

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Education Pre-K - 12 Committee

BILL: Proposed Committee Substitute for SB 1908

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee and Senator Gaetz

SUBJECT: High School Grades

DATE: March 10, 2008

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	deMarsh-Mathues	Matthews	ED	Pre-meeting
2.			EA	
3.			RC	
4.				
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

The bill provides additional criteria and student assessment data for designating school grades, beginning with the 2009-2010 school year for high schools with grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, or grades 10, 11, and 12. Half of a school's grade will be based on the existing FCAT-related factors in s. 1008.34(3)(a), F.S., and the other half will be based on factors that include a school's high school graduation rate, including at-risk students who scored at Level 2 or lower on the 8th grade FCAT in reading and math, the postsecondary readiness of the students, and the annual growth or decline in these components. As valid data becomes available, the criteria will include performance and participation of students in Advanced Placement (AP®) courses; International Baccalaureate (IB) courses; dual enrollment courses; Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses; and the achievement of industry certification in a career and professional academy.

This bill substantially amends section 1008.34 of the Florida Statutes:

II. Present Situation:

Student achievement data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in grades 3-10 are used to establish both proficiency levels and annual progress for individual students, schools, districts, and the state.¹ Results are also used as the primary criteria in calculating school performance grades, school rewards and recognition, and performance-based funding.² The

¹ s. 1008.34, F.S.

² Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

results of the statewide assessment program must be annually reported by the Commissioner of Education.

School grades were first issued in 1999 under the A+ Plan for Education with the FCAT being the primary criterion in calculating school grades.³ Since then, school grading evolved to include the FCAT results of students in grades 3-10, student learning gains, and a measure to determine whether the lowest performing students are making improvements in reading, math or writing.⁴ By the 2009-2010 school year, the criteria for school grades will include learning gains for students seeking a special diploma, as measured by an alternate assessment tool.⁵

The following letter grades are used to designate school performance:

- "A," for schools making excellent progress;
- "B," for schools making above average progress;
- "C," for schools making satisfactory progress;
- "D," for schools making less than satisfactory progress; and
- "F," for schools failing to make adequate progress.⁶

The criteria for designating school performance grades are based on a combination of the following:⁷

- Student achievement scores, including achievement scores for students seeking a special diploma;
- Student learning gains as measured by annual FCAT assessments in grades 3 through 10; and
- Improvement of the lowest 25th percentile of students in the school in reading, math, or writing on the FCAT, unless these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance.

Student assessment data used in determining school grades includes:⁸

- Aggregate scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school who have been:
 - Assessed on the FCAT; and
 - Assessed on the FCAT, including Florida Writes, with scores at or in the lowest 25th percentile of students in the school in reading, math, or writing, unless these students are exhibiting satisfactory performance; and
- Achievement scores and learning gains of eligible students attending alternative schools that provide dropout prevention and academic intervention services pursuant to s. 1003.53, F.S.

³ ch. 99-398, L.O.F. In school years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, a school's performance grade was determined by the student achievement levels on the FCAT and on other appropriate performance data, including, but not limited to, attendance, dropout rate, school discipline data, and student readiness for college, in accordance with rules of the State Board of Education. Student assessment data included the median scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school who were assessed on the FCAT and who scored at or in the lowest 25th percentile of the state in the previous school year.

⁴ See ch. 2000-235, L.O.F., ch. 2001-90, L.O.F., ch. 2002-387, L.O.F., and ch. 2006-74, L.O.F.

⁵ ch. 2006-74, L.O.F., which also created s. 1008.341, F.S., to permit alternative schools that provide dropout prevention and academic intervention services pursuant to s. 1003.53, F.S., to receive a school improvement rating.

⁶ s. 1008.34, F.S.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ *Id.*

School grades are calculated using a point system. Schools are awarded one point for each percent of students who score at specific levels on the FCAT and make annual learning gains.⁹ Student scores are classified into five achievement levels, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest.¹⁰ Schools earn one point for each percent of students who score in achievement Levels 3, 4, or 5 in reading and one point for each percent of students who score Levels 3, 4, or 5 in math. Schools earn one point for each percent of students scoring 3.5 or above on the writing portion of the FCAT. Points are also awarded for students who make annual learning gains in reading and math and for the learning gains of students scoring in the lowest quartile in reading.¹¹ These points are added together and converted into a school grading scale.

In addition to the accumulation of percentage points for each of the performance measures, schools are also evaluated on the basis of the percent of students tested and the adequate progress of the lowest quartile of students in reading and math.¹²

- Schools earning enough total points to earn a grade of “A” must also test at least 95 percent of their eligible students. All other letter grade designations are based on testing a minimum of 90 percent of the eligible students;
- Schools with enough points to earn an “A” must show adequate progress of the lowest quartile of students¹³ in both reading and math for the current year; and
- Schools with enough points to earn a “B” or “C” must show adequate progress of the lowest quartile of students in both reading and math for either the current or previous year.¹⁴ The final grade will be reduced one letter grade for schools failing to meet this criterion.

