

HB 979

2022

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to high school graduation
3 requirements; amending s. 1002.3105, F.S.; adding a
4 requirement for the award of a standard high school
5 diploma to a student through the Academically
6 Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning options;
7 amending s. 1003.4282, F.S.; requiring students to
8 submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid to
9 be awarded a standard high school diploma; providing
10 an exception; requiring high schools to enforce and
11 monitor compliance with such requirements; amending s.
12 1003.5716, F.S.; conforming cross-references;
13 providing an effective date.

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

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17 Section 1. Subsection (5) of section 1002.3105, Florida
18 Statutes, is amended to read:

19 1002.3105 Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance
20 Learning (ACCEL) options.—

21 (5) AWARD OF A STANDARD HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.—A student who
22 meets the applicable grade 9 cohort graduation requirements of
23 s. 1003.4282 (3) (a)–(e), earns three credits in electives, ~~and~~
24 earns a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on a 4.0
25 scale, and complies with the Free Application for Federal

26 Student Aid requirement in s. 1003.4282(5) shall be awarded a
27 standard high school diploma in a form prescribed by the State
28 Board of Education.

29 Section 2. Subsections (5) through (11) of section
30 1003.4282, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (6)
31 through (12), respectively, and a new subsection (5) is added to
32 that section to read:

33 1003.4282 Requirements for a standard high school
34 diploma.—

35 (5) FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID REQUIREMENT.—
36 Beginning with students entering grade 9 in the 2022-2023 school
37 year, a student must submit a Free Application for Federal
38 Student Aid to be awarded a standard high school diploma.
39 However, a student meets the requirements of this subsection if
40 the student's parent or the student, if such student is 18 years
41 of age or older, submits a signed form declining to submit the
42 Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Each high school is
43 responsible for enforcing and monitoring compliance with this
44 subsection.

45 Section 3. Paragraphs (a) and (b) of subsection (2) of
46 section 1003.5716, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

47 1003.5716 Transition to postsecondary education and career
48 opportunities.—All students with disabilities who are 3 years of
49 age to 21 years of age have the right to a free, appropriate
50 public education. As used in this section, the term "IEP" means

51 individual education plan.

52 (2) Beginning not later than the first IEP to be in effect
53 when the student enters high school, attains the age of 14, or
54 when determined appropriate by the parent and the IEP team,
55 whichever occurs first, the IEP must include the following
56 statements that must be updated annually:

57 (a) A statement of intent to pursue a standard high school
58 diploma and a Scholar or Merit designation, pursuant to s.
59 1003.4285, as determined by the parent.

60 1. The statement must document discussion of the process
61 for a student with a disability who meets the requirements for a
62 standard high school diploma to defer the receipt of such
63 diploma pursuant to s. 1003.4282(11)(c) ~~s. 1003.4282(10)(e)~~.

64 2. For the IEP in effect at the beginning of the school
65 year the student is expected to graduate, the statement must
66 include a signed statement by the parent, the guardian, or the
67 student, if the student has reached the age of majority and
68 rights have transferred to the student, that he or she
69 understands the process for deferment and identifying if the
70 student will defer the receipt of his or her standard high
71 school diploma.

72 (b) A statement of intent to receive a standard high
73 school diploma before the student attains the age of 22 and a
74 description of how the student will fully meet the requirements
75 in s. 1003.4282, including, but not limited to, a portfolio

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76 | pursuant to s. 1003.4282(10) (b) ~~s. 1003.4282(9) (b)~~ which meets
77 | the criteria specified in State Board of Education rule. The IEP
78 | must also specify the outcomes and additional benefits expected
79 | by the parent and the IEP team at the time of the student's
80 | graduation.

81 | Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.