


# Careers & Workforce Subcommittee

**Wednesday, January 14, 2026**
**9:00 AM**
**Morris Hall (17 HOB)**

**Daniel Perez**
**Speaker**

**Tiffany Esposito**
**Chair**

# Committee Meeting Notice

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### Careers & Workforce Subcommittee

**Start Date and Time:** Wednesday, January 14, 2026 09:00 AM

**End Date and Time:** Wednesday, January 14, 2026 10:00 AM

**Location:** Morris Hall (17 HOB)

**Duration:** 1.00 hrs

**Consideration of the following bill(s):**

HB 561 Educator Certifications by Gerwig

**NOTICE FINALIZED on 01/12/2026 4:31PM by Kelley.Megan**

**HB 561**

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
# BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

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|---|---|
| **BILL #:** HB 561 | **COMPANION BILL:** SB 1718 (Calatayud) |
| **TITLE:** Educator Certifications | **LINKED BILLS:** None |
| **SPONSOR(S):** Gerwig | **RELATED BILLS:** None |

**Committee References**

Careers & Workforce ➤ PreK-12 Budget ➤ Education & Employment

## SUMMARY


**Effect of the Bill:**
The bill removes barriers to reinstatement of expired professional educator certificates, providing educators with a streamlined process for returning to the classroom. The bill also corrects a reference relating to the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence and requires the center to offer free professional learning to educators seeking to renew or reinstate their certificate.

**Fiscal or Economic Impact:**
The bill has a positive fiscal impact on educators seeking to reinstate an expired certificate due to the removal of a fee-based exam requirement and the opportunity to earn the college credits or inservice points required for reinstatement at no personal cost. The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Department of Education (DOE). The bill also has an indeterminate fiscal impact on public or private entities that charge fees for professional learning. The bill may have a positive fiscal impact on school districts by reducing the amount of professional learning they need to offer.



JUMP TO SUMMARY ANALYSIS RELEVANT INFORMATION BILL HISTORY


## ANALYSIS

### EFFECT OF THE BILL:

The bill requires an applicant for reinstatement of a professional educator certificate to complete certain statutory requirements,[1] but removes the current requirement[2] for an educator to pass a subject area exam for each subject included on the certificate since he or she already demonstrated mastery of subject area knowledge in order to receive the expired certificate.[3] When an expired certificate is reinstated, it must include each subject area and endorsement held at the time of expiration. The bill also stipulates that inservice points completed for issuance of the expired certificate may not be used to satisfy the requirements for reinstatement. (Section 2).

The bill requires the DOE to issue a temporary certificate to such an educator so he or she can begin teaching while earning their required college credits or inservice points,[4] expediting the process of returning to the classroom and removing an additional cost barrier for educators. (Section 1).

[1] *See* s. 1012.56(2)(a) – (f), F.S. To seek certification, a person must be at least 18 years old; swear allegiance to constitutional principles; hold a bachelor's or higher degree; submit to background screening; be of good moral character; and be competent and capable of performing the duties, functions, and responsibilities of an educator.
[2] Section 1012.585(5)(c), F.S.
[3] *See* s. 1012.56(2)(h), (5), and (7)(a)1., F.S. In order to receive a professional certificate, an applicant must demonstrate mastery of subject area knowledge.
[4] Section 1012.585(5)(b), F.S.

The bill corrects a reference to the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) at the University of South Florida (USF) as the collaborator entity with Miami Dade College on the newly created Florida Center for Teaching Excellence.[5] Instead, the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching within USF will replace it.

The bill requires the center to offer professional learning, at no cost, to certified educators seeking to renew or reinstate their certificate and to submit any inservice points earned to the DOE on the educator's behalf. It also requires the center to provide such educators with information on school district professional learning systems that provide access to inservice training to persons not employed by the school district. (Section 3).

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2026. (Section 4).

**RULEMAKING:**

Current law requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to adopt rules relating to educator certification requirements and the process for reinstating an expired professional certificate. The bill modifies provisions of law already under the SBE's rulemaking authority, thus allowing the SBE to make rules to implement the bill.

