

1002.375 Alternative credit for high school courses; pilot project.--

(1) The Commissioner of Education shall implement a pilot project in up to three school districts beginning in the 2008-2009 school year which allows school districts to award alternative course credit for students enrolled in nationally or state-recognized industry certification programs, as defined by the Agency for Workforce Innovation in accordance with the criteria described in s. 1003.492(2). The Commissioner of Education shall establish criteria for districts that participate in the pilot program. School districts interested in participating in the program must submit a letter of interest by July 15, 2008, to the Commissioner of Education identifying up to five nationally or state-recognized industry certification programs, as defined by the Agency for Workforce Innovation in accordance with the criteria described in s. 1003.492(2), under which the district would like to award alternative credit for the eligible courses identified in subsection (2). The Commissioner of Education shall select up to three participating school districts by July 30, 2008. The Commissioner of Education shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives identifying the number of students choosing to earn alternative credit, the number of students that received alternative credit, and legislative recommendations for expanding the use of alternative credit for core academic courses required for high school graduation. The report shall be submitted by January 1, 2010.

(2) For purposes of designing and implementing a successful pilot project, eligible alternative credit courses include Algebra 1a, Algebra 1b, Algebra 1, Geometry, and Biology. Alternative credits shall be awarded for courses in which a student is not enrolled, but for which the student may earn academic credit by enrolling in another course or sequence of courses required to earn a nationally or state-recognized industry certificate, as defined by the Agency for Workforce Innovation in accordance with the criteria described in s. 1003.492(2), of which the majority of the standards-based content in the course description is consistent with the alternative credit course description approved by the Department of Education.

(3) An alternative credit course is not subject to:

(a) The definition of credit under s. 1003.436;

(b) The time requirements of s. 1011.60(2); or

(c) The net hours of instruction requirements for purposes of determining full-time equivalency pursuant to s. 1011.61(1)(a)1. under the Florida Education Finance Program.

(4) The Department of Education may approve a course as an alternative credit course pursuant to this section. In order to earn credit, each participating student must pass an end-of-course assessment that measures proficiency in the Sunshine State Standards addressed by the course. The Department of Education shall approve each end-of-course assessment and the minimum passing score for each assessment. Approved

assessments shall be limited to assessments for Algebra 1a, Algebra 1b, Algebra 1, Geometry, and Biology developed by the Florida Virtual School, or end-of-course statewide standardized assessments for these courses which may be adopted or developed by the department. The department shall approve the method of administering end-of-course assessments for alternative credit courses in each participating school district in order to ensure the validity of the assessment results.

(5) School districts shall report all enrollments and credits awarded for alternative education courses pursuant to this section under procedures prescribed by the Department of Education.

(6) The Department of Education shall maintain a list of approved assessments and minimum passing scores for each approved course. The approved list must be incorporated into the Course Code Directory. The department shall prescribe the information a district must provide in order to have a course considered for inclusion in the directory listing for the approved courses used in the pilot program. A properly completed request by a district to have a course included in the directory must be approved or denied by the department within 30 days after receipt. When a request is denied, the department must provide the district with its reason for denial in writing within 10 days after the denial.

(7) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement the pilot program created in this section.

History.--s. 1, ch. 2008-174.