

A Comparison of State of Florida Charter Technical Career Centers to District Non-Charter Career Centers, 2014-15

At a Glance

In school year 2014-15, there were 3,942 students enrolled in the state of Florida's charter technical career centers First Coast Technical College (FCTC) and Lake Technical College (LTC) representing 3.7 percent of total career center (charter and public non-charter technical career center) headcount. Forty-three percent (three of seven) of the charter centers' adult education programs and 63 percent (22 of 35) of their career certificate (also known as Postsecondary Adult Vocational or PSAV) programs performed better than the average public non-charter technical career center. FCTC and LTC performed below the average public non-charter technical career center for their apprenticeship programs. FCTC and LTC have a lower percentage of minority and female students respectively than the average non-charter career center, but location and program offerings appear to explain these differences. Regarding socioeconomic status, FCTC had a higher percentage of students with demonstrated financial need (Pell grants) than LTC and the average public non-charter technical career center.

Scope

This report, provided by the Florida Department of Education (department) compares Florida charter technical career centers to non-charter district career centers statewide. Section 1002.34(19), Florida Statutes (F.S.), requires the commissioner of education to submit an annual comparative evaluation of charter technical career centers and non-charter career centers to the governor, the president of the Senate, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Senate and House committees responsible for secondary and postsecondary career and technical education. The comparative evaluation must address demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the students served, types and costs of services provided, and outcomes achieved.

Background

The 1999 Florida Legislature created charter technical career centers to promote advances and innovations in workforce preparation and economic development. The law authorized the creation of a new school or the conversion of an existing center currently operated by school districts or Florida College System institutions. The charter must be approved by the school board or the board of trustees of the college in whose geographic region the center is located. A charter technical career center's programs, admission policies, employment practices, operations and all other matters of governance are managed by a board of directors. The board of directors of a career center may decide matters relating to the operation of the school, including budgeting and curriculum and operating procedures, subject to the career center's charter. The term of an initial charter may not exceed five years. Thereafter, the sponsor may renew a charter for a period of up to five years. Legislation authorizing charter technical career centers includes the centers' purposes and responsibilities as well as the sponsors' responsibilities.

Appendix A of this report is a copy of the authorizing statute and Appendix B is a Program Glossary. The legislative intent is to provide charter technical career centers with an environment to incorporate non-traditional teaching/learning methods, evaluate these methods and identify which ones are successful. Methods that are proven effective can then be incorporated into public non-charter technical career centers' curricula. The legislation creates this environment by exempting charter technical career centers from nearly all statutes of the Florida K-20 Education Code see section 1002.34(10), F.S. This gives charter technical career centers more local control, reduces response time to local business/industry needs, and decreases state-level involvement in areas such as decision-making, curriculum and assessment development, and instructor hiring policies.

The mission of Florida's charter technical career centers is to provide comprehensive and innovative technical education programs, services and customized training to meet the needs of citizens, business and industry. The purpose of charter technical career centers is to develop a competitive workforce that supports local business, industry and economic development, and creates a training and education model reflective of marketplace realities. The career centers offer an array of career educational opportunities using school-to-work, technical, academy and/or magnet school models to provide career pathways for lifelong learning and career mobility and to enhance career and technical training.

Previous charter technical reports also included information on the Flagler/Volusia Advanced Technology Center which opened on August 20, 2001, at Daytona Beach Community College¹ in Volusia County; it subsequently was renamed Advanced Technology College in 2007. However, Advanced Technology College is no longer a charter technical career center after its charter expired on June 30, 2013, and this report contains no information on Advanced Technology College.

In school year 2014-15, the state of Florida had two charter technical career centers. These centers and their sponsors were:

1. First Coast Technical College (FCTC) – St. Johns County School Board
2. Lake Technical College (LTC) – Lake County School Board

Florida's Charter Technical Career Centers

On July 1, 1999, the St. Augustine Technical Center, which was operated by the St. Johns County School Board, converted to become the state's first charter technical career center under the name of First Coast Technical Institute. It subsequently was renamed First Coast Technical College and recently reauthorized its charter on July 1, 2013.

¹ This institution is now named Daytona State College.

Lake Technical Center became a conversion charter technical career center in July 2004, and recently reauthorized its charter on July 1, 2014, and changed its name to Lake Technical College (LTC).

First Coast Technical College

St. Johns County School Board sponsored First Coast Technical College (FCTC) as Florida's first postsecondary charter technical career center. FCTC's main and public service campuses are located in St. Augustine with two additional branch campuses in Putnam County. FCTC serves St. Johns County. FCTC's mission is to "provide career, technical and adult education to meet the changing needs of students, businesses and the workforce."² FCTC serves adults, dual enrolled and secondary high school students.

All career and technical training programs are supported by steering committees composed of members from business and industry. Career and technical training programs are competency-based, with curriculum provided by the state and enhanced with input from business and industry to ensure that training meets industry standards.

FCTC is accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE) and AdvancED. FCTC holds certification and/or approval from the following organizations: American Culinary Federation, American Welding Society, Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs of Medical Assistants Endowment, Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions, Florida Department of Education's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Florida Bureau of Fire Standards and Training, Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Department of Health's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services, Florida Department of Veterans Affairs, Florida State Board of Cosmetology, Florida State Board of Massage Therapy, Florida State Board of Nursing, National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, U.S. Department of Education's Office of Student and Financial Aid and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

FCTC provides students with financial aid, guidance and career counseling, career assessment, and placement services, and accommodations for students with special needs.