***Lawmaking is a legislative power; however, the Legislature may delegate a portion of such power to executive branch agencies to create rules that have the force of law. To exercise this delegated power, an agency must have a grant of rulemaking authority and a law to implement.***

**FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**

STATE GOVERNMENT:

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on the DOE for revenue associated with applications and subject area exams taken by educators seeking to reinstate an expired professional certificate. The application fee to reinstate an expired Professional Educator Certificate is $75 per subject. A subject area exam typically costs $150.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on public entities that charge fees for professional learning. The bill may have a positive fiscal impact on school districts by reducing the amount of professional learning they need to offer.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

The bill has a positive fiscal impact on educators since they will no longer have to pay to take a subject area exam in order to reinstate an expired professional certificate. The bill also benefits such educators by allowing them to earn the college credits or inservice points required for reinstatement at no personal cost while teaching under a temporary certificate and eventually through the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence. The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact on private entities that charge fees for professional learning.

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

**SUBJECT OVERVIEW:**

Educator Certification

In order for a person to serve as an educator in a traditional public school, charter school, virtual school, or other publicly operated school, the person must hold a certificate issued by the DOE.[6] Persons seeking employment at a public school as a school supervisor, principal, teacher, library media specialist, school counselor, athletic coach, or in other instructional capacity must be certified.[7] The purpose of certification is to require school-based personnel

[5] Section 1012.981, F.S. The Center was created by HB 875, which passed the Legislature in 2025.
[6] Sections 1012.55(1) and 1002.33(12)(f), F.S.
[7] Sections 1002.33(12)(f) (charter school teachers) and 1012.55(1), F.S. District school boards and charter school governing boards are authorized to hire non-certified individuals who possess expertise in a given field to serve in an instructional

to "possess the credentials, knowledge, and skills necessary to allow the opportunity for a high-quality education in the public schools."[8]

The DOE issues three main types of educator certificates:

- **Professional Certificate**: The professional certificate is Florida's highest type of full-time educator certification.[9] The professional certificate is valid for 5 years and is renewable.[10]
- **Temporary Certificate**: The temporary certificate covers employment in full-time positions for which educator certification is required.[11] Generally, a temporary certificate is valid for 5 years and is nonrenewable.[12]
- **Athletic Coaching Certificate**: The athletic coaching certificate covers full-time and part-time employment as a public school's athletic coach.[13] The DOE issues two types of athletic coaching certificates – one is valid for 5 years and may be issued for subsequent 5-year periods while the other is valid for 3 years and may be issued only once.[14] The 5-year certificate requires satisfaction of certain specialization requirements established in rule.[15]

Reinstating a Professional Educator Certificate

Under current law,[16] to reinstate an expired professional educator certificate, the certificate holder must submit an application; complete 6 college credits, 120 inservice points, or a combination thereof, in specified areas[17] during the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement; and pass a subject area exam for each subject to be shown on the reinstated certificate during those same 5 years. The requirements may not be satisfied by subject area exams or college credits completed for issuance of the expired certificate.[18]

The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence

The center was established by the Legislature at Miami Dade College in 2025 for the purpose of preparing high-quality teachers for Florida through rigorous, evidence-based programs grounded in cognitive science, high-impact teaching strategies, and the implementation of knowledge-rich curricula.[19] The center will work in collaboration with the USF CITL institute.[20] Among other functions, the center is authorized to submit a professional learning system for approval, pursuant to the School Community Professional Learning Act.[21] The Miami Dade College Board of Trustees, in collaboration with the DOE, are responsible for establishing policies for the supervision, administration, and governance of the center.[22]

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capacity. Rule 6A-1.0502, F.A.C.; ss. 1002.33(12)(f) and 1012.55(1)(c), F.S. Occupational therapists, physical therapists, audiologists, and speech therapists are not required to be certified educators. Rule 6A-1.0502(10) and (11), F.A.C.

[8] Section 1012.54, F.S.; *see* r. 6A-4.001(1), F.A.C.

[9] Rule 6A-4.004(5), F.A.C.

