

A++ Education Reform Policy Initiatives

2006 Florida Legislative Session (House Bill 7087)

Policy Initiative	Brief Summary
A++ Reading Initiatives:	
<i>Just Read, Florida! Office</i>	Creates the Just Read, Florida! Office in statute within DOE and provides that the office is fully accountable to the Commissioner.
<i>Florida Center for Reading Research</i>	Creates the Florida Center for Reading Research in statute at Florida State University, with 2 outreach centers – one at a central Florida community college and one at a south Florida state university.
<i>Reading Allocation in the FEFP</i>	Creates a research-based reading allocation in the FEFP and requires the Just Read, Florida! Office (JRF) to approve each district's reading plan. If a district and JRF cannot agree on the contents of the reading plan, the district can appeal to the State Board of Education.
<i>Reading Credential for Non-degreed, Career Program Teachers</i>	Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to give part-time and full-time non-degreed teachers of career programs the opportunity to earn a reading credential equivalent to a content-area-specific reading endorsement.
A++ Secondary School Initiatives:	
<i>Middle School Promotion and Requirements</i> <i>(Algebra I FEFP Incentive)</i>	Provides new middle school promotion requirements beginning with students entering grade 6 in the 2006-2007 school year. The new promotion standards will require students to complete at least 3 courses in English; 3 courses in math; 3 courses in science; 3 courses in social studies; and 1 course in career and education planning to be completed in the 7th or 8th grade. Requires all middle schools in the state to offer at least one high school level mathematics course for which a student may earn high school credit. An additional 0.088 FTE shall be awarded for each student in grades 6 through 8 who completes a high school level algebra course and receives a grade of C or better. Each district must allocate the funds to the school that generated the funds.
<i>Student Academic Planning</i>	Requires the completion of a personalized academic and career plan for all students during the 7 th or 8 th grade through the use of the Florida Academic Counseling and Tracking for Students (FACTS.org) online advising system.
<i>Secondary School Redesign</i>	Provides guiding principles to be used in the annual preparation of each secondary school's improvement plan, as well as in the development of policies addressing secondary issues such as promotion of out-of-state or country students, students not having developed an academic and career plan, district based requirements, etc. Requires DOE to report to the Legislature annually a longitudinal analysis of the success of the Secondary School Redesign reform effort.
<i>High School Graduation Credits</i>	Provides new high school graduation requirements that will take effect with students entering grade 9 in the 2007-2008 school year. Requires each student to complete at least 4 credits of English and math; 3 credits of social studies and science; 1 credit of fine arts; and 1 credit of P.E. Requires each student to select and complete courses in a "major." Majors will consist of at least 4 sequential courses in a chosen area of interest to include specific academic content areas, fine and performing arts, career and technical education, or other appropriate curricula. Majors will be developed by districts and must be approved by the Commissioner. Allows students to select and obtain a 3-credit "minor" in addition to the major, or to "double-major."
<i>Weighting for GPA Calculation</i>	Requires that beginning with students entering grade 9 in 2006-2007, school districts and community colleges must weigh dual enrollment courses the same as advanced placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) courses for GPA calculations.

