

HB 7053 – Public School Assessments by PreK-12 Policy *(Similar to SB 4 by Detert)*

The bill makes several significant changes to the statewide assessment program, promotion and graduation requirements, and related statutory provisions.

Middle Grades Promotion

The bill amends s. 1003.4156 relating to general requirements for middle grades promotion to provide that successful completion of a high school level Algebra I or geometry course is not contingent upon the student's performance on an end-of-course assessment. However, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, a middle school student must pass the Algebra I end-of-course assessment to earn high school credit for an Algebra I course and, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, a middle school student must pass the geometry end-of-course assessment to earn high school credit for a geometry course,

Similarly, successful completion of a high school level Biology I course is not contingent upon the student's performance on the end-of-184 course assessment. However, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, a middle school student must pass the Biology I end-of-course assessment to earn high school credit for a Biology I course.

The bill also amends provisions relating to the required middle school student's personalized academic and career plan to require that the plan must inform students of high school graduation requirements, high school assessment and college entrance test requirements, Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program requirements, state university and Florida college admission requirements, and opportunities through which a high school student can earn college credit.

High School Graduation

The bill amends s. 1003.428 relating to general requirements for graduation to provide that, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2013-2014 school year, one of the 24 required credits must contain online learning. This requirement must be met through an online course offered by the Florida Virtual School, through a course offered by the high school that significantly integrates online content, or through an online dual enrollment course. A student who is enrolled in a full-time virtual instruction program meets this requirement.

The bill amends the graduation requirements for math to provide that, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2010-2011 school year, the end-of-course assessment requirements must be met in order for a student to earn the required credit in Algebra I. Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2011-2012 school year, the end-of-course assessment requirements must be met in order for a student to earn the required credit in geometry. Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2012-2013 school year, in addition to the Algebra I and geometry credit requirements, one of the four credits in mathematics must be Algebra II or the equivalent.

Similarly, the bill amends the graduation requirements for science to provide that, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2011-2012 school year, one of the three credits in science must be Biology I or the equivalent and end-of-course assessment requirements must be met in order for a student to earn the required credit in Biology I. In addition, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2013-2014 school year, in addition to the Biology I credit requirement, one of the three credits in science must be chemistry or physics or the equivalent.

The bill provides that, for courses that require statewide, standardized end-of-course assessments, a minimum of 30% of a student's course grade must be comprised of performance on the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment. A student with a disability for whom the individual education plan (IEP) committee determines that an end-of-course assessment cannot accurately measure the student's abilities, taking into consideration all allowable accommodations, must have the end-of-course assessment results waived for the purpose of determining the student's course grade and credit.

The bill amends s. 1002.429 relating to accelerated high school graduation options to include the same course requirements and end-of-course assessment requirements in mathematics and science as are applied for the general graduation requirements described above. In order to accommodate the additional math course, the bill provides that, for the 3-year college preparatory program, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2010-2011 school year, students must earn four credits (rather than three credits) in mathematics and earn two credits (rather than three credits) in electives. For the 3-year career preparatory program, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2010-2011 school year, students must earn four credits (rather than three credits) in mathematics and earn one credit (rather than two credits) in electives.

Acceleration Opportunities for High School Students

The bill creates s. 1003.4295 relating to acceleration opportunities for high school students to require each high school to advise each student of opportunities through which a student can earn college credit. In addition, beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, each high school must offer an International Baccalaureate Program, an Advanced International Certificate of Education Program, or a combination of at least four courses in dual enrollment or Advanced Placement, including one course each in English, mathematics, science, and social studies. To meet this requirement, school districts may utilize the course offerings provided by the Florida Virtual School or through authorized virtual instruction programs.

The bill also creates the Credit Acceleration Program (CAP) to allow a secondary student to earn high school credit in a course that requires a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment if the student attains a specified score on the assessment. A school district must award course credit to a student who is not enrolled in the course or who has not completed the course if the student attains a score – established by the State Board of Education – that indicates the student is high achieving on the corresponding statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment. A student who is not enrolled in the course or who has not completed the course may take the statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment during the regular administration of the assessment and may only take the end-of-course assessment once for the purposes of the Credit Acceleration Program.

Statewide Assessment Program

The bill amends and adds to s. 1008.22 relating to the statewide assessment program to phase in the use of end-of-course exams in certain subjects. The bill provides that, beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2010-2011 school year, end-of-course assessments in Algebra I and geometry will replace the grade 9 and grade 10 FCAT Mathematics. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, all students enrolled in Algebra I or the equivalent must take the Algebra I end-of-course assessment. For students entering grade 9 during the 2010-2011 school year, each student's performance on the end-of-course assessment in Algebra I must constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2011-2012 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the end-of-course assessment in Algebra I in order to pass the course and earn course credit.

Similarly, beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, all students enrolled in geometry or an equivalent course must take the geometry end-of-course assessment. For students entering grade 9 during the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years, each student's performance on the end-of-course assessment must constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Beginning with students entering grade 9 during the 2012-2013 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the end-of-course assessment in geometry in order to pass the course and earn course credit.

Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2011-2012 school year, the end-of-course assessment in Biology I will replace FCAT Science at the high school level. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, all students enrolled in Biology I or an equivalent course must take the Biology I end-of-course assessment. For students entering grade 9 during the 2011-2012 school

year, each student's performance on the end-of-course assessment in Biology I shall constitute 30% of the student's final course grade. Beginning with students entering grade 9 during the 2012-2013 school year, a student must earn a passing score on the end-of-course assessment in Biology I in order to pass the course and earn course credit.

The current FCAT Writing will continue to be administered at least once at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. However, the bill removes the multiple performance tasks required for FCAT Writing that would have been required beginning with the 2012-2013 school year. In addition, the bill provides that, contingent upon funding, the Commissioner must establish an implementation schedule for the development and administration of statewide, standardized end-of-course assessments in English/Language Arts II, Algebra II, chemistry, physics, earth/space science, United States history, and world history with priority given to the development of an end-of-course assessment in English/Language Arts II. The Commissioner must evaluate the feasibility and effect of transitioning from the grade 9 and grade 10 FCAT Reading and high school level FCAT Writing to an end-of-course assessment in English/Language Arts II and report the results of that evaluation legislative leaders by July 1, 2011.

FCAT Reading, Mathematics, and Science and all statewide, standardized end-of-course assessments must measure, by use of scaled scores and achievement levels, the content knowledge and skills a student has attained. Achievement levels must range from 1 through 5, with level 3 indicating satisfactory performance. For FCAT Writing, student achievement must be scored using the rubric scale of 1 through 6 and the score earned must be used in calculating school grades.

The bill requires that the State Board of Education must, by rule, designate a passing score for each part of the grade 10 assessment test and end-of-course assessments. The State Board must also designate, by rule, a score for each statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment which indicates that a student is high achieving and is likely to meet college-readiness standards by the time the student graduates from high school. The bill specifies that, except as otherwise provided, students must earn a passing score on grade 10 FCAT Reading and grade 10 FCAT Mathematics or attain concordant scores to qualify for a standard high school diploma. A student who has not earned passing scores on the grade 10 FCAT must participate in each retake of the assessment until the student earns passing scores or achieves scores on a standardized assessment that are concordant with passing scores.

The bill directs the Commissioner (rather than the State Board of Education) to analyze the content and concordant data sets for widely used high school achievement tests to assess if concordant scores for FCAT scores can be determined for high school graduation. However, concordant scores earned before taking the grade 10 FCAT for the first time in grade 10 may not be used to satisfy this requirement. The Commissioner must also analyze the content and equivalent data sets for high school achievement tests to assess if equivalent scores for end-of-course assessment scores can be determined for passage of an end-of-course assessment. However, equivalent scores earned before taking an end-of-course assessment for the first time may not be used to satisfy this requirement. In order to use an equivalent score to satisfy the end-of-course assessment requirements, a student must have received a grade "F" in a course solely because the student failed to pass the end-of-course assessment. Use of an equivalent score for purposes of grade adjustment, grade forgiveness, or course credit recovery is contingent upon and subject to district school board rules.

The bill provides that a statewide, standardized end-of-course assessment must be administered during a 3-week period at the end of a year-long course. The commissioner must select a 3-week administration period that meets the intent of end-of-course assessments and provides student results prior to the end of the course. School districts must select one testing week within the 3-week administration period for each end-of-course assessment. For an end-of-course assessment

administered at the end of a semester-long course, the commissioner must determine the most appropriate testing dates based on a school district's academic calendar. In addition, the Commissioner is required to consider the observance of religious and school holidays when establishing the schedules for the administration of statewide assessments. The bill also provides that test results for the FCAT must be made available no later than the week of June 8 and student results for end-of-course assessments must be provided no later than 1 week after the school district completes testing for each course.

School Grades and School Recognition

The bill amends s. 1008.34 relating to school grades to include FCAT assessments and end-of-course assessments in the determination of school grades. The bill also removes FCAT Writing from measure improvement in the lowest quartile of students in the school. The bill makes similar amendment to s. 1008.341 relating to school improvement rating.

The bill amends s. 1008.36 relating to the School Recognition Program to provide that, if school staff and the school advisory council cannot reach agreement on the use of the award by February 1 (rather than November 1), the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers. The bill also provides that, beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, if a school selected to receive a school recognition award is no longer in existence at the time the award is paid, the district school superintendent must determine how the school recognition funds will be used to support the district.

Other Significant Provisions

The bill amends s. 1003.25 to require the State Board of Education to establish, by rule, uniform procedures relating to the acceptance of credits and grades earned by students entering Florida's public schools. Credits and grades earned in courses, including those courses that would be subject to statewide assessments, must be accepted at face value if based on official transcripts and subject to validation procedures established by rule.

The bill amends s. 1003.428 to provide that the three credits in social studies must include one credit in United States history (rather than "American history"), one credit in world history, one-half credit in economics, and one-half credit in United States government (rather than "American government").

The bill amends s. 1003.437 relating to the middle and high school grading system to provide that a high school student who fails to pass an end-of-course assessment may receive a grade of "I" (Incomplete) in the course until the next administration of the end-of-course assessment. If the student then passes the end-of-course assessment, the appropriate grade must be substituted.