

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: CS/SB 1908 Designation of High School Grades

SPONSOR(S): Education Pre-K - 12, Gaetz and others

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:** None.

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR
1) <u>Schools & Learning Council</u>	<u>12 Y, 0 N</u>	<u>Kutasi/Eggers</u>	<u>Cobb</u>
2) <u>Policy & Budget Council</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
3) <u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
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5) <u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The bill amends Florida law to provide 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 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, the performance of a school's students on statewide standardized end-of-course assessments approved by the Department of Education, when available, 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. [Amendments one and two, adopted by the Schools & Learning Council, add the achievement of the Florida Ready to Work Credential as a criterion to be included in designating school grades.]

For an explanation of the three amendments adopted by the House of Representatives Schools & Learning Council on April 11, 2008, see SECTION IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. HOUSE PRINCIPLES ANALYSIS:

The bill does not appear to implicate any of the House Principles.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

SCHOOL GRADES

Current Law:

Student achievement data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in grades 3 through 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 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;

¹ s. 1008.34, F.S.

² Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C.

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., permits 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.*

- 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 include: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.

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 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 included 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

⁸ *Id.*

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.

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.

High School Grades for School Years 1999-2007¹⁸

Grade	20062007	20052006	20042005	20032004	20022003	20012002	20002001	19992000	19981999
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

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;
- Performance of a school's students on statewide standardized end-of-course assessments approved by the Department of Education; 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;

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.fl DOE.org/pdf/0607/School_Grades_07_PressPacketComplete.pdf

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.

- 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;
- 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;
- Performance of a school's students on statewide standardized end-of-course assessments approved by the Department of Education; 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.

See SECTION IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES for a discussion of the three amendments adopted by the Schools & Learning Council on April 11, 2008.

C. SECTION DIRECTORY:

- Section 1.** Amends s. 1008.34, F.S., providing additional criteria and student assessment data for designating high school grades, beginning with the 2009-2010 school.
- Section 2.** Providing an effective date of July 1, 2008.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:
None.

2. Expenditures:

²¹ ss. 1003.492 and 1003.493, F.S.

²² s. 1007.271, F.S.

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

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

Schools that earn a grade of "A" or improve at least one grade level are eligible for school recognition funds pursuant to s. 1008.36, F.S. The fiscal impact on this program cannot be determined because it is not known how the provisions of the bill will be implemented and the school grades earned under the new criteria. If the bill is implemented in a manner that increases the number of eligible schools, funds for the school recognition program would increase. Conversely, if implementation reduces the number of eligible schools, funds for the school recognition program would decrease. However, in either situation, implementation would be accomplished within existing state funds, because funds for the Discretionary Lottery program offset any increases or decreases to the School Recognition program funds.

The State Board of Education will have responsibility to incorporate the additional factors into the criteria for high school grades as required by the bill. This effort is expected to have an insignificant fiscal impact.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

This bill does not appear to require a city or county to expend funds or to take any action requiring the expenditure of funds.

The bill does not appear to reduce the authority that municipalities or counties have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

This bill does not appear to reduce the percentage of state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

None.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

D. STATEMENT OF THE SPONSOR

Not applicable.

IV. AMENDMENTS/COUNCIL SUBSTITUTE CHANGES

On April 11, 2008, the Schools and Learning Council adopted three amendments and reported the bill favorably.

Amendments one and two, offered by Representative Pickens:

- Add achievement of the Ready to Work Credential to the list of work-readiness measures, which the bill adds for the calculation of school grades for high schools.

Amendment three, offered by Representative Coley, adds the provisions of HB 7069. More particularly, the amendment:

- Adds requirements that each public high school in the state provide students access to at least four AP, IB, AICE, or dual enrollment courses--one each in English, mathematics, science, and social studies--and at least four courses in career and technical dual enrollment by the 2009-2010 school year.
- Provides that in order to meet the above access requirement, schools may utilize Florida Virtual School, a career center, a charter technical career center, a community college, a state university, or an independent college or university that is eligible to participate in dual enrollment.
- Requires the State Board of Education to adopt a comprehensive plan to provide all students with access to a substantive and rigorous curriculum designed to challenge their minds, enhance their knowledge and skills, and provide opportunities to acquire postsecondary education credits while in high school.
- Provides for recognition of a student's accomplishments in preparing for college or career by requiring, beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, each standard high school diploma to include, as applicable:
 - A designation of the student's major area of interest
 - A designation reflecting completion of accelerated college credit courses
 - A designation reflecting career education certification
 - A designation reflecting a Ready to Work Credential
- Requires state universities to weigh dual enrollment courses the same as comparable AP, IB, and AICE courses for purposes of making admissions decisions beginning with the 2009-2010 academic year.
- Requires the district interinstitutional articulation agreement between a district school superintendent and community college president to include an identification of the responsibility

of the postsecondary institution for the assigning of letter grades for dual enrollment courses and the responsibility of school districts for posting dual enrollment course grades to the high school transcript as assigned by the postsecondary institution awarding the credit.

- Provides for a Remediation Reform Pilot Project designed to reduce the need for and the cost of remediation for recent high school graduates who enter postsecondary education. The amendment also revises provisions relating to the common placement test, including that:
 - High schools will be required to evaluate prior to the beginning of the 12th grade the college or career readiness of each student scoring at level 2 or 3 on the reading portion of the grade 10 FCAT or level 2, 3, or 4 on the mathematics portion of the grade 10 FCAT using results from the CPT or an equivalent exam identified by the State Board of Education.
 - The State Board is required to establish in rule the minimum test scores a student must achieve to demonstrate readiness.
 - The high school must use the results of the test to advise students of any identified deficiencies and provide any necessary remedial instruction prior to, or the summer immediately following high school graduation.
 - Secondary and postsecondary institutions are to collaborate on the remedial instruction that will be provided.
- Requires the Florida Virtual School to partner with one or more community colleges to develop remedial content that may be offered online contingent upon appropriations of funds in the GAA.
- Requires district school boards to establish policies that require an annual review of each high school student's personal education plan.