

# Career Readiness Initiatives in Florida

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Division of Workforce Education  
State Board of Education Meeting  
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# Florida Ready to Work

An innovative, new workforce education and economic development program. It is helping to build a skilled workforce – a catalyst for retaining and creating high-wage jobs, attracting business investment and growing Florida's economy.



# Florida Ready to Work Employee Credentialing Program

- ENACTED by the Florida Legislature in 2006 with general revenue funding
- Created to enhance the workplace skills of Florida's students and jobseekers and to better prepare individuals for successful employment
- Provides jobseekers a competitive edge – a credential that proves to employers that they have the right skills and the right attitude
- Takes the guesswork out of hiring, saving time and money for employers

# The Credential

- Personalized certificate, issued by the state of Florida and signed by the Governor
- To earn the credential the jobseeker must take three assessments:
  - Applied Mathematics
  - Reading for Information
  - Locating Information

# The Assessments

- Developed by ACT<sup>®</sup>, the national testing company best known for the ACT college admissions test
- Research shows that these three assessments test the work skills required for more than 85 percent of all jobs today
- Online tutorials aligned with assessments
- No cost to the jobseeker

# Three Credentials

Jobseekers may earn one of three levels:



**Ready for 30% of jobs**



**Ready for 65% of jobs**



**Ready for 90% of jobs**

# Employer Partners

- Over 400 Florida employer partners who recognize Ready to Work Credentialing Program as a hiring and/or training tool
- Ready to Work gives participating employers a competitive edge by:
  - Reducing employee turnover
  - Reducing training costs
  - Saving hiring time and money
  - Increasing productivity and profitability

# Employer Partners

- Include Shands Hospital (Jacksonville), PGT Industries, Volusia County Government, Busch Gardens, Bayfront Medical Center, and Pierce Manufacturing.
- Supported by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Florida, HR Florida State Council, Employ Florida, and the Manufacturer's Association of Florida.

# Florida Ready to Work

- 607 assessment sites throughout the state  
(schools, community colleges, regional workforce boards, correctional facilities, community-based organizations, and employers)
- 202,700 students/jobseekers enrolled as of March 2009
- 208,515 assessment tests administered since inception through March 2009
- 49,529 cumulative credentials awarded since inception - 85 percent earned this year
- 42,062 credentials awarded year to date