Lake Technical College

Lake Technical College (LTC) is a conversion charter technical center sponsored by the Lake County School Board. Its main campus is located in Eustis. LTC's mission is to be an integral component of the economic growth and development in its community by offering a variety of high quality career-training opportunities. All programs are supported by advisory committees who assist in ensuring the programs are industry standard and relevant to the workforce needs in the region. The career training programs are competency-based and follow the standards set by the state. The majority of the students enrolled at LTC are adults. However, secondary students may simultaneously enroll in career certificate programs to earn secondary and postsecondary credit.

² FCTC charter, page 2.

In addition to the main campus, the Institute of Public Safety, an extension campus, is located in Tavares and offers programs in law enforcement, corrections, firefighting, and public safety telecommunications (911 Dispatcher), as well as advanced and specialized courses to meet the needs of our public safety community. An instructional service center located in Mascotte provides adult education classes to students in the south part of the county. A plumbing apprenticeship program is also offered at the Mascotte site.

Adult basic education, GED[®] test preparation, applied academics for adult education and adult English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes are available on the main campus and in seven off-site locations around the county. Through a partnership with the Lake County Library System, many of these courses are offered in tandem with library tutors. GED[®] test preparation is also offered to inmates in the Lake County Jail.

LTC is accredited by COE and AdvancED. In addition, individual programs are certified/approved by the following accrediting bodies: American Culinary Federation; Bureau of Fire Standards; Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs; Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission; Florida Department of Health's Bureau of Emergency Medical Services; Florida Department of Veterans Affairs; Florida State Board of Cosmetology; Florida State Board of Nursing; Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions; National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation, Inc.; American Welding Society; U.S. Department of Education's Office of Federal Student Aid and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Career counseling and career assessment, accommodations for students with special needs, and job placement assistance are available to LTC students. Financial aid and scholarships may be available for qualified students.

Financial Data

This section compares costs and revenues reported by FCTC and LTC. Table 1 shows data from independent audit reports performed on FCTC and LTC for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015. The first section comprises four major cost categories followed by a section that differentiates federal, state and local revenue sources. The bottom row ("Net Change") is the difference between costs and revenue for the year and is applied toward each institution's reserve fund. FCTC allocated a smaller percentage of its resources to instruction and a higher percentage to services as compared to LTC.

Table 1
Charter Technical Career Center Financial Data for Fiscal Year

Expenditure Categories	FCTC	Percent	LTC	Percent
Instruction	\$3,043,681	30.8%	\$7,184,554	77.7%
Administration	\$345,014	3.5%	\$858,469	9.3%
Services	\$4,372,533	44.3%	\$432,774	4.7%
Plant and Operations	\$2,109,037	21.4%	\$765,954	8.3%
Fixed Capital Outlay	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Totals	\$9,870,265	100.0%	\$9,241,751	100.0%
Revenue	FCTC	Percent	LTC	Percent
Federal	\$130,257	1.4%	\$1,815,906	17.8%
State	\$4,567,233	48.9%	\$5,259,918	51.6%
Local and Other	\$4,651,901	49.8%	\$3,124,299	30.6%
Totals	\$9,349,391	100.0%	\$10,200,123	100.0%
Net Change	\$(520,874)		\$958,372	

Source: Independent audit report

Comparative Analysis of Career and Technical Education Productivity

Enrollment

All enrollment and performance data in this report are extracted from the department databases. FCTC and LTC submit data through the department Workforce Development Information System (WDIS). Community College and Technical Center Management Information System (CCTCMIS) personnel identify students enrolled in district-sponsored charter technical career centers. Then CCTCMIS identifies all other district technical career center students as public non-charter technical career center students.

This report compares each of the charter technical career centers to the aggregated 45 Florida public non-charter technical career centers.

Charter technical career center enrollment represented 3.7 percent of the total charter and public non-charter technical career center enrollment. Tables 2a and 2b shows statewide public non-charter technical career center and charter technical career center 2014-15 student headcount and enrollment percentages in adult and career certificate education programs. In addition, enrollment data on continuing workforce education is also included. Enrollment is disaggregated by instruction type. FCTC and LTC's largest program areas were career certificate programs at 55 percent each followed by adult general education at FCTC (37.0 percent) and LTC (32.7 percent). The largest student enrollments in public non-charter technical career were in the area of adult general education (51.7 percent). The charter technical career centers' largest aggregate student enrollments (55.1 percent) were in career certificate programs.

A notable difference when looking at enrollment at charter technical career centers compared with public non-charter technical career centers is the high percentage of Continuing Workforce Education (CWE). In public non-charter technical career centers CWE is a relatively small percent (2.7 percent) of the overall enrollment while at charter technical centers it is 8.9 percent of the overall enrollment. It should be noted that beginning 2010-11, CWE is the only workforce education program that must be 100 percent fee supported.

Table 2a
Career Center Headcounts by Postsecondary and Adult Program Category, 2014-15

School	Adult General Education (AGE)	Career Certificate (PSAV)	Continuing Workforce Education (CWE)*	Apprenticeship	Applied Technology Diploma (ATD)	Total Enrollment
Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	52,840	38,446	2,761	7,086	1,164	102,297
All Charter Technical Centers	1,375	2,174	351	38	4	3,942
FCTC and LTC Headcount by Program Category						
First Coast Technical College	740	1,101	144	13	4	2,002
Lake Technical Center	635	1,073	207	25	N/A	1,940

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

* Beginning in 2010-11, continuing workforce education programs are no longer state funded and must be supported by fees.

