

Public Schools
School Choice



Education Council Controlled Open Enrollment

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What is “controlled open enrollment”?	"Controlled open enrollment" means a public education delivery system that allows school districts to make student school assignments using parents' indicated preferential public school choice as a significant factor. The controlled open enrollment program may be offered in addition to any existing choice programs.
2. Are districts required to offer controlled open enrollment?	<p>No. Florida law requires each district school board to develop a controlled open enrollment plan that describes a controlled open enrollment program within the public schools. Plans must be submitted to the Commissioner of Education. The law also provides that each district school board may offer controlled open enrollment within the public schools.</p> <p>The districts are required to ensure that parents and students have meaningful opportunities to exercise their rights to educational choice.</p>
3. Which districts have implemented public school choice open enrollment programs?	According to the 2004-2005 Survey 3, 45 school districts reported via the state automated student information system that they had implemented a “controlled open enrollment plan”, in accordance with Section 1002.31, F.S., for one or more students: Alachua, Baker, Bay, Brevard, Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, Miami-Dade, Desoto, Escambia, Franklin, Hamilton, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough, Holmes, Indian River, Jackson, Lake, Lee, Leon, Madison, Manatee, Marion, Martin, Monroe, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Palm Beach, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Seminole, Suwannee, Taylor, Volusia, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington.
4. What are the applicable statutes?	Section 1002.20(6), F.S. — Educational choice. Section 1002.31, F.S. -- Public school parental choice.
5. Where can I get additional information?	Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451



Education Council Opportunity Scholarships

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What is the Opportunity Scholarship Program?	The Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) is a school choice program created by the Legislature in 1999 as part of the A+ Education Plan (Ch. 99-398, L.O.F.). Opportunity Scholarships are available for eligible students to attend the eligible public or private school of their choice.
2. Who is eligible for an Opportunity Scholarship?	<p>A <i>public</i> school student is eligible for an Opportunity Scholarship in order to attend an eligible public or private school of their choice if one of the following criteria are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the student spent the prior school year in attendance at a public school graded F, and the school has had an F for two years in a four-year period;• the student was in attendance elsewhere in the public school system and has been assigned to such a school; or• the student is entering kindergarten or first grade and has been assigned to such a school.
3. Are private school students eligible for an Opportunity Scholarship?	No. The only students eligible for an Opportunity Scholarship are public school students, or those students who are just entering the school.
4. What are the options available to a student under the Opportunity Scholarship Program?	<p>Once a school has been graded F for two years in a four-year period, eligible students have several options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance at a higher performing public school within the district;• Attendance at a higher performing public school in an adjacent district, as long as space is available; or• Attendance at an eligible private, sectarian or nonsectarian, school. <p>Students at the graded F public school may choose to remain at that school.</p>
5. What is the school district's role in the Opportunity Scholarship Program?	<p>School districts have certain obligations in the Opportunity Scholarship Program. For each student enrolled in or assigned to a school which has been graded F for two school years in a four- year period, the school district must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Timely notify the parent of the student of all the options available to the student.• Offer the student's parent the opportunity to enroll the child in another public school within the district graded C or higher. <p>The school district must also provide locations and times for all students participating in the Opportunity Scholarship</p>

Opportunity Scholarships

	Program to take all required state assessments.
6. Are all private schools required to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program?	No. Private schools are not required to participate in the program. However, participation is open to all private schools that wish to take part in the program, as long as the schools meet the eligibility criteria set forth by law.
7. What must a private school do to become eligible to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program?	<p>There are several criteria that a private school must meet to become eligible to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program. The private school must be located in Florida, may be sectarian or nonsectarian, and must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate fiscal soundness by being in operation for one school year or provide the Department of Education (DOE) with a statement by a certified public accountant confirming that the school is insured and has sufficient capital to operate for the upcoming year. • Notify the DOE and the school district of its intent to participate in the program by May 1 of the school year in which it intends to participate. • Comply with antidiscrimination provisions of 42 U.S.C. s. 2000d, which prohibit discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. • Meet state and local health and safety laws and codes. • Accept the scholarship students on a random, religious-neutral basis without regard to the student's past academic history (preference may be given to siblings of other OSP students). • Be subject to the instruction, curriculum, and attendance criteria adopted by an appropriate nonpublic school accrediting body. • Be academically accountable to the parent for meeting the educational needs of the child. • Furnish a school profile which includes student performance. • Employ or contract with teachers that meet any one of the following criteria: (1) hold a baccalaureate or higher degree, (2) have at least three years of teaching experience in public or private schools, or (3) have special skills, knowledge, or expertise in subjects taught. • Comply with all state laws relating to private schools. • Accept as full tuition and fees the amount of the scholarship provided by the state for each student. • Agree not to compel any Opportunity Scholarship student attending the private school to profess a specific ideological belief, to pray, or to worship. • Adhere to the tenets of its published disciplinary procedures prior to the expulsion of any Opportunity Scholarship student. <p>Complete and submit by May 1st of each year, the private</p>

Opportunity Scholarships

	<p>school compliance form indicating that the private school is compliant with all applicable private school statutory and regulatory requirements.</p>
<p>8. Are there obligations for participation in the Opportunity Scholarship Program?</p>	<p>Yes. Students and their parents must comply with the following criteria to retain the scholarship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must remain in attendance throughout the school year, unless excused for illness or good cause. • Students must comply fully with the school’s code of conduct. • Parents must comply fully with the private school’s parental involvement requirements, unless excused for illness or good cause. • Parents must ensure that their child takes all required state assessments. <p>A participant who fails to comply with these requirements forfeits the Opportunity Scholarship.</p>
<p>9. How long does an Opportunity Scholarship last?</p>	<p>The opportunity for a student to <i>continue</i> attending a higher performing public school within the district or in an adjacent district remains in force until the student graduates from high school.</p> <p>The opportunity for a student to <i>continue</i> attending a private school remains in force until:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student returns to the public school; or • If the student chooses to attend a private school that only offers classes through the 8th grade, until the student matriculates to high school and the public high school to which the student is assigned is a grade C or higher.
<p>10. Are students with disabilities eligible for an Opportunity Scholarship?</p>	<p>Yes. Students with disabilities are eligible to receive an Opportunity Scholarship. In addition, these students remain eligible to receive services from the school district as provided by federal or state law. The public or private school that provides services to students with disabilities will receive weighted funding for such services.</p>
<p>11. Who provides transportation for students who choose an Opportunity Scholarship?</p>	<p>Responsibility for transportation varies depending upon the option chosen by the parent or guardian of the eligible student. Listed below are the following options and transportation requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attendance at a higher performing public school within the school district.</i> If this option is chosen, the school district is responsible for providing transportation. School districts may utilize state categorical transportation funds. • <i>Attendance at a higher performing public school in an</i>

Opportunity Scholarships