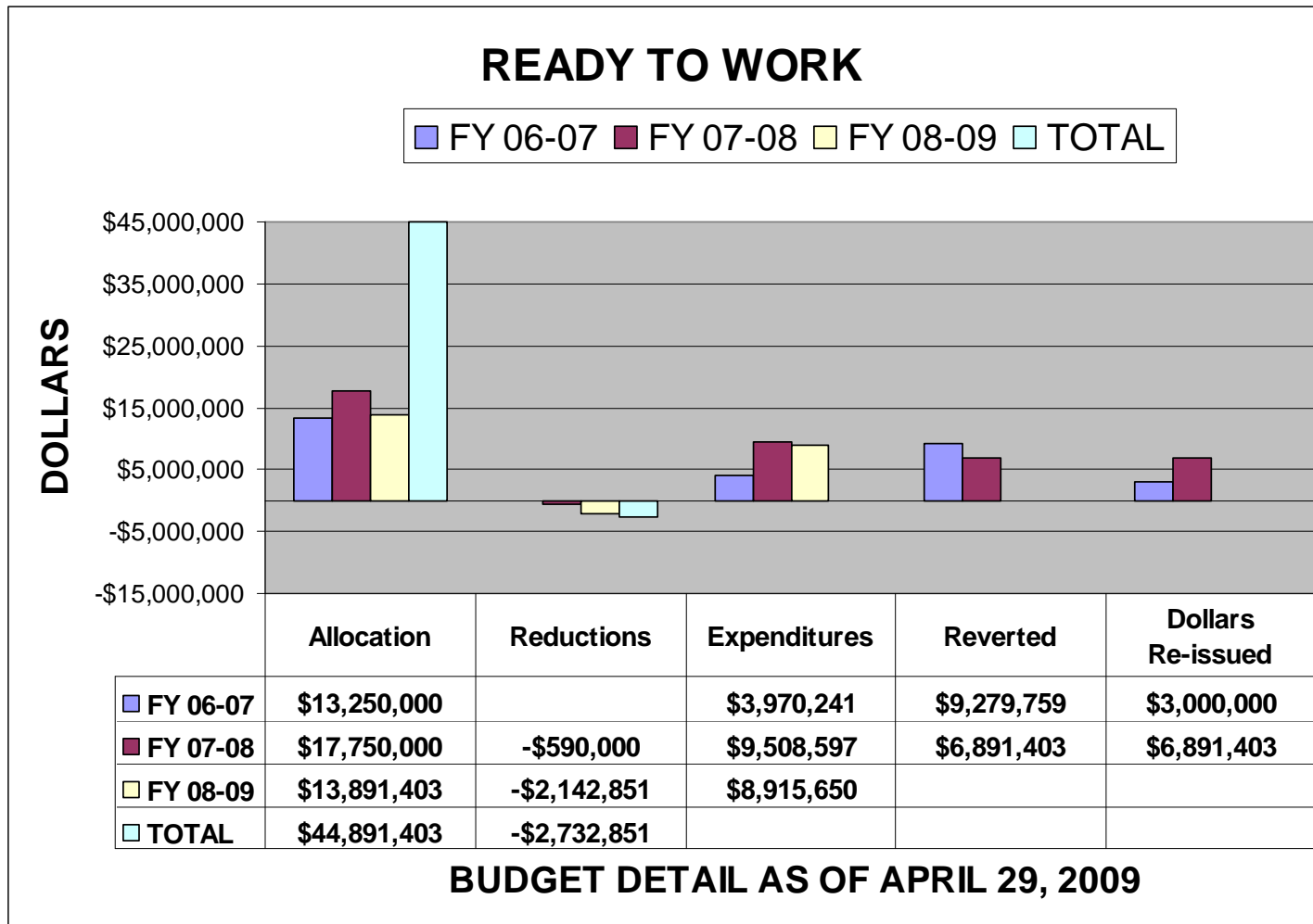
# Assessment Centers

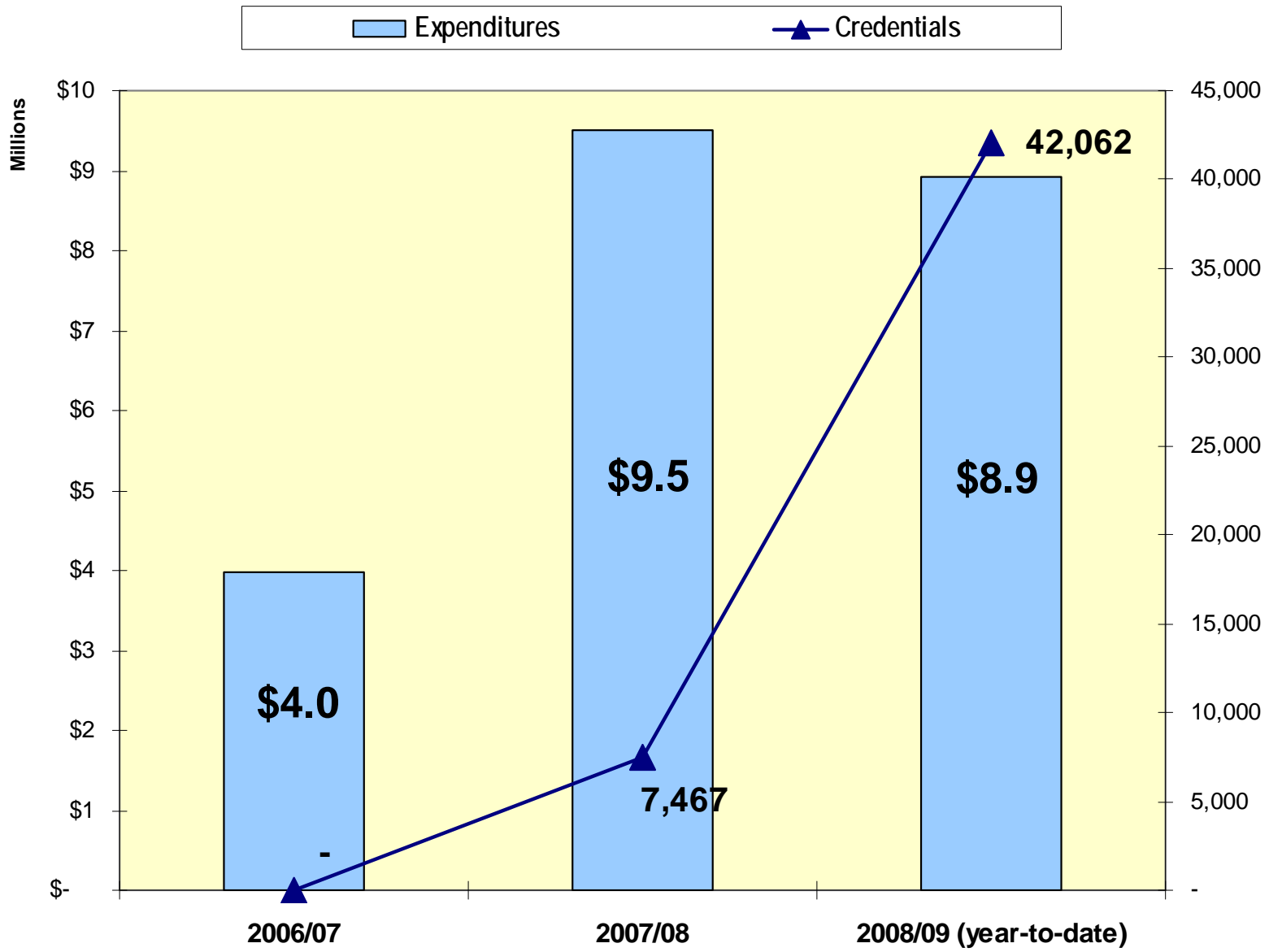
Sites	Assessments to Date	Credentials to Date
High Schools	158,711	36,823
Dept. of Juvenile Justice	2,277	446
Adult Education	2,506	632
Public Technical Centers	16,124	4,345
Community-based Organizations	1,787	333
Regional Workforce Boards	17,277	4,524
Employer Sites	1,400	388
Community Colleges	1,938	402
Charter Schools	1,639	419
Other Sites	277	50
Correctional Programs	3,857	974
Private Schools/Colleges	61	14
State University Sites	711	179
<b>Total</b>	<b>208,515</b>	<b>49,529</b>