Table 2b
Career Center Headcounts by Postsecondary and Adult Program Category, 2014-15

School	Adult General Education (AGE)	Career Certificate (PSAV)	Continuing Workforce Education (CWE)	Apprenticeship	Applied Technology Diploma (ATD)
Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	51.7%	37.6%	2.7%	6.9%	1.1%
All Charter Technical Centers	34.9%	55.1%	8.9%	1.0%	<1%
FCTC and LTC Enrollment Percentages by Program					
First Coast Technical Center	37.0%	55.0%	7.2%	<1%	<1%
Lake Technical Center	32.7%	55.0%	10.7%	1.3%	N/A

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Performance

This section evaluates student performance among the charter technical career centers in school year 2014-15 in three separate program areas: adult general education, career certificate and apprenticeship programs. Students' technical and literacy skills acquisition or advancement is measured by completion points: literacy completion points (LCPs)³ for adult general education skills and occupational completion points (OCPs)⁴ for technical skills. Each completion point represents a discrete level of skill within a program. The first performance measure reported in this section is the percentage of students who earned at least one completion point during the 2014-15 academic year. While this measure indicates the breadth of learning gains among enrolled students, the second measure, the ratio of completion points to students enrolled, is a general measure of the number of skills acquired per student, or depth of learning, during the year. Because adult general education and career certificate categories are rather broad and include a variety of program types with different amounts of time required to earn completions, performance calculations are compared by program.⁵ For comparative purposes, we have calculated statewide averages for each program among all 45 public non-charter technical career centers for both measures. Small programs at the charter technical career centers (less than 20 students) were excluded from the analysis. Note, that because the following are comparisons of aggregated groups of students, student-level characteristics such as baseline academic performance and demographics are not controlled for in the analysis. Also, these are norm-referenced comparisons because there is no statewide, standardized, criterion-referenced performance measurement available.

Each of the following tables include annual program headcount ("Headcount"), the percentage of those students who earned at least one completion point ("Percent with at least one LCP" or "Percent with at least one OCP"), the ratio of completions to headcount ("Completion-to-Headcount"), and, for comparative purposes, the statewide average among all public non-charter technical career centers for both of those measures. For this performance indicator, the higher the ratio, the better the performance.

Adult Education Performance

Tables 3 and 4 reveal that students enrolled in three out of the seven charter technical career center adult education programs at FCTC and LTC analyzed in this report, (43 percent) performed at or better than the statewide average of all public non-charter technical career centers on both performance metrics.

³ Literacy completion points are the literacy gains earned by a student during the school year. LCPs in adult general education are earned through the process of pre- and post-testing and reaching a scale score that is at or beyond the upper range of their current educational functioning level.

⁴ Occupational completion points are the occupational competencies that qualify a person to enter an occupation that is linked to a career and technical program.

⁵ For example, students at lower literacy levels will earn LCPs at a much slower rate than students at an adult high school who earn an LCP with every completed course at the 9th and 10th grade levels. Students in automotive service technology programs can earn many more OCPs in a year than web development students.

Table 3
First Coast Technical College Adult General Education Performance, 2014-15

Program	Headcount	Percent with at least one LCP*		Completion to Headcount Ratio**	
		FCTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	FCTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers
Adult Basic Education (9900000)	554	23.6%	31.5%	0.33	0.58
Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (9900040)	83	12.0%	25.2%	0.13	0.34
GED® Preparation (9900130) ¹	68	2.9%	7.8%	0.07	0.22
Applied Academics for Adult Education (S990001)	36	41.7%	13.6%	0.44	0.18

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

FCTC also reported enrollment in Adult High School Co-Enrollment

*LCPs maybe reported based on passage of individual subtests, however for accountability purposes only students who earn the GED are considered completers.

**Completion to headcount ratio is based on total number of LCPs reported.

Table 4
Lake Technical College Adult General Education Performance, 2014-15

Program	Headcount	Percent with at least one LCP*		Completion to Headcount Ratio**	
		LTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	LTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers
Adult Basic Education (9900000)	395	36.7%	31.5%	0.76	0.58
Adult English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) (9900040)	194	29.4%	25.2%	0.35	0.34
GED® Preparation (9900130) ¹	81	0.0%	7.8%	0.00	0.22

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

*LCPs maybe reported based on passage of individual subtests, however for accountability purposes only students who earn the GED are considered completers.

**Completion to headcount ratio is based on total number of LCPs reported.

Career Certificate Performance

Tables 5 through 6 shows that 22 out of 35 charter technical career center certificate programs with 20 or more students enrolled (63 percent), performed at or better than the statewide average of all public non-charter technical career centers on the Occupational Completion Point and the Completion to Headcount Ratio measures.