[10] Section 1012.56(7)(a), F.S.; *see* r. 6A-4.0051(3)(d), F.A.C. (validity period is expressed as 5 years from July 1 of the school fiscal year). The DOE also issues a nonrenewable 5-year professional certificate that allows an applicant with a bachelor's degree in the area of speech-language impairment to complete a master's degree in speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.; r. 6A-4.004(6), F.A.C.

[11] Rule 6A-4.004(1)(a)2., F.A.C.

[12] Section 1012.56(7)(f), F.S. (validity period is expressed in school fiscal years); r. 6A-4.004(1)(a), F.A.C. The veteran's pathway to educator certification authorizes a 5-year nonrenewable temporary certificate. Section 1012.56(7)(b)2., F.S. The DOE also issues a nonrenewable temporary certificate, which is valid for 2 years in the area of speech-language impairment. Section 1012.56(7)(c), F.S.

[13] Section 1012.55(2)(a), F.S.

[14] *R*ule 6A-4.004(7), F.A.C. (validity periods expressed in school fiscal years).

[15] *See* r. 6A-4.0282, F.A.C.

[16] Section 1012.585(5), F.S.

[17] Section 1012.585(5)(b), F.S. *See also* s. 1012.585(3)(a) and (e), F.S.

[18] Section 1012.585(5), F.S.

[19] Section 1012.981(1), F.S.

[20] Section 1012.981(2), F.S.

[21] Section 1012.981(3), F.S. The School Community Professional Learning Act was established to bring various education stakeholders together to work collaboratively to establish a coordinated system of professional learning. *See* s. 1012.98, F.S.

[22] Section 1012.981(5), F.S.

**RECENT LEGISLATION:**

| YEAR | BILL #/SUBJECT | HOUSE/*SENATE* SPONSOR(S) | OTHER INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2025 | CS/CS/HB 875 - Educator Preparation | Rizo, Snyder/ *Burgess* | Became law on May 30, 2025. |

**OTHER RESOURCES:**

Educator Preparation and Certification Fact Sheet, Education & Employment Committee

## BILL HISTORY

| COMMITTEE REFERENCE | ACTION | DATE | STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF | ANALYSIS PREPARED BY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Careers & Workforce Subcommittee | | | Kiner | Blalock |
| PreK-12 Budget Subcommittee | | | | |
| Education & Employment Committee | | | | |

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to educator certifications; amending s. 1012.56, F.S.; revising the criteria for the award of a temporary educator certification to include certain persons with expired professional certificates; amending s. 1012.585, F.S.; requiring subject area coverages and endorsements for a certificateholder to be reinstated with the certificateholder's professional certificate; revising requirements for reinstatement of a professional certificate; prohibiting certain requirements for reinstatement of a professional certificate to be met using specific inservice points; amending s. 1012.981, F.S.; requiring the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence to collaborate with the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teacher for specified purposes; requiring, rather than authorizing, the center to submit a specified professional learning system for approval by the department; requiring the center to allow certain certified educators to use such system for specified purposes at no cost to the educator; requiring the center to submit inservice points for such educators to the department; requiring the center to provide information for certain school district professional learning systems; providing an

effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

**Section 1. Paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section 1012.56, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1012.56 Educator certification requirements.—

(7) TYPES AND TERMS OF CERTIFICATION.—

(b) The department shall issue a temporary certificate to any applicant who:

1. Completes the requirements outlined in paragraphs (2)(a)-(f) and completes the subject area content requirements specified in state board rule or demonstrates mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to subsection (5) and holds an accredited degree or a degree approved by the Department of Education at the level required for the subject area specialization in state board rule;

2. For a subject area specialization for which the state board otherwise requires a bachelor's degree, documents 48 months of active-duty military service with an honorable discharge or a medical separation; completes the requirements outlined in paragraphs (2)(a), (b), and (d)-(f); completes the subject area content requirements specified in state board rule or demonstrates mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to subsection (5); and documents completion of 60 college credits

with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, as provided by one or more accredited institutions of higher learning or a nonaccredited institution of higher learning identified by the Department of Education as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's degree or higher; ~~or~~

3. Is enrolled in a state-approved teacher preparation program under s. 1004.04; is actively completing the required program field experience or internship at a public school; completes the requirements outlined in paragraphs (2)(a), (b), and (d)-(f); completes the subject area content requirements specified in state board rule or demonstrates mastery of subject area knowledge pursuant to subsection (5); and documents completion of 60 college credits with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale, as provided by one or more accredited institutions of higher learning or a nonaccredited institution of higher learning identified by the Department of Education as having a quality program resulting in a bachelor's degree or higher; or~~.~~

4. Completes the requirements outlined in paragraphs (2)(a)-(f) and whose previously issued professional certificate has expired.

