

CHAPTER 2025-53

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 296

An act relating to middle school and high school start times; amending ss. 1001.42 and 1002.33, F.S.; providing that district school boards and charter schools, respectively, are in compliance with certain provisions relating to middle school and high school start times upon submission of a specified report to the Department of Education; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Paragraph (f) of subsection (4) of section 1001.42, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—The district school board, acting as a board, shall exercise all powers and perform all duties listed below:

(4) ESTABLISHMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND OPERATION OF SCHOOLS.—Adopt and provide for the execution of plans for the establishment, organization, and operation of the schools of the district, including, but not limited to, the following:

(f) *Opening and closing of schools; fixing uniform date; middle school and high school start times.*—Adopt policies for the opening and closing of schools, fix uniform dates, and middle school and high school start times.

1. The opening date for schools in the district may not be earlier than August 10 of each year.

2. By July 1, 2026, the instructional day for middle schools may not begin earlier than 8 a.m. and the instructional day for high schools may not begin earlier than 8:30 a.m. Each district school board must inform its community, including parents, students, teachers, school administrators, athletic coaches, and other stakeholders, about the health, safety, and academic impacts of sleep deprivation on middle school and high school students and the benefits of a later school start time and discuss local strategies to successfully implement the later school start times.

3. A district school board shall be deemed in compliance with the requirements of subparagraph 2. if the district school board submits to the department, by June 1, 2026, a report, in a format prescribed by the department, that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:

a. The start times of elementary, middle, and high schools in the school district.

b. Documentation of strategies considered to implement a later school start time for middle schools and high schools within the school district, including the number of board meetings, public hearings, and opportunities for parent input to discuss the strategies.

c. A description of the impact of implementing the school start time requirements in subparagraph 2., including the financial impact for the school district.

d. Identified unintended consequences to the school district, students, and the community by implementing the school start time requirements in subparagraph 2.

Section 2. Paragraph (b) of subsection (16) of section 1002.33, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1002.33 Charter schools.—

(16) EXEMPTION FROM STATUTES.—

(b) Additionally, a charter school shall be in compliance with the following statutes:

1. Section 286.011, relating to public meetings and records, public inspection, and criminal and civil penalties.

2. Chapter 119, relating to public records.

3. Section 1003.03, relating to the maximum class size, except that the calculation for compliance pursuant to s. 1003.03 shall be the average at the school level.

4. Section 1012.22(1)(c), relating to compensation and salary schedules.

5. Section 1012.33(5), relating to workforce reductions.

6. Section 1012.335, relating to contracts with instructional personnel hired on or after July 1, 2011.

7. Section 1012.34, relating to the substantive requirements for performance evaluations for instructional personnel and school administrators.

8. Section 1006.12, relating to safe-school officers.

9. Section 1006.07(7), relating to threat management teams.

10. Section 1006.07(9), relating to School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting.

11. Section 1006.07(10), relating to reporting of involuntary examinations.

12. Section 1006.1493, relating to the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool.

13. Section 1006.07(6)(d), relating to adopting an active assailant response plan.

14. Section 943.082(4)(b), relating to the mobile suspicious activity reporting tool.

15. Section 1012.584, relating to youth mental health awareness and assistance training.

16. Section 1001.42(4)(f)2., relating to middle school and high school start times, unless the governing board has submitted a report to the department pursuant to s. 1001.42(4)(f)3. A charter school-in-the-workplace is exempt from this requirement.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.

Approved by the Governor May 21, 2025.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 21, 2025.