Table 5
First Coast Technical College Career Certificate Program Performance, 2014-15
 Sorted by Percent with Minimum of One OCP

Program	Headcount	Percent with minimum of one OCP		Completion to Headcount Ratio	
		FCTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	FCTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers
Dental Assisting	24	95.8%	85.5%	1.79	1.54
Massage Therapy	36	94.4%	85.8%	0.94	1.17
Practical Nursing	129	84.5%	74.1%	1.18	1.09
Digital Design 1	25	84.0%	55.9%	1.56	1.03
Medical Assisting	69	79.7%	74.9%	1.90	1.64
Pharmacy Technician	28	78.6%	78.9%	0.79	0.92
Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating Technology 1	27	77.8%	63.7%	1.56	1.14
Fire Fighter	123	76.4%	87.5%	1.20	1.74
Emergency Medical Technician	154	72.1%	86.6%	1.36	1.06
Cabinetmaking	23	69.6%	12.0%	0.70	0.18
Automotive Service Technology 1	34	64.7%	63.1%	1.65	1.42
Applied Welding Technologies	83	63.9%	69.3%	1.43	1.71
Commercial Foods and Culinary Arts	119	59.7%	51.6%	1.34	1.03
Paramedic	57	36.8%	54.7%	0.37	0.84
Cosmetology	105	28.6%	36.3%	0.29	0.36

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Table 6
Lake Technical Center Career Certificate Program Performance, 2014-15
 Sorted by Percent with Minimum of One OCP

Program	Headcount	Percent with minimum of one OCP		Completion to Headcount Ratio	
		LTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	LTC	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers
Public Safety Telecommunications	21	100%	0.0%	1.00	0
Patient Care Technician	23	95.7%	83.2%	5.39	3.65
Fire Fighter	80	95.0%	87.5%	1.83	1.74
Automotive Service Technology 1	33	93.9%	63.1%	2.94	1.42
Medical Assisting	53	92.5%	74.9%	2.19	1.64
Nursing Assistant (Articulated)	87	89.7%	79.1%	1.70	1.40
Phlebotomy	39	89.7%	80.6%	1.54	1.23
Applied Welding Technologies	60	85.0%	69.3%	2.82	1.71
Commercial Foods and Culinary Arts	40	85.0%	51.6%	2.08	1.03
Medium and Heavy Duty Truck and Bus Technician 1	20	85.0%	88.7%	1.55	2.1
Pharmacy Technician	35	82.9%	78.9%	1.03	0.92
Accounting Operations	28	82.1%	73.4%	1.75	1.37
Automotive Collision Repair and Refinishing	43	81.4%	57.9%	2.09	1.30
Emergency Medical Technician (Basic)	105	80.0%	86.6%	1.20	1.06
Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating Technology 1	24	79.2%	63.7%	1.71	1.14
Correctional Officer (Traditional Correctional B RTP)	36	72.2%	73.2%	0.72	0.73
Practical Nursing	126	65.1%	74.1%	1.06	1.09
Law Enforcement Officer	77	55.8%	49.7%	0.56	0.50
Paramedic	39	43.6%	54.7%	0.44	0.84
Cosmetology	88	43.2%	36.3%	0.43	0.36

Source: WDIS 2014-15 end of year data

Apprenticeship Performance

Table 7 below shows public non-charter and charter technical career centers' apprenticeship student performance indicators. Apprenticeship students who complete a full year of instruction earn one OCP. Students leaving before one full year (or students entering late in the year) decrease this ratio. FCTC performed below the statewide average of all public non-charter technical career centers and LTC on both performance indicators. Conversely, LTC performed higher than the statewide average of all public non-charter technical career centers and FCTC on both performance indicators.

Table 7
Career Center Apprenticeship Performance

Institution	Unduplicated Headcount	Percent with Minimum of one OCP	Completion to Headcount Ratio
Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	7,086	49.4%	0.56
First Coast Technical College	13	0%	0.00
Lake Technical College	25	72.0%	1.32

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Gender Distribution

Table 8 shows that the statewide public non-charter technical career centers gender distribution was slightly higher for males at 50.9 percent and 49.1 percent for females. First Coast Technical College had a slightly higher distribution of female students (50.5 percent) as compared to male students (49.5 percent). Lake Technical College had a slightly higher percentage of male students at (50.8 percent) than female students (49.2 percent).

Table 8
Career Center Gender Distribution

Institution	Female	Male
Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	49.1%	50.9%
First Coast Technical College	50.5%	49.5%
Lake Technical College	49.2%	50.8%

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Race/Ethnicity Distribution

Table 9 shows that statewide, White (non-Hispanic) students constituted a much larger proportion of the charter technical career centers' student populations (68.2 percent) than that of the public non-charter technical career centers (30.5 percent). There were corresponding larger percentages of African-American (non-Hispanic) and Hispanic students among public non-charter technical career centers.

Table 9
Race/Ethnicity Distribution Among Career Centers, 2014-15

Population	African-American	Hispanic	Other	White
Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	27.8%	37.9%	3.7%	30.5%
Charter Technical Career Centers	16.3%	13.1%	2.3%	68.2%

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Race/ethnicity distribution at the public non-charter technical career centers and charter technical career centers are more likely reflective of the centers' locations than the centers' recruiting efforts. Specifically, the large Hispanic population in South Florida influences the statewide numbers. The charter technical career centers' mid-Florida locations result in a smaller percentage of Hispanic students and an increase in other ethnic groups' percentages. The remainder of this section compares the charter technical career centers' race/ethnicity distributions to the corresponding K-12 distributions in each center's service area to make valid comparisons.

Table 10 reveals that FCTC's race/ethnicity distribution was very similar to the district that the institution serves. White students represented 75.5 percent of FCTC's enrollment and 78.7 percent of the K-12 students in St. Johns District. The largest percentage difference was among African-American students, which was (8.9 percentage points) higher at FCTC (16.2 percent) than at the K-12 districts (7.3 percent). Hispanic students accounted for (6.4 percent) of FCTC's population and (7.8 percent) of K-12 students in FCTC's service area.

