



State Board of Education

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JLAC received 5-1-24

May 1, 2024

Melinda Miguel
Chief Inspector General
Office of the Chief Inspector General
The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Dear Ms. Miguel:

In accordance with Section 20.055(6)(h), Florida Statutes, attached is the six month status of corrective actions taken in response to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability Report #23-10, Career Statewide Articulation Agreements.

If you have any concerns regarding this status report, please contact Mike Blackburn by phone at 850-245-9418 or by email at mike.blackburn@fldoe.org.

Sincerely,



Manny Diaz, Jr.

Attachment

cc: Mike Blackburn, Inspector General
Suzanne Pridgeon, Deputy Commissioner, Finance and Operations
Kevin O'Farrell, Chancellor, Division of Career and Adult Education
Kathy Hebda, Chancellor, Florida College System
Legislative Auditing Committee

Department of Education
Office of the Inspector General – Internal Audit
Six-Month Status Report on: OPPAGA Career Statewide Articulation Agreements
Report #23-10 Issued: November 1, 2023
Status as of May 1, 2024

Recommendations:

As required by Ch. 2023-81, *Laws of Florida*, OPPAGA offers several recommendations for strengthening the statewide articulation agreement development process and enhancing the role of such agreements in a Florida stackable credential framework.

- The Florida Department of Education should consider providing additional information to the Office of Articulation and to the Articulation Coordinating Committee to evaluate the effect of articulation agreements. This information, such as student enrollment and completion data for the first and second credential identified in each articulation agreement, could be considered during annual reviews to identify any changes that might help increase the use of the agreements.
- FDOE should consider increasing the allowable number of years between when a student completes the first credential and enrolls in the second credential program.
- FDOE should consider working with state colleges, career centers, and school districts to provide better marketing and information campaigns to increase student awareness of existing career statewide articulation agreements and the credits for prior work that students may use for a second credential program. FDOE also should continue to catalog local agreements. In addition, the FDOE should post the catalog on its website to help students identify programs of study that match their interests and award greater credit for prior work.
- FDOE should consider assisting state colleges and career centers in revising entrance applications to request information on students' attained credentials to ensure that students receive the credits identified in career statewide articulation agreements.
- Officials from FDOE, the REACH Office, and CareerSource Florida reported that the department has begun developing criteria for high quality stackable credentials, including built-in mechanisms for statewide articulation agreements. FDOE officials stated that this work is not complete. FDOE should continue developing a definition of stackable credentials, a framework for stackable credentials that includes identifying high quality credentials, and ways that statewide articulation agreements may support high quality stackable credentials. These improvements would help ensure that students receive credit for prior work as they move through a sequence of stackable credentials.

Response as of November 1, 2023:

In accordance with the provisions of s. 11.51(2), *Florida Statutes*, a draft of OPPAGA's report was submitted to the Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education and the Chancellor of the Florida Board of Governors. The Department of Education and Board of Governors provided informal comments but did not submit written responses.

Response as of May 1, 2024:

Please see the Department's responses to each of the recommendations from the final report.

As required by Ch. 2023-81, *Laws of Florida*, OPPAGA offers several recommendations for strengthening the statewide articulation agreement development process and enhancing the role of such agreements in a Florida stackable credential framework.

- The Florida Department of Education should consider providing additional information to the Office of Articulation and to the Articulation Coordinating Committee to evaluate the effect of articulation agreements. This information, such as student enrollment and completion data for the first and second credential identified in each articulation agreement, could be considered during annual reviews to identify any changes that might help increase the use of the agreements.
 - It would not be advantageous to students for the Department to decline a possible agreement and potentially exclude students who could benefit from articulated credit in a program in their location area. However, reviewing completion and enrollment data, when available, could be a useful tool for monitoring the usage of established agreements. For 2024-25, the

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Department will review enrollment and data available by program and will consider surveying institutions regarding the application of articulated credit to students in the program.

- FDOE should consider increasing the allowable number of years between when a student completes the first credential and enrolls in the second credential program.
 - The FDOE anticipates initiating rulemaking this fall to make this adjustment, which would make the extended time effective during the 2024-25 academic year.
- FDOE should consider working with state colleges, career centers, and school districts to provide better marketing and information campaigns to increase student awareness of existing career statewide articulation agreements and the credits for prior work that students may use for a second credential program. FDOE also should continue to catalog local agreements. In addition, the FDOE should post the catalog on its website to help students identify programs of study that match their interests and award greater credit for prior work.
 - In response to the recommendations provided by OPPAGA, the FDOE has taken proactive steps to collaborate with state colleges, career centers and school districts, ensuring they are equipped to effectively increase student awareness of existing career statewide articulation agreements and credits available for prior work. Through regular outreach calls, we've engaged in collaborative discussions to gather insights and feedback directly from these institutions. This collaborative approach has provided valuable input, guiding us in understanding the specific needs and preferences of our partners.
 - Building upon these discussions, we are currently in the process of developing a comprehensive toolkit. This toolkit will include resources such as social media graphics, newsletter copy and draft emails designed to streamline the marketing process for these programs. By working closely with our partners and incorporating their input, we aim to ensure that the toolkit meets their needs effectively, ultimately enhancing student awareness and participation.
 - The FDOE has planned or completed a number of other opportunities to provide information, including a presentation to the Florida Community College Early Childhood Education Network (April 12, 2024), the Council of Presidents meeting (April 19, 2024) and the Joint Councils summer meeting (June 6, 2024). In addition, rule workshops associated with rulemaking in the fall of 2024 will provide additional opportunities to advertise the new lists and enhance communications.
- FDOE should consider assisting state colleges and career centers in revising entrance applications to request information on students' attained credentials to ensure that students receive the credits identified in career statewide articulation agreements.
 - There is a field on the FASTER secondary transcript to indicate that a high school student has earned a specific industry certification. FDOE will include this information in its technical assistance to institutions this summer.
- Officials from FDOE, the REACH Office, and CareerSource Florida reported that the department has begun developing criteria for high quality stackable credentials, including built-in mechanisms for statewide articulation agreements. FDOE officials stated that this work is not complete. FDOE should continue developing a definition of stackable credentials, a framework for stackable credentials that includes identifying high quality credentials, and ways that statewide articulation agreements may support high quality stackable credentials. These improvements would help ensure that students receive credit for prior work as they move through a sequence of stackable credentials.
 - As part of the Credential Review Committee (CRC) work, the Department continues to work with the CRC steering committee on work related to credential sequencing for credentials that do not meet the framework of quality wage requirements for the Master Credentials List

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- (MCL). This work involves documenting the pathway from the lower-level credential to an associate in science degree that does meet the wage criteria required for the MCL.
- The Division of Career and Adult Education staff are engaging with the Office of Articulation in the Florida College System to continue a review of all the industry certifications on the 2024-25 Master Credentials List which have not yet been reviewed for an articulation agreement.
 - The Division of Career and Adult Education has begun to identify the secondary program to postsecondary program linkages to identify career dual enrollment courses for implementation of a new career pathway performance funding component in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). The division is developing strategies, as part of our required review of all secondary and postsecondary career and technical education programs, to engage in program design changes to identify more clear pathways from secondary to postsecondary and establish those relationships as programs undergo review.

Anticipated Completion Date & Contact:

Dates are included in the response above; some are underway and others will be completed during the summer or fall of 2024. Please contact Kathy.Hebda@fldoe.org or Shannon.Mercer@fldoe.org for additional information.