In 2007, school grades include student performance on the science portion of the FCAT and the learning gains of students scoring in the lowest quartile in math.¹⁵ Additionally, high schools were eligible to earn ten bonus points to their total school grade points if at least half of the 11th and 12th grade students in the school who were required to retake the grade 10 FCAT met the FCAT graduation requirement.¹⁶ To receive the bonus, there had to be 10 eligible students. Of the 162 high schools that earned bonus points, 22 schools improved a letter grade due to the bonus points.¹⁷

The following table reflects the high school grades for school years 1999 through 2007.

⁹ Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

¹⁰ Student performance is considered to be below grade level (Levels 1 and 2), at grade level (Level 3), and above grade level (Levels 4 and 5).

¹¹ Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ For purposes of this calculation, these are students scoring in Levels 1-3 of the reading and math portions of the FCAT in each grade. *2007 Guide to Calculating School Grades, 2006-2007 Technical Assistance Paper*, DOE, p. 5.

¹⁴ *Id.* The minimum requirement for adequate progress is met when at least half of the lowest performing students make learning gains.

¹⁵ *Id.* and Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C.

¹⁶ Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

¹⁷ Two schools improved to an “A,” 13 schools improved to a “B,” and 7 schools improved to a “C.” To receive the ten points, at least 50 percent of the 11th and 12th grade students must pass the retake of the reading and math portion of the FCAT. See http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/pdf/0607/School_Grades_07_PressPacketComplete.pdf

High School Grades for School Years 1999-2007¹⁸

Grade	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002	2000-2001	1999-2000	1998-1999
A	55	64	59	35	57	53	54	10	8
B	86	95	82	66	79	65	17	9	12
C	119	146	134	159	145	152	252	280	278
D	102	66	95	83	51	40	45	62	56
F	30	10	21	15	12	19	0	0	4

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill provides additional criteria and student assessment data for designating school grades, beginning with the 2009-2010 school year for high schools with grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, or grades 10, 11, and 12. Half of a school's grade will be based on the existing FCAT-related factors in s. 1008.34(3)(a), F.S., and the other half will be based on the following:

- High school graduation rate of the school;
- As valid data becomes available, the performance and participation of a school's students in Advanced Placement (AP®) courses; International Baccalaureate (IB) courses; dual enrollment courses; Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses; and achievement of industry certification in a career and professional academy, as described in s. 1003.493, F.S.;¹⁹
- Postsecondary readiness of the school's students, as measured by the SAT, ACT, or the Common Placement Test;²⁰
- High school graduation rate of at-risk students who scored at Level 2 or lower on the 8th grade FCAT in reading and math; and
- Growth or decline in the components listed above from year to year.

To the existing student assessment data, the bill adds the following data, as determined to be valid and available by the DOE:

- High school graduation rate of the school, as calculated by the DOE;
- Participation rate of all eligible students enrolled in the school and enrolled in AP®, IB, dual enrollment, AICE, and eligible industry certification programs;²¹
- Aggregate scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school in AP®, IB, and AICE, courses;
- College credit earned by all eligible students enrolled in the school in dual enrollment programs;²²
- Certificates earned by all eligible students enrolled in the school for an industry certified program, as determined by the AWI, in a career and professional academy;

¹⁸ DOE, February 2008.

¹⁹ AP®, IB, dual enrollment, AICE are acceleration mechanisms under ss. 1007.22 and 1007.27, F.S. National industry certification is determined by the Agency for Workforce Innovation, pursuant to s. 1003.492(2), F.S., based upon the highest available national standards.

²⁰ The Common Placement Test, pursuant to s. 1008.30, F.S., assesses the basic computation and communication skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at any public postsecondary educational institution.

²¹ ss. 1003.492 and 1003.493, F.S.

²² s. 1007.271, F.S.

- Aggregate scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school in reading, math, and other subjects, as measured by the SAT, ACT, and Common Placement Test for postsecondary readiness;
- High school graduation rate of all eligible at-risk students enrolled in the school who scored at Level 2 or lower on the reading and math portions of the 8th grade FCAT; and
- Growth or decline in the data components listed above from year to year.

For high schools (grades 9, 10, 11, and 12, or grades 10, 11, and 12), the criteria must give added weight to the graduation rate of all eligible at-risk students.²³ High schools designated with a grade of "A" must demonstrate that at-risk students in the school are making adequate progress.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The Commissioner of Education's annual report on the student assessment program must identify each school's performance as having improved, remained the same, or declined. This rating is based on a comparison of the current year's and previous year's student and school performance data. Schools that improve at least one grade level are eligible for school recognition funds pursuant to s. 1008.36, F.S. Depending on how the provisions of the bill are implemented and the school grades earned under the new criteria, there may be an indeterminate fiscal impact in FY 09-10.

²³ At risk students are students who score at Level 2 or lower on the 8th grade FCAT in reading and math.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