Table 10
Race/Ethnicity Distribution at First Coast Technical College, 2014-15

Population	African-American	Hispanic	Other	White
First Coast Technical College	16.2%	6.4%	1.8%	75.5%
St. Johns County K-12 Students	7.3%	7.8%	6.2%	78.7%

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Table 11 reveals that LTC's White students represented a higher percentage (60.7 percent) of total enrollment than among Lake County K-12 students (55.2 percent). LTC's Hispanic enrollment was (2.4 percent) less than that of Lake County's K-12 population. While the African American student population was (1.3 percent) higher at LTC as compared to Lake County's K-12 population.

Table 11
Race/Ethnicity Distribution at Lake Technical College, 2014-15

Population	African-American	Hispanic	Other	White
Lake Technical College	16.4%	20.0%	2.9%	60.7%
Lake County K-12 Students	15.1%	22.4%	7.3%	55.2%

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

Financial Need

Pell grants are a federal need-based grant program available to students enrolled in career certificate programs of 600 hours or more. The percentage of postsecondary students receiving Pell grants reflects both the students' socioeconomic status and the schools' program lengths. A higher proportion of students enrolled in programs over 600 hours results in a higher proportion of students who are eligible for Pell grants based on program length alone. Table 12 shows that LTC's percentage (34.7 percent) was above the public non-charter technical career centers' percentage (32.8 percent), while FCTC's percentage was higher (49.3 percent), reflecting their relatively wide range of programs offered.

Table 12
Career Certificate Headcount with Number and Percent of Students Pell Grant Eligible, 2014-15

Population	Public Non-Charter Technical Career Centers	First Coast Technical College	Lake Technical College
Career Certificate Headcount	38,446	1,101	1,073
Number Pell Grant Eligible	12,607	543	372
Percent Pell Grant Eligible	32.8%	49.3%	34.7%

Source: WDIS end of year data 2014-15

APPENDIX A

Authorizing Statute (Section 1002.34, Florida Statutes)

(1) **AUTHORIZATION.**—The Legislature finds that the establishment of charter technical career centers can assist in promoting advances and innovations in workforce preparation and economic development. A charter technical career center may provide a learning environment that better serves the needs of a specific population group or a group of occupations, thus promoting diversity and choices within the public education and public postsecondary technical education community in this state. Therefore, the creation of such centers is authorized as part of the state’s program of public education. A charter technical career center may be formed by creating a new school or converting an existing school district or Florida College System institution program to charter technical status.

(2) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of a charter technical career center is to:

- (a) Develop a competitive workforce to support local business and industry and economic development.
- (b) Create a training and education model that is reflective of marketplace realities.
- (c) Offer a continuum of career educational opportunities using a school-to-work, tech-prep, technical, academy, and magnet school model.
- (d) Provide career pathways for lifelong learning and career mobility.
- (e) Enhance career and technical training.

(3) **DEFINITIONS.**—As used in this section, the term:

- (a) “Charter technical career center” or “center” means a public school or a public technical center operated under a charter granted by a district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees or a consortium, including one or more district school boards and Florida College System institution boards of trustees, that includes the district in which the facility is located, that is nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and operations, and is managed by a board of directors.
- (b) “Sponsor” means a district school board, a Florida College System institution board of trustees, or a consortium of one or more of each.

(4) **CHARTER.**—A sponsor may designate centers as provided in this section. An application to establish a center may be submitted by a sponsor or another organization that is determined, by rule of the State Board of Education, to be appropriate. However, an independent school is not eligible for status as a center. The charter must be signed by the governing body of the center and the sponsor and must be approved by the district school board and Florida College System institution board of trustees in whose geographic region the facility is located. If a charter

technical career center is established by the conversion to charter status of a public technical center formerly governed by a district school board, the charter status of that center takes precedence in any question of governance. The governance of the center or of any program within the center remains with its board of directors unless the board agrees to a change in governance or its charter is revoked as provided in subsection (15). Such a conversion charter technical career center is not affected by a change in the governance of public technical centers or of programs within other centers that are or have been governed by district school boards. A charter technical career center, or any program within such a center, that was governed by a district school board and transferred to a Florida College System institution prior to the effective date of this act is not affected by this provision. An applicant who wishes to establish a center must submit to the district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees, or a consortium of one or more of each, an application on a form developed by the Department of Education which includes:

- (a) The name of the proposed center.
- (b) The proposed structure of the center, including a list of proposed members of the board of directors or a description of the qualifications for and method of their appointment or election.
- (c) The workforce development goals of the center, the curriculum to be offered, and the outcomes and the methods of assessing the extent to which the outcomes are met.
- (d) The admissions policy and criteria for evaluating the admission of students.
- (e) A description of the staff responsibilities and the proposed qualifications of the teaching staff.
- (f) A description of the procedures to be implemented to ensure significant involvement of representatives of business and industry in the operation of the center.
- (g) A method for determining whether a student has satisfied the requirements for graduation specified in s. [1002.3105\(5\)](#), s. [1003.4281](#), or s. [1003.4282](#) and for completion of a postsecondary certificate or degree.
- (h) A method for granting secondary and postsecondary diplomas, certificates, and degrees.
- (i) A description of and address for the physical facility in which the center will be located.
- (j) A method for resolving conflicts between the governing body of the center and the sponsor and between consortium members, if applicable.
- (k) A method for reporting student data as required by law and rule.
- (l) A statement that the applicant has participated in the training provided by the Department of Education.
- (m) The identity of all relatives employed by the charter technical career center who are related to the center owner, president, chairperson of the governing board of directors, superintendent, governing board member, principal, assistant principal, or any other person

employed by the center who has equivalent decision making authority. As used in this paragraph, the term “relative” means father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, or half sister.

