

**The Florida Senate**  
**PROFESSIONAL STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT**

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: Education Pre-K - 12 Appropriations Committee

BILL: CS/SB 2598

INTRODUCER: Education Pre-K - 12 Appropriations Committee and Senator Wise

SUBJECT: Governor's School for Science and Technology

DATE: April 24, 2007

REVISED: \_\_\_\_\_

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Carrouth</u>	<u>Matthews</u>	<u>ED</u>	<b>Favorable</b>
2.	<u>Armstrong</u>	<u>Hamon</u>	<u>EA</u>	<b>Fav/CS</b>
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

**I. Summary:**

This bill creates the Governor's School for Science and Technology (Governor's School), a residential school, to provide advanced educational learning opportunities in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology in short periods of intensive and specialized real-life learning experiences for qualified high school students. The Governor's School would also provide summer training programs for teachers.

The Governor's School would:

- Serve students statewide in grades 9 through 12.
- Be located in Brevard County and situated where a formal partnership between the school and the Kennedy Space Center can be established and maintained and existing facilities are available.
- Be controlled and managed by a Board of Trustees with 7 members appointed by the Governor.
- Be established within the K-20 public education system and administratively housed within the Department of Education.
- Be funded as determined by the Legislature through the General Appropriations Act in a separate identifiable amount in the public school budget entity of the Department of Education.

The sum of \$500,000 is provided for planning for the Governor's School in Senate Bill 2800, the 2007-2008 Senate Appropriations Bill.

This bill creates section 1002.371 and amends sections 1000.04, 1002.20, and 1003.02 of the Florida Statutes.

## II. Present Situation:

### **Accelerated Instruction in Science, Math, and Technology**

The 2003 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is the third comparison of mathematics and science achievement since 1995 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), an international organization of national research institutions and governmental research agencies. The TIMSS is used to track changes in achievement over time. Moreover, TIMSS is closely linked to the curricula of the participating countries, providing an indication of the degree to which students have learned concepts in mathematics and science they have encountered in school. In 2003, some 46 countries participated in TIMSS, at either the fourth- or eighth-grade level, or both.<sup>1</sup> Based on information from the 2003 TIMSS Report, no measurable changes were detected in the average mathematics and science scores of U.S. fourth-graders between 1995 and 2003. Moreover, the available data suggest that the performance of U.S. fourth-graders in both mathematics and science was lower in 2003 than in 1995, relative to the 14 other countries that also participated in both studies.<sup>2</sup>

Currently, many Florida school districts operate various magnet schools and programs with a focus on accelerated studies in science, math, and technology. Additional programs may be developed and implemented as the result of secondary career academies and major areas of interest, both of which are provided for in law.<sup>3</sup> In addition, four school districts have established schools or academies that are recognized by the National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools in Mathematics, Science and Technology.<sup>4</sup> Florida, however, does not currently operate a residential program for secondary students that emphasizes instruction in accelerated math, science, and technology.

The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics was established in 1980 as the nation's first residential secondary school with a challenging curriculum for juniors and seniors.<sup>5</sup> The school is located in Durham, North Carolina as an affiliate of the University of North Carolina. The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics currently enrolls 640 high school students and operates with an authorized budget of \$17.4 million.<sup>6</sup> The current estimated cost per student is \$27,130.<sup>7</sup>

### **Florida Virtual School**

The FLVS was founded in 1997 as the nation's first state-wide Internet-based public high school and currently offers more than 90 courses for middle and high school students. In 2000, the Florida Legislature established FLVS as an independent educational entity with an appointed board. FLVS provides online instruction for grades 6 to 12, as well as for adults seeking GED

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<sup>1</sup> <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/timss03/index.asp>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.timss.org>

<sup>3</sup> ch. 2006-74, L.O.F.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ncssmst.org> – Pinellas, Seminole, Dade, and Hillsborough Counties

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ncssm.edu>

<sup>6</sup> Florida Department of Education Bill Analysis, March 15, 2007

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

alternatives both in Florida and out-of-state through their Global Services Division. In 2005-2006, FLVS served more than 31,000 students in 68,000 half-credit courses. FLVS is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. All FLVS teachers possess a valid Florida teaching certificate and are certified specifically in the subject they teach. More than 64 percent of staff hold advanced degrees, and 76 are national board certified.<sup>8</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill creates the Governor's School for Science and Technology (Governor's School) to provide advanced educational opportunities in the areas of science, mathematics, engineering, and technology in a residential setting with highly qualified scientists and instructors. Instruction is to be organized and provided in short periods of intensive specialized real-life learning experiences for highly motivated and talented students in grades 9 through 12.

This bill creates a Board of Trustees consisting of 7 members appointed by the Governor. Board members are to be appointed for 4 year terms, with the initial appointments in staggered 2, 3, and 4 year terms. Trustees are to serve without compensation but are to be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses in accordance with s. 112.061, F.S. The Board of Trustees is to be a body corporate and is to be given the power and authority to be in charge of the planning, organization, operation, and control of the Governor's school. Funding for the Governor's school is to be as determined by the Legislature through the General Appropriations Act and provided as a separate identifiable sum in the public schools budget entity of the Department of Education. The Board of Trustees is authorized to receive gifts, donations, and bequests of money or property, real or personal, tangible or intangible, from any person, firm, corporation, or other legal entity.

The bill also provides that the school is to be located in Brevard County and is to be situated where a formal partnership between the school and the Kennedy Space Center can be established and maintained to provide real-life learning experiences for the students. It is the intent of the Legislature that existing facilities be used for the Governor's school.

The attendance area for the school is the entire state for qualified students. The Board of Trustees must establish the qualifications for students selected for attendance, the application process, and the appeal procedure. Students selected for the Governor's school will continue to be enrolled and recorded as in attendance for funding purposes in their home school district during the short period of time the students are in attendance at the Governor's school.

Funding for the Governor's School is to be provided in the General Appropriations Act to provide for instruction and operation of the school including student's room and board and transportation during the time the student is in attendance at the school and between home and the school.

The bill also makes conforming changes to the school code.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.flvs.net>

<sup>9</sup> ss. 1002.20 and 1003.02, F.S.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2007.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Funding for the Governor's School of Science and Technology is to be determined by the Legislature. The bill provides that funds are to be provided in the General Appropriations Act for instruction and operation of the school, including the student's room and board and transportation during the time the student is in attendance at the school and for transportation from the home to the school. The school may also receive contributions from private entities, gifts, and bequests of money or property.

Costs upon full implementation of the school are difficult to predict because the delivery of services and the short term participation of students is unique. However, if the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics model is used, when fully operational, assuming the same per student cost and number of students, \$27,130 and 640 respectively, the Governor's School would require operating funds of \$17.4 million. Costs may be mitigated by the partnership with the Space Center; however, school district costs would remain essentially the same for students who attend the new school because of the dual enrollment funding provision. If new facilities are required, construction of an educational facility for 640 high school students, using the statutory per student station cost of \$25,854, would cost roughly \$16.5 million. The cost of dorms would be an additional cost and would be more expensive per square foot than the classroom cost. The bill provides that it is the intent of the Legislature that the Governor's School is to use existing facilities, thereby minimizing facilities construction costs.

In Senate Bill 2800, the Senate proposed 2007-2008 budget, there is a \$500,000 appropriation for planning for the school.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

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This Senate Professional Staff Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

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## **VIII. Summary of Amendments:**

None.

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