit certificate programs or AAS programs to use the designation “college” with appropriate approval.

**Section 2.** Amends s. 1002.34, F.S., authorizing a charter technical career center to offer college credit certificate programs and providing a process for approval to offer AAS degree programs; and allowing a center that does offer college credit certificate or AAS programs to use the designation “charter technical college” with appropriate approval.

**Section 3.** Amends s. 1004.02, F.S., renaming the applied technology diploma program as the college credit certificate program to provide clarification and reflect that a career center or charter technical career center can now offer college credit in such programs.

**Section 4.** Amends 1007.23, F.S., correcting a cross reference from applied technology diploma to career credit certificate.

**Section 5.** Amends 1007.25, F.S., correcting a cross reference from applied technology diploma to college credit certificate.

**Section 6.** Amends 1009.22, F.S., requiring only those students pursuing a career certificate, college credit certificate or associate in applied science degree (not adult general education students) to meet residency requirements.

**Section 7.** Amends s.1009.53, F.S., correcting a cross reference from applied technology diploma to college credit certificate.

**Section 8.** Amends s. 1009.532, F.S., correcting a cross reference from applied technology diploma to college credit certificate.

**Section 9.** Amends s. 1009.536, F.S., correcting a cross reference to college credit certificate instead of applied technology diploma.

**Section 10.** Amends s. 1011.80, F.S., authorizing a career center or charter technical career center to offer AAS degree programs; and clarifying that a career center and a charter technical career center

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<sup>22</sup> Section 11, ch. 2011-63, L.O.F.  
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authorized to offer AAS degree programs, may only offer those general education courses contained within the approved degree program.

**Section 11.** Provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

## **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:**

None.

### **D. FISCAL COMMENTS:**

None.

## **III. COMMENTS**

### **A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:**

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

2. Other:

None.

### **B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:**

The proposed committee bill requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules providing guidelines for receiving, reviewing, and approving proposals to offer associate in applied science degree programs.

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

None.

## **IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES**