(n) Other information required by the district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees.

Students at a center must meet the same testing and academic performance standards as those established by law and rule for students at public schools and public technical centers. The students must also meet any additional assessment indicators that are included within the charter approved by the district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees.

(5) APPLICATION.—An application to establish a center must be submitted by February 1 of the year preceding the school year in which the center will begin operation. The sponsor must review the application using an evaluation instrument developed by the Department of Education and make a final decision on whether to approve the application and grant the charter by March 1, and may condition the granting of a charter on the center’s taking certain actions or maintaining certain conditions. Such actions and conditions must be provided to the applicant in writing. The district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees is not required to issue a charter to any person.

(6) SPONSOR.—A district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees or a consortium of one or more of each may sponsor a center in the county in which the board has jurisdiction.

(a) A sponsor must review all applications for centers received through at least February 1 of each calendar year for centers to be opened at the beginning of the sponsor’s next school year. A sponsor may receive applications later than this date if it so chooses. To facilitate an accurate budget projection process, a sponsor shall be held harmless for FTE students who are not included in the FTE projection due to approval of applications after the FTE projection deadline. A sponsor must, by a majority vote, approve or deny an application no later than 60 days after the application is received. If an application is denied, the sponsor must, within 10 days, notify the applicant in writing of the specific reasons for denial, which must be based upon good cause. Upon approval of a charter application, the initial startup must be consistent with the beginning of the public school or Florida College System institution calendar for the district in which the charter is granted, unless the sponsor allows a waiver of this provision for good cause.

(b) An applicant may appeal any denial of its application to the State Board of Education within 30 days after the sponsor’s denial and shall notify the sponsor of its appeal. Any response

of the sponsor must be submitted to the state board within 30 days after notification of the appeal. The State Board of Education must, by majority vote, accept or reject the decision of the sponsor no later than 60 days after an appeal is filed, pursuant to State Board of Education rule. The State Board of Education may reject an appeal for failure to comply with procedural rules governing the appeals process, and the rejection must describe the submission errors. The appellant may have up to 15 days after notice of rejection to resubmit an appeal. An application for appeal submitted after a rejection is timely if the original appeal was filed within 30 days after the sponsor's denial. The State Board of Education shall remand the application to the sponsor with a written recommendation that the sponsor approve or deny the application, consistent with the state board's decision. The decision of the State Board of Education is not subject to the provisions of chapter 120.

(c) The sponsor must act upon the recommendation of the State Board of Education within 30 days after it is received, unless the sponsor determines by competent substantial evidence that approving the state board's recommendation would be contrary to law or the best interests of the students or the community. The sponsor must notify the applicant in writing concerning the specific reasons for its failure to follow the state board's recommendation. The sponsor's action on the state board's recommendation is a final action, subject to judicial review.

(d)1. The Department of Education shall offer or arrange for training and technical assistance to centers which must include developing and amending business plans, estimating and accounting for costs and income, complying with state and federal grant and student performance accountability reporting requirements, implementing good business practices, and identifying state and federal financial aid the center may be eligible to receive.

2. An applicant must participate in the training provided by the department after approval of its application but at least 30 days before the first day of classes at the center. The department may provide technical assistance to an applicant upon written request.

(e) The terms and conditions for the operation of a center must be agreed to by the sponsor and the applicant in a written contract. The sponsor may not impose unreasonable requirements that violate the intent of giving centers greater flexibility to meet educational goals. The applicant and sponsor must reach an agreement on the provisions of the contract or the application is deemed denied.

(f) The sponsor shall monitor and review the center's progress toward charter goals and shall monitor the center's revenues and expenditures. The sponsor shall perform the duties provided in [s.1002.345](#).

(7) LEGAL ENTITY.—A center must organize as a nonprofit organization and adopt a name and corporate seal. A center is a body corporate and politic, with all powers to implement its charter program. The center may:

- (a) Be a private or a public employer.
- (b) Sue and be sued, but only to the same extent and upon the same conditions that a public entity can be sued.
- (c) Acquire real property by purchase, lease, lease with an option to purchase, or gift, to use as a center facility.
- (d) Receive and disburse funds.
- (e) Enter into contracts or leases for services, equipment, or supplies.
- (f) Incur temporary debts in anticipation of the receipt of funds.
- (g) Solicit and accept gifts or grants for career center purposes.
- (h) Take any other action that is not inconsistent with this section and rules adopted under this section.

(8) **ELIGIBLE STUDENTS.**—A center must be open to all students as space is available and may not discriminate in admissions policies or practices on the basis of an individual’s physical disability or proficiency in English or on any other basis that would be unlawful if practiced by a public school or a Florida College System institution. A center may establish reasonable criteria by which to evaluate prospective students, which criteria must be outlined in the charter.