At least 1 year before an individual's temporary certificate is set to expire, the department shall electronically notify the individual of the date on which his or her certificate will

expire and provide a list of each method by which the qualifications for a professional certificate can be completed.

**Section 2. Subsection (5) of section 1012.585, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

1012.585 Process for renewal or reinstatement of professional certificates.—

(5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to allow the reinstatement of expired professional certificates, including each subject area coverage and endorsement held by the certificateholder at the time of the certificate's expiration. The department may reinstate an expired professional certificate if the certificateholder:

(a) Submits an application for reinstatement of the expired certificate.

(b) Completes the requirements in s. 1012.56(2)(a)-(f).

(c) ~~(b)~~ Documents completion of 6 college credits during the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the expired certificate, completion of 120 inservice points, or a combination thereof, in an area specified in paragraph (3)(a) to include the credit required under paragraph (3)(e).

~~(c) During the 5 years immediately preceding reinstatement of the certificate, achieves a passing score on the Florida-developed subject area examination or, if a Florida subject area examination has not been developed, a standardized examination specified in state board rule for each subject to be shown on~~

~~the reinstated certificate.~~

The requirements of this subsection may not be satisfied by ~~subject area examinations or~~ college credits or inservice points completed for issuance of the certificate that has expired.

**Section 3. Subsections (2) and (3) of section 1012.981, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:**

1012.981 The Florida Center for Teaching Excellence.—

(2) The center shall, in collaboration with the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of ~~Innovative~~ Teaching within ~~and Learning at~~ the University of South Florida, do all of the following:

(a) Develop and deliver evidence-based professional learning opportunities aligned to the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices.

(b) Develop and deliver educator training programs pursuant to s. 1012.98 that integrate high-quality instructional materials included on the state-adopted instructional materials list under s. 1006.28, materials evaluated and identified pursuant to s. 1001.215(4), and materials developed by or under the direction of the department as provided in s. 1006.39. These programs must focus on the effective use of knowledge-based curricula, highlighting when and how to incorporate intervention materials, and emphasize the importance of background knowledge in building advanced reading comprehension grounded in the

science of reading and critical thinking skills.

(c) Develop and design models of high-quality clinical experiences for aspiring teachers. These model experiences shall serve as a standard that institutions approved pursuant to ss. 1004.04 and 1004.85 can adopt or adapt, enabling participants to demonstrate mastery of instructional techniques, classroom management strategies, and the application of high-impact teaching strategies in authentic educational settings.

(d) Collaborate with school districts and other educational stakeholders to identify emerging needs in teacher preparation and align center programs accordingly, conducting gap analyses to provide comprehensive coverage of the science of learning, high-impact teaching strategies, and knowledge-rich curriculum implementation.

(e) Establish a statewide network of teachers and instructional leaders equipped with the knowledge and skills to mentor and support aspiring and current educators participating in the center's programs. This network shall model effective pedagogical practices and facilitate professional growth.

(f) Conduct research and disseminate findings on high-impact teaching practices and the implementation of knowledge-based curricula to inform policy, improve classroom instruction, and address the importance of background knowledge in student achievement.

(g) Report to the department the completion of

professional learning by individuals who are not employed by entities with an approved professional learning system.

(3) The center:

(a) Must ~~may~~ submit a professional learning system for approval pursuant to s. 1012.98.

(b) Shall allow a certified educator seeking to renew or reinstate his or her certificate to use the system at no cost and submit any inservice points earned by the educator through the system to the department on the educator's behalf.

(c) Shall provide a certified educator seeking to renew or reinstate a certificate with information on school district professional learning systems that provide access to inservice training to persons not employed by the school district.

**Section 4.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.