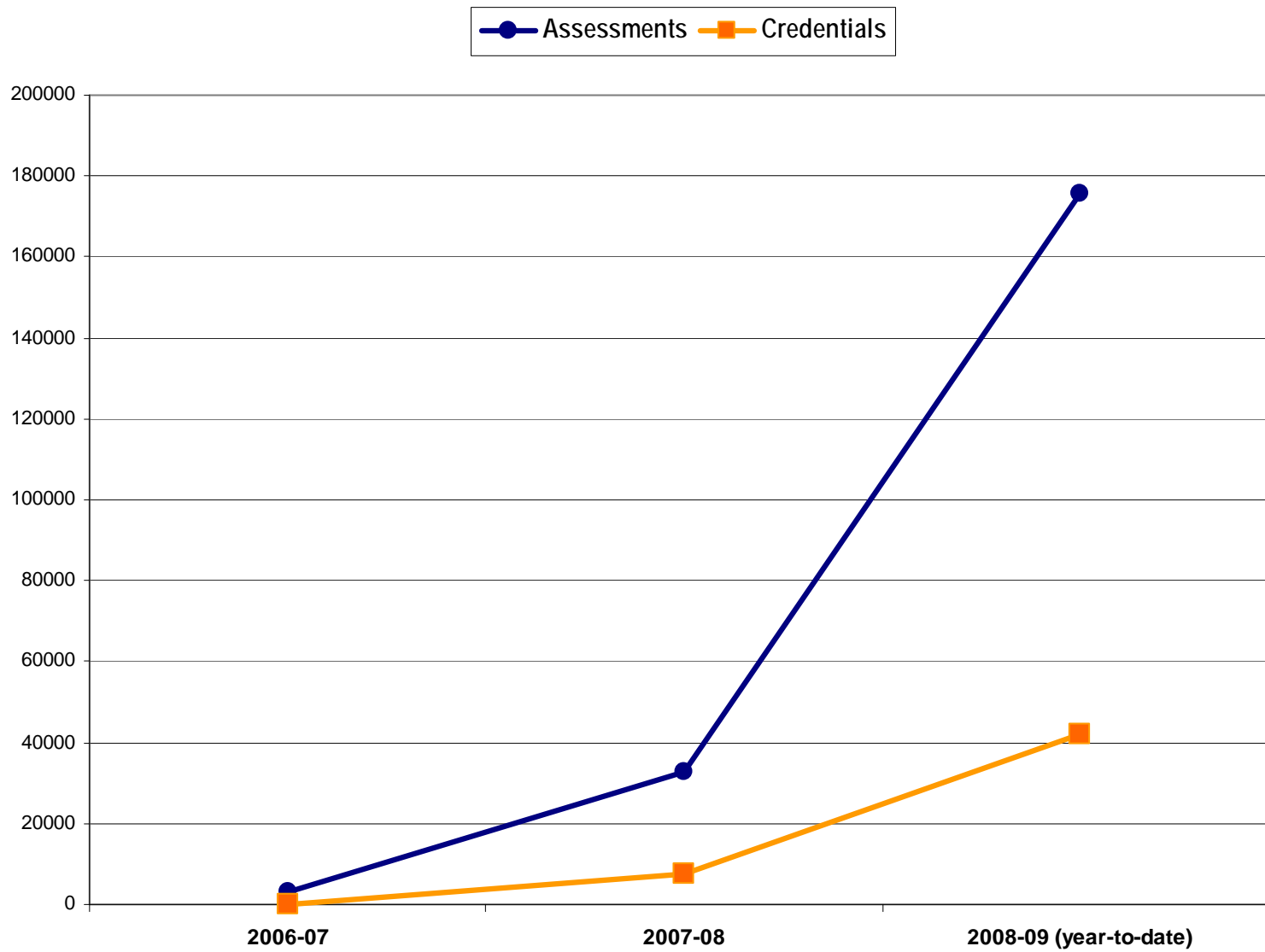
# Top 10 performing implementation partners based on credentials earned inception through March 31, 2009

<b>Assessment Center</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Credentials</b>
WorkSource	Duval	RWB	1,357
Crestview High School	Okaloosa	HS	1,194
Lake Brantley High School	Seminole	HS	945
Workforce Plus	Leon	RWB	916
Mariner High School	Lee	HS	836
Living Hope International	Orange	COR	825
Cypress Lake High School	Lee	HS	804
Paxon School for Advanced Studies	Duval	HS	802
East Lee County High School	Lee	HS	761
Cape Coral High School	Lee	HS	737

# Funding







# Florida Ready to Work

- Starting with the 2008-2009 school year, all high school students who earn the Ready to Work Credential will receive a designation on their high school diploma.
- Florida is one of 30 states with similar programs, making the Florida Ready to Work Credential portable nationwide.

# Registered Career and Professional Academies

# Career and Professional Academies

- Established by section 1003.493, F.S.
  - Research-based program that integrates a rigorous academic curriculum with an industry-specific curriculum aligned directly to priority workforce needs as established by regional workforce boards
- Funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP)
- .3 additional FTE earned for each student who completes an industry-certified career and professional academy and who is issued the highest level of industry certification and a high school diploma

- Each Career and Professional Academy must:
  - Provide a rigorous standards-based academic curriculum integrated with a career theme;
  - Include one or more partnerships with postsecondary institutions, businesses, industry, employers, economic development organizations, or other appropriate partners from the local community;
  - Provide shared, maximum use of private sector facilities and personnel;
  - Provide personalized student advisement;
  - Promote and provide opportunities for students to earn Bright Futures scholarships;
  - Provide instruction in high growth, high demand, and high pay careers;

- Each Career and Professional Academy must:
  - Deliver instruction relevant to the applicable career, including intensive reading and mathematics intervention;
  - Offer applied courses that combine academic content with technical skills;
  - Provide instruction resulting in competency, certification, or credentials in workplace skills;
  - Provide opportunities for students to obtain the Florida Ready to Work Credential;
  - Include an evaluation plan;
  - Include a plan to sustain career and professional academies; and
  - Redirect appropriated career funding to career and professional academies.

