STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Action Item
January 15, 2025

SUBJECT: Approval of Request from St. Johns River State College for a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1007.33, Florida Statutes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

St. Johns River State College (SJRSC) submitted a notice of intent followed by a proposal to the Department of Education to offer a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences. Appropriate notification of intent was provided to the Board of Governors, Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida and the Commission for Independent Education, as required in section 1007.33, Florida Statutes.

The degree program will prepare graduates for careers as Biological Scientists and Technicians, Natural Science Managers, and Food and Forensic Science Technicians. Additionally, the program curriculum is designed to articulate into graduate programs in biology and physical therapy for students who wish to pursue an advanced degree.

Florida Commerce projects that the total job growth in occupations directly related to the Biological Sciences degree will increase by more than 9% from 2024 to 2032, and the estimated annual unmet need of graduates will be more than 20 in SJRSC's service district and more than 80 in the college's workforce region. These jobs will have an average annualized salary of more than $66,000 per year.

Letters of support were provided by Flagler College, Nova Southeastern University, St. Johns/Putnam/Clay County Board of Commissioners, as well as industry partners including Green Water Labs and ENCORE Research Group. There were no letters of objection or alternative proposals for the proposed degree program.

An extensive review of criteria was conducted for the proposal submitted, and written comments and recommendations were provided to the college. The final proposal is being submitted to the State Board of Education for consideration.

Documentation Included: SJRSC Proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences and Appendices (under separate cover)

Facilitators/Presenters: Chancellor Kathy Hebda, Florida College System; President Joe Pickens, St. Johns River State College, and guests