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A++ Teacher Initiatives:	
<i>Professional Development Plans</i>	Requires that professional development plans established by a district school board shall incorporate school improvement plans and shall be aligned with principal leadership training as a part of the plan.
<i>Professional Development System</i>	Requires DOE, public postsecondary educational institutions, public school districts, public schools, state education foundations, consortia, and professional organizations in Florida to work collaboratively to establish a coordinated system of professional development to, among other things, enhance classroom instructional strategies that promote rigor and relevance throughout the curriculum.
<i>Differentiated Pay</i> <i>(Performance Pay)</i>	Requires that beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, each district school board shall adopt a salary schedule with a differentiated pay policy for both instructional personnel and school-based administrators. Provides that the salary schedule is subject to collective bargaining and must allow for differentiated pay based upon factors determined by school districts, including, but not limited to, additional responsibilities, school demographics, critical shortage areas, and level of job performance difficulties. Provides that a district school board may not sign a collective bargaining agreement that precludes the school district from providing sufficient incentives to meet this requirement. <u>Note:</u> Proviso for Specific Appropriation 91 within the 2006-2007 General Appropriations Act (FEFP line item) directs \$147.5 million to the Special Teachers are Rewarded performance pay plan (STAR plan) to provide the highest performing 25 percent of instructional personnel in improved student achievement with a performance pay reward. STAR Plan funds will be distributed to districts, subject to review and approval by the State Board of Education of the district's STAR Plan.
<i>Collective Bargaining Contracts</i>	Requires DOE to annually post links to each school district's collective bargaining contracts and the salary and benefits of the personnel or officers of any educator association that were paid by the school district.
<i>Co-teaching (Team Teaching)</i>	Provides that each teacher assigned to a classroom must be used in the calculation for compliance with the constitutional class size requirements and provides criteria for which team-teaching is allowable in individual classrooms.
<i>Professional Development Program for School Leaders</i>	Establishes the William Cecil Golden Professional Development Program for School Leaders to provide high standards and sustained support for principals as instructional leaders. The program will consist of a collaborative network of state and national leadership organizations that shall support the human-resource development needs of principals, principal leadership teams, and candidates for principal leadership positions using the framework of leadership standards adopted by the State Board of Education, the Southern Regional Education Board, and the National Staff Development Council.
<i>Teacher Assignments</i>	Provides that school districts may not assign a higher percentage than the school district average of first-time teachers, temporarily certified teachers, teachers in need of improvement, or out-of-field teachers to schools with above the district average of minority and economically disadvantaged students, or schools that are graded D or F. School districts must certify compliance to the Commissioner, who must notify the State Board of Education if the district is not in compliance.
A++ School Improvement Initiatives:	
<i>Progress Monitoring Plans</i>	Requires schools to develop and implement a progress monitoring plan for each student that fails to meet certain performance levels, including scoring below Level 3 in FCAT Reading or Math. The school must develop the plan in consultation with the student's parents.

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<i>Community Assessment Teams</i>	Requires the Commissioner to assign a community assessment team to every school district, or governing board, with a school graded F to review the school's performance data. Requires participation from representatives of local government on the community assessment teams.
<i>School Report Cards</i>	Requires that DOE develop a school report card to be delivered to parents, including those whose students are enrolled in an alternative school. The report card must include the school grade, information regarding school improvement, an explanation school improvement as measured under No Child Left Behind, and indicators on return on investment.
<i>Amendments to the Calculation of School Grades</i>	<p>Requires that beginning with the 2005-2006 school year, the achievement scores and learning gains of certain students attending alternative schools shall be included in student assessment data used in the calculation of the student's home school's grade.</p> <p>Requires that learning gains for students seeking a special diploma, as measured by an alternate assessment tool developed by DOE, shall be included in calculating school grades not later than the 2009-2010 school year.</p>
<i>School Grade Feeder Patterns</i>	Provides that a school that serves any combination of students in K-3, which does not receive a school grade because its students are not tested and included in the school grading system, shall receive the school grade designation of the school feeder pattern identified by DOE and verified by the school district. A school feeder pattern exists if at least 60 percent of the students in the K-3 school are scheduled to be assigned to the graded school.
<i>School Improvement Rating for Alternative Schools</i>	Allows alternative schools that provide dropout-prevention and academic intervention services to choose between whether they wish to receive a standard school grade or a "school improvement rating." Alternative schools that opt to receive a school improvement rating will receive a rating of "improving," "maintaining," or "declining" based on the year-to-year progress of its students, without regard to the overall proficiency levels of the students. Requires the Commissioner to prepare an annual report on the performance of each school receiving a school improvement rating.
<i>Secondary School Improvement Award Program</i>	Requires the Commissioner to create and implement the Secondary School Improvement Award Program to reward secondary schools that demonstrate continuous student academic improvement and show the greatest gains in student academic achievement in reading and math.
<i>Required Attendance at Remediation Programs</i>	Allows district school boards to require low-performing students to attend remediation programs held before or after regular school hours or during the summer if transportation is provided.
<i>No Child Left Behind Reauthorization Plan</i>	Requires the Commissioner to submit the proposed state plan for reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act to the Legislature for review prior to submission to the U.S. Department of Education.
A++ Workforce/Career Initiatives:	
<i>Career and Professional Academies</i>	Creates career and professional academies as research-based programs that integrate a rigorous academic curriculum with an industry-driven career curriculum. Defines the allowable types of career and professional academies as a "school-within-a-school" model or a "total school configuration," in which each student in the school is enrolled in an academy.
<i>Ready to Work Certification</i>	Creates the Florida Ready to Work Certification Program to enhance the workplace skills of Florida's students to better prepare them for successful employment. Provides that the program may be conducted in public middle and high schools, community colleges, technical centers, one-stop career centers, vocational rehabilitation centers, and Department of Juvenile Justice facilities.