(9) **FACILITIES.**—A center may be located in any suitable location, including part of an existing public school or Florida College System institution building, space provided on a public worksite, or a public building. A center’s facilities must comply with the State Uniform Building Code for Public Educational Facilities Construction adopted pursuant to s. [1013.37](#), or with applicable state minimum building codes pursuant to chapter 553, and state minimum fire protection codes pursuant to s. [633.208](#), adopted by the authority in whose jurisdiction the facility is located. If K-12 public school funds are used for construction, the facility must remain on the local school district’s Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH) school building inventory of the district school board and must revert to the district school board if the consortium dissolves and the program is discontinued. If Florida College System institution public school funds are used for construction, the facility must remain on the local Florida College System institution’s facilities inventory and must revert to the local Florida College System institution board of trustees if the consortium dissolves and the program is discontinued. The additional student capacity created by the addition of the center to the local school district’s FISH may not be calculated in the permanent student capacity for the purpose of determining need or eligibility for state capital outlay funds while the facility is used as a center. If the construction of the center is funded jointly by K-12 public school funds and Florida College System institution funds, the sponsoring entities must agree, before granting the charter, on the appropriate owner and terms of transfer of the facility if the charter is dissolved.

(10) EXEMPTION FROM STATUTES.—

(a) A center must operate pursuant to its charter and is exempt from all statutes of the Florida School Code except provisions pertaining to civil rights and to student health, safety, and welfare, or as otherwise required by law.

(b) A center must comply with the Florida K-20 Education Code with respect to providing services to students with disabilities.

(c) A center must comply with the antidiscrimination provisions in s. [1000.05](#) and the provisions in s. [1002.33](#)(24) which relate to the employment of relatives.

(11) FUNDING.—

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a charter technical career center's student membership enrollment must be calculated pursuant to this section.

(b) Each district school board and Florida College System institution that sponsors a charter technical career center shall pay directly to the center an amount stated in the charter. State funding shall be generated for the center for its student enrollment and program outcomes as provided in law. A center is eligible for funding from workforce education funds, the Florida Education Finance Program, and the Florida College System Program Fund, depending upon the programs conducted by the center.

(c) A center may receive other state and federal aid, grants, and revenue through the district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees.

(d) A center may receive gifts and grants from private sources.

(e) A center may not levy taxes or issue bonds, but it may charge a student tuition fee consistent with authority granted in its charter and permitted by law.

(f) A center shall provide for an annual financial audit in accordance with s. [218.39](#). A center shall provide a monthly financial statement to the sponsor. The monthly financial statement shall be in a form prescribed by the Department of Education.

(g) A center must define in the charter agreement the delivery system in which the instructional offering of educational services will be placed. The rules governing this delivery system must be applied to all of the center's students and must authorize all other sponsoring educational systems to report required enrollment and student data based solely on the rules of the offering institution. Each sponsor shall earn full-time equivalent membership for each student for funding and reporting purposes.

(12) EMPLOYEES OF A CENTER.—

(a) A center may select its own employees.

(b) A center may contract for services with an individual, partnership, or a cooperative. Such persons contracted with are not public employees.

(c) If a center contracts with a public educational agency for services, the terms of employment must follow existing state law and rule and local policies and procedures.

(d) The employees of a center may bargain collectively, as a separate unit or as part of the existing district collective bargaining unit, as determined by the structure of the center.

(e) As a public employer, a center may participate in:

1. The Florida Retirement System upon application and approval as a “covered group” under s. [121.021](#)(34). If a center participates in the Florida Retirement System, its employees are compulsory members of the Florida Retirement System.

2. The State Community College System Optional Retirement Program pursuant to s. [1012.875](#)(2), if the charter is granted by a Florida College System institution that participates in the optional retirement program and meets the eligibility criteria of s. [121.051](#)(2)(c).

(f) Teachers who are considered qualified by the career center are exempt from state certification requirements.

(g) A public school or Florida College System institution teacher or administrator may take a leave of absence to accept employment in a charter technical career center upon the approval of the school district or Florida College System institution.

(h) An employee who is on a leave of absence under this section may retain seniority accrued in that school district or Florida College System institution and may continue to be covered by the benefit programs of that district or Florida College System institution if the center and the district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees agree to this arrangement and its financing.

(13) **BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORITY.**—The board of directors of a center may decide matters relating to the operation of the school, including budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures, subject to the center’s charter. The board of directors is responsible for performing the duties provided in s. [1002.345](#), including monitoring the corrective action plan. The board of directors must comply with s. [1002.33](#)(26).

(14) **ACCOUNTABILITY.**—Each center must submit a report to the participating district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees by August 1 of each year. The report must be in such form as the sponsor prescribes and must include:

(a) A discussion of progress made toward the achievement of the goals outlined in the center’s charter.

(b) A financial statement setting forth by appropriate categories the revenue and expenditures for the previous school year.

(15) **TERMS OF THE CHARTER.**—The term of an initial charter may not exceed 5 years. Thereafter, the sponsor may renew a charter for a period up to 5 years. The sponsor may refuse to renew a charter or may revoke a charter if the center has not fulfilled a condition imposed

under the charter or if the center has violated any provision of the charter. The sponsor may place the center on probationary status to allow the implementation of a remedial plan, after which, if the plan is unsuccessful, the charter may be summarily revoked. The sponsor shall develop procedures and guidelines for the revocation and renewal of a center's charter. The sponsor must give written notice of its intent not to renew the charter at least 12 months before the charter expires. If the sponsor revokes a charter before the scheduled expiration date, the sponsor must provide written notice to the governing board of the center at least 60 days before the date of termination, stating the grounds for the proposed revocation. The governing board of the center may request in writing an informal hearing before the sponsor within 14 days after receiving the notice of revocation. A revocation takes effect at the conclusion of a school year, unless the sponsor determines that earlier revocation is necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students. The sponsor shall monitor and review the center in its progress toward the goals established in the charter and shall monitor the revenues and expenditures of the center.

