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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents
Florida College System Presidents

FROM: Ashley Meros, Ph.D.

DATE: August 31, 2026

SUBJECT: **2026-2027 Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE)
Start-up Grant Funding Opportunity Announcement and Webinar**

The Graduation Alternative to Traditional Education (GATE) Start-up Grant is established in [Section \(s.\) 1011.804, Florida Statutes \(F.S.\)](#). This grant program is created to fund and support the startup and implementation of the GATE Program, subject to legislative appropriation. The purpose of the grant program is to increase access to programs that support adult learners earning a high school credential, either a high school diploma or its equivalent, and a workforce credential aligned to statewide or regional demand. Career education credentials offered as part of the GATE program must be included on the 2026-27 Master Credentials List under [s. 445.004\(4\), F.S.](#) See [s. 1011.804, F.S., GATE Startup Grant Program](#), for complete statutory language.

GATE Start-up Grant funding is limited to institutions that serve students in or are located in Rural Areas of Opportunity as defined by the Governor and that do not currently have a GATE program meeting the requirements of [s. 1004.933, F.S.](#) However, all institutions as defined in [s. 1004.933, F.S.](#), are eligible for the following:

- GATE Scholarship Program funds established in [s. 1009.711, F.S.](#), to reimburse institutions for registration, tuition, laboratory, and examination fees and related instructional materials costs for students enrolled in the GATE Program; and
- GATE Program Performance funds established in [s. 1011.8041, F.S.](#), to reward institutions for the documented success of students participating in the GATE Program.

Attached is the concept proposal document that must be completed by institutions that are eligible to receive the GATE Start-up Grant. Concept proposals for this grant may be received by institutions that serve students in or are located in Rural Areas of Opportunity. Current designations of Rural Areas of Opportunity can be found on the Florida Commerce Rural Areas of Opportunity webpage at [Florida Rural Areas of Opportunity - FloridaJobs.org](#).

Ashley Meros, Ph.D.
Chancellor of Career and Adult Education

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Priority will be provided to proposals received via email to GATEprogram@fldoe.org by Thursday, October 1, 2026.

Proposals will continue to be accepted until all funds are awarded. To learn more about this opportunity, please register for the funding opportunities webinar below.

Link to Register: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/c31a4d79-9768-4093-ae00-89f43531f910@63bf107b-cb6f-4173-8c1c-1406bb5cb794?source=copyLinkLegacyShareEventDialog>

Date: September 14, 2026

Time: 1:30 p.m. (EDT)

Questions may be directed to GATEprogram@fldoe.org.

AM/cb

Attachment

cc: School District and Florida College System Adult Education Directors
Technical College Directors
Florida College System Workforce Administrators
School District Career and Technical Education Directors