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A++ Quality Improvement Initiatives:	
<i>DOE Structure</i>	Creates the Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement in statute within DOE.
<i>Alternative Standardized Assessments</i>	Requires district school boards to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate an acceptable level of performance on an alternative standardized assessment following enrollment in a summer academy. Alternative assessments must be approved by the State Board of Education.
<i>Concordant FCAT Scores</i>	Requires the State Board of Education to analyze the content of concordant data sets for widely used high school achievement tests, including, but not limited to, the Preliminary SAT, the pre-ACT, SAT, ACT, and college placement test, to assess if concordant scores for FCAT scores can be determined for high school graduation, college placement, and scholarship awards such as Bright Futures.
<i>FCAT Retakes</i>	Requires the Commissioner to document the procedures used to ensure that the versions of the FCAT that are taken by students retaking the grade 10 FCAT are equally as challenging and difficult as the tests taken by students in grade 10, which contain performance tasks.
<i>Paperwork Reduction for Teachers and School District Employees</i>	Implements initiatives designed to reduce the paperwork burden on the state's teachers and other school-based and district-based employees. The initiatives are consistent with the recommendations of the Paper Reduction Task Force, and include requiring each district to appoint a classroom teacher as a district representative to speak on behalf of teachers regarding paperwork reduction, streamlining school improvement plan development, and consolidating duplicative student monitoring plans.
<i>Electronic Individual Educational Plans (IEP) for Students with Disabilities</i>	Requires DOE to develop and have an operating electronic IEP system in place for potential statewide use no later than July 1, 2007. The statewide system must be developed collaboratively with districts, particularly those districts currently developing or operating an electronic IEP system.
<i>Data Quality Initiatives</i>	Requires that all data collected by state universities be integrated into the K-20 Data Warehouse. Also requires a common format to be developed for districts to report the data to DOE. Provides that the Commissioner is the <i>sole custodian</i> of the K-20 Data Warehouse.
<i>Instructional Materials and Staff Development</i>	Requires each superintendent to certify to the Commissioner, prior to the release of instructional materials funds, that the district school board has approved a comprehensive staff development plan and to verify that training was provided and instructional materials are being implemented as designed.
A++ Other Initiatives:	
<i>School Start Date</i>	Provides that beginning with the 2007-2008 school year and each year thereafter, the opening date for schools may not be earlier than 14 days before Labor Day.
<i>Board of Governors Performance Measures</i>	Requires the Board of Governors of the State University System to establish performance measures and to set performance standards for individual state universities, including actual completion rates.
<i>Tuition Setting Flexibility</i>	Provides that undergraduate tuition shall be established in the General Appropriations Act each year. However, the bill provides the Board of Governors (BOG) with the flexibility to set tuition for graduate, post-graduate, and professional programs, as well as out-of-state tuition for all programs. Provides that adjustments made by the BOG to out-of-state fees or tuition for graduate and professional programs may not exceed 10 percent in any year.