(16) **TRANSPORTATION.**—The center may provide transportation, pursuant to chapter 1006, through a contract with the district school board or the Florida College System institution board of trustees, a private provider, or parents of students. The center must ensure that transportation is not a barrier to equal access for all students in grades K-12 residing within a reasonable distance of the facility.

(17) **IMMUNITY.**—For the purposes of tort liability, the governing body and employees of a center are governed by s. [768.28](#).

(18) **RULES.**—The State Board of Education shall adopt rules, pursuant to ss. [120.536\(1\)](#) and [120.54](#), relating to the implementation of charter technical career centers, including rules to implement a charter model application form and an evaluation instrument in accordance with this section.

(19) **EVALUATION; REPORT.**—The Commissioner of Education shall provide for an annual comparative evaluation of charter technical career centers and public technical centers. The evaluation may be conducted in cooperation with the sponsor, through private contracts, or by department staff. At a minimum, the comparative evaluation must address the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the students served, the types and costs of services provided, and the outcomes achieved. By December 30 of each year, the Commissioner of Education shall submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Senate and House committees that have responsibility for secondary and postsecondary career and technical education a report of the comparative evaluation completed for the previous school year.

History.—s. 99, ch. 2002-387; s. 1, ch. 2004-357; s. 8, ch. 2009-214; s. 28, ch. 2011-5; s. 9, ch. 2011-55; s. 43, ch. 2013-35; s. 157, ch. 2013-183; s. 174, ch. 2014-17; s. 25, ch. 2014-39.

APPENDIX B

Program Glossary

Adult General Education

Instructional programs that target the employability of the state's workforce through the following: adult basic education, adult secondary education, vocational-preparatory instruction, instruction for adults with disabilities and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). These programs assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency and in the completion of a secondary education diploma (adult high school or passing the GED[®] test). The adult education programs included in this report include the following.

Adult Basic Education (ABE) - Education for adults whose inability to speak, read or write the English language constitutes a substantial impairment of their ability to procure or retain employment, commensurate with their ability is designed to help them be less dependent on others, improve their ability to benefit from occupational training, increase their opportunities for more productive and profitable employment, and to make them better able to meet their adult responsibilities.

Adult ESOL - English for Speakers of Other Languages.

Adult High School - Courses leading to completion of credits and passing of state-mandated assessments (Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, or FCAT) necessary to qualify for a high school diploma.

Applied Academics for Adult Education - Adult general education through which students learn academic and workforce readiness skills at the level of functional literacy (grade level 6.0 - 8.9) or higher so that students may pursue certificate career education or higher level career education.

GED[®] Test Preparation - Courses that prepare students for success in the five GED[®] subject area tests that lead to the award of the state of Florida High School Diploma.

Applied Technology Diploma Program

The applied technology diploma (ATD) program is considered part of a technical degree program, has a length of less than 60 credit hours and leads to employment in a specific occupation. The program may include either technical credit or college credit. It may be offered by a public school district only as technical credit, with college credit being awarded upon articulation to a Florida College System institution. Statewide articulation is guaranteed by s. 1007.23, F.S., in addition to guidelines issued by the State Board of Education as found in s. 1007.24 and s. 1007.25, F.S.

Apprenticeship or Pre-Apprenticeship Program

An apprenticeship program is a course of instruction with an industry sponsor and program standards approved and registered with the Florida Department of Education's Apprenticeship Programs Section. The registered program standards contain all the terms and conditions for the qualifications, recruitment, selection, employment, salary and training of apprentices. In addition, it includes the requirements for a written apprenticeship agreement. The program must include on-the-job training and classroom instruction components. Sponsors can elect to provide classroom instruction privately or enter into agreements with Florida College System institutions or school districts. Apprentices enrolled at public institutions are exempt from paying registration, matriculation and lab fees. Apprentices who complete registered apprenticeship programs are accepted by the industry as journeymen. Certifications earned through registered apprenticeship programs are recognized nationwide.

A pre-apprenticeship program is a course of instruction designed to prepare a person 16 years of age or older to become an apprentice. Courses are approved by and registered with the Florida Department of Education and sponsored by a registered apprenticeship program.

Associate in Applied Science (AAS)

The Associate in Applied Science (AAS) is a two-year technical degree indicating that a student has trained in a particular field and is prepared for employment.

Associate in Science (AS)

The Associate in Science is a two-year technical degree that contains 15-18 credit hours of transferable general education.

Career Certificate Program (Postsecondary Adult Vocational Certificate Program or PSAV program)

Career certificate program means a course of study that leads to at least one Occupational Completion Point. "Occupational Completion Point" is defined as the "occupational competencies that qualify a person to enter an occupation that is linked to a career and technical program." Full program completions may be issued to students who complete all the occupational completion points for a program. This program is also known as Postsecondary Adult Vocational (PSAV).

College credit may be awarded in such programs through local and statewide articulation agreements if authorized by the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education. The state currently has 37 statewide articulation agreements between Career Certificate/PSAV and Associate in Science/Associate in Applied Science degree programs.

Continuing Workforce Education

Continuing workforce education programs are for the following:

- Individuals requiring training for licensure or certification renewal by a regulatory

- agency or credentialing body;
- New or expanding businesses;
- Business, industry and government agencies requiring retraining of employees due to changes in products or services or to increase efficiency and productivity; and
- Individuals enhancing occupational skills to maintain current employment, cross-train or upgrade employment.

This instruction does not result in a technical certificate, diploma, Associate in Science degree or Associate in Applied Science degree.