



Adult and Community Educators (ACE) of Florida

Position Paper: HB 1507

ACE of Florida Supports Local Decision-making

Agency partnerships are born out of local need and coordinated by those on the ground who are best suited to make decisions and provide services in the best interest of students/customers. In areas where such partnerships do not exist or where they have not been successful, state and local leaders in those agencies should identify areas of improvement and collaborate with the programs and their local governing bodies to improve those challenges.

We do not support a forced “regionalization” approach where primary decision making occurs at the state level. There is little evidence that regionalization/standardization is the single variable that leads to improved student retention and achievement in adult education.

ACE of Florida Supports Reduced Government Not More Bureaucracy

Each of the agencies identified in HB 1507 have unique federal, state and local requirements including but not limited to performance metrics and related data collection and reporting requirements. Consolidating all of the entities into an “agency stew” with little or no research or data to support the potential success of combining all the complicated entities under one office creates just one more level of bureaucracy.

We do not support the creation of new entity to oversee and/or coordinate the workings of these agencies.

ACE of Florida Supports Equity and Accessibility

All Workforce Education programs should be accessible to everyone. Designating some programs as “Money Back Guarantee” programs with unique eligibility requirements creates a tiered educational system. All programs and apprenticeships that meet identified labor market needs should have equal access. Incenting institutions to exceed the minimum number of “Money Back Guarantee” programs will be counter-productive to improving equity and accessibility and will put the state further behind in meeting overall workforce needs.

We do not support the “Money Back Guarantee” option as it is, by design, exclusive.

ACE of Florida Supports Research and Data-driven Solutions and the Use of Real-time Data to Drive Instruction and Improve Achievement

There currently exists no statewide postsecondary data system that can yield the kind of accurate, real time information needed for program improvement or to drive student achievement. FETPIP, while providing useful information, is a lagging indicator unsuited for this purpose. WDIS is complicated by federal reporting requirements that are not necessarily achievement-driven or tailored to Florida’s Adult Education System. Consolidating and modifying several data systems from multiple agencies referenced in HB 1507 to meet their diverse reporting requirements, in addition to being costly, would water-down information necessary to drive student achievement improvement.

We do not support the “adaptation and integration of state information systems.” 14.36 (5) (a)

ACE of Florida Supports Fiscal Accountability

Research does not identify combining funding sources as the single variable to improving student achievement. With the fiscal challenges Florida is currently facing, opening the resources of one agency to another invites inefficiency, “mission creep,” and removes direct accountability for spending.

We do not support “combining two or more sources of funding to support workforce related programs or activities.” (834-836)

ACE of Florida Recognizes the Need for Continuous Improvement in Adult Education Retention and Student Achievement

Workforce education adult education programs are proud to serve some of Florida’s most challenging populations. We are the first to recognize, however, that not enough of the students we serve are reaching desired achievement levels or are not reaching those levels quickly enough to move on to postsecondary education. We are committed to analyzing our practices to identify the need to improve our academic performance results and are further committed to embracing and implementing improvements in our own system.

We do not support trying to improve multiple state agencies, all with their own leadership, infrastructure and funding systems, in one broad piece of legislation. One size does not fit all.