

Baccalaureate Degree Program Proposal
Florida Gateway College (FGC)
Bachelor of Science (BS) in Elementary Education Summary

The proposed new baccalaureate degree program is an opportunity to provide citizens of Florida greater access to higher education.

- The body of skills and knowledge acquired by BS in elementary education graduates will prepare them to teach children in kindergarten through grade six.
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) workforce demand data and employment projections indicate the need for 40 elementary teachers in FGC's service area per year.
- There are no public universities operating in FGC's service area. Saint Leo University (SLU), which offers the elementary education program in the college's district as a satellite program, submitted an alternative proposal. FGC noted the costs of attending SLU, a private institution, are prohibitive for many students—estimated at \$44,400, compared to \$13,419 for a baccalaureate degree from FGC. FGC believes it can offer local students an exemplary education at a substantially lower cost.
- At the start of the 2019-2020 school year, there were 72 classes that were being taught by teachers without a professional teaching certificate in elementary education and 11 classes that did not have a permanent teacher.
- Human resource directors in FGC's service area and in adjacent areas confirmed the demand for graduates holding a BS in elementary education.
- Admission to the BS in elementary education program will use the state's 2+2 model and will be open to all applicants who have completed an associate in arts degree. The program aligns with Florida standards, as outlined in statute, for initial teacher preparation programs.
- Graduates will develop instructional skills for teaching diverse populations, which includes special-needs learners, and will also be eligible for professional certification in elementary education (K-6) with endorsements in reading and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).