# Registered Academies

- Districts are required to annually register the career and professional academies that meet the requirements of s. 1003.493, F.S.
- Registration window is between July 15 and September 15.
- Superintendents certify that each registered academy meets all of the requirements in statute.

# Enrollment and Performance

- 2007-2008 – first year of implementation
  - 246 registered academies with FLDOE
  - 38 of 67 school districts (56.7%)
- During 2007-2008, approximately 803 students enrolled in career and professional academies successfully earned one or more industry certifications
- Approximately \$500,000 was funded in 2008-2009 for industry certifications earned in 2007/2008

# Enrollment and Projected Performance, 2008-2009

- 490 registered career and professional academies
- 66 of 67 school districts participating
  - 219 high schools and 11 district technical centers
  - School districts with the most registered career and professional academies (top 5):
    1. Miami-Dade – 155
    2. Hillsborough – 66
    3. Palm Beach – 26
    4. Clay – 24
    5. Okaloosa – 18
- Of the 69,605 students enrolled, it is projected that 8,888 industry certifications will be earned

# Research Findings

- Research from first year regarding enrollment patterns and student academic performance:
  - The most frequent career cluster represented by academies was health science with 61 academies followed by architecture and construction with 34.
  - Among the 19,868 students enrolled in career and professional academies, 803, or 3.9%, were reported as earning one or more approved industry certifications during the academic year.
  - Academy students, particularly freshmen, had, on average, higher cumulative grade point averages than non-academy high school students.
  - Academy students were less likely to be chronically absent than non-academy students
  - Academy graduates were more likely to take Advanced Placement or dual enrollment courses than non-academy students.
  - Schools with at least one registered academy earned, on average, lower school grades than schools with no academies, suggesting that districts implemented academies in schools as part of an improvement strategy.

# Industry Certification

- A key component of the Florida Career and Professional Education Act (1003.491 F.S.). One of the purposes of the Act is to:
  - Provide rigorous and relevant career-themed courses that articulate to postsecondary-level coursework and lead to industry certification

# Industry Certification

- **The Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) is tasked with defining “Industry Certification”**

*“A voluntary process, through which individuals are assessed by an independent, third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge, skills and competencies, resulting in the award of a time-limited credential that is nationally recognized and applicable to an occupation that is included in the workforce system’s targeted occupation list or determined to be an occupation that is critical, emerging or addresses a local need.”*

# Industry Certification

- In accordance with s. 1008.34, F.S., industry certification will serve as a key component in the revised high school grading system and formula.

# Industry Certification

- Statewide articulation agreements have been developed based on successful passage of industry certification:
  - Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) to Computer Engineering Technology AAS/AS - (12 college credit hours)
  - Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) to Network Services Technology AAS/AS - (12 college credit hours)
  - Production Technician Certification (MSSC) to Engineering Technology AAS/AS - (15 college credit hours)
- Additional statewide articulation agreements are being developed and will be presented for consideration to the ACC during its May 2009 meeting

# Technical Skill Attainment

# Technical Skill Attainment

- The federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (P.L. 109-270) requires Florida to assess the attainment of program outcomes by students to ensure they have the technical skills aligned with and validated by business and industry.
- Carl D. Perkins federal funding for 2009-2010 - \$65,244,410

# Technical Skill Attainment

- Varieties of assessments, which meet the federal criteria for validity and reliability, are used to measure technical skill attainment.
- Technical skill attainment is a state and local accountability requirement and must be reported annually to the U.S. Department of Education.
- The Perkins IV Five-Year State Plan establishes policy for determination of assessment instruments used to measure technical skill attainment.

# Technical Skill Attainment

- Students enrolled in career and technical education programs have the opportunity to:
  - Earn an industry certification;
  - Earn a state or federal license; or
  - Pass a third-party assessment which validates skill attainment.

# Technical Skill Attainment

- It is anticipated that during the 2008-2009 academic year approximately 10,000 industry certifications will be earned by secondary and postsecondary career and technical education students.

# Alternative Credit for High School Courses – Pilot Project

- Under certain conditions, this pilot program allows high school students to take one course and generate two credits
  - 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
  - Eligible alternative credit courses include Algebra 1a and 1b; Algebra 1; Geometry, and Biology
  - A student must pass an end-of-course assessment approved by DOE, and may either be from those developed by the Florida Virtual School or an end-of-course statewide standardized assessment developed or adopted by the DOE

# Alternative Credit for High School Courses – Pilot Project

- DOE must report to the Governor, the Senate President, and the Speaker of the House by January 1, 2010, on the participation of, and credits earned by, students as well as recommendations for expanding the use of alternative credit for core academic courses.
- The pilot is currently offered at Braden River High School in Manatee County
  - Five classes of freshmen are enrolled in the Introduction to Engineering Design course
  - Of the students enrolled, 68 are scheduled to sit for the Algebra 1 exam, which will be administered via Florida Virtual School on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

# Career and Education Planning Course

- According to section 1003.4156, F.S., general requirements for middle grades promotion includes the completion of a Career and Education Planning course and the creation of a four-year plan for high school.

# Career and Education Planning Course

- Students must enroll in a semester-long course in career and education planning which must be completed in the seventh or eighth grade.
- Schools must use one of the approved courses to meet this requirement. Some of the courses are designated as year-long.
- As part of the course, students develop a career and education plan using Florida CHOICES (or other career information system) and use the electronic Personal Education Planner (ePEP) on FACTS.org

# Enrollment and Performance, 2008-2009

- Some schools offer the Career and Planning course as a one-semester course that 8th graders will complete in the spring 2009 semester. As of December 2008, over 80% of 8th grade students had either completed or were enrolled in an appropriate course.
  - As of April 2009, the number of students who had created an ePEP was almost 60%.

# Career Planning – Florida CHOICES

- Florida CHOICES, referenced in section 1003.4156 F.S., provides free online career and educational exploration and information.
- Funded through a grant (\$250,000)
- Databases contain information on:
  - Careers
  - Florida public and independent postsecondary institutions
  - National institutions
  - Financial aid
  - Programs of study
  - Annually updated data on wages and job projections<sup>38</sup>

# Florida CHOICES

- CHOICES helps students build plans as they compare, connect and choose from a vast network of work and education options.
- Users can build career and education plans and resumes that are securely stored in “Your Portfolio” section.
- Enhanced accountability tools allow educators to review students’ assessments results, measure progress and report program success.

# Florida CHOICES

- The Department currently supports 1,629 sites at public high schools, postsecondary institutions and agencies.
- This school year, the CHOICES training staff have presented in six sessions at conferences for middle and high school guidance counselors, attended by 1,495 individuals.
- The CHOICES training staff have conducted three outreach events for 150 parents.
- Upon invitation, school district personnel have requested 66 customized hands-on training workshops, attended by 1,553 participants.
- The CHOICES program can be accessed by all Florida citizens on the Internet.

# **Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO's)**

# CTSO's

- Student learning in Career Education programs is enhanced by participation in leadership and competition opportunities available through co-curricular student organizations. Local, regional and national platforms challenge students to develop better teamwork and leadership skills by applying classroom learning to "real-life" situations.

# CTSO's

- Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO's) are an integral part of career education instructional programs. Each organization provides:
  - Standards-based education
  - Leadership and professional development
  - Job and career-related training
  - Employability skills
  - Citizenship and communication skills
  - Opportunities to set and achieve goals
  - Scholarship and postsecondary opportunities

# Questions?

Loretta Costin

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Division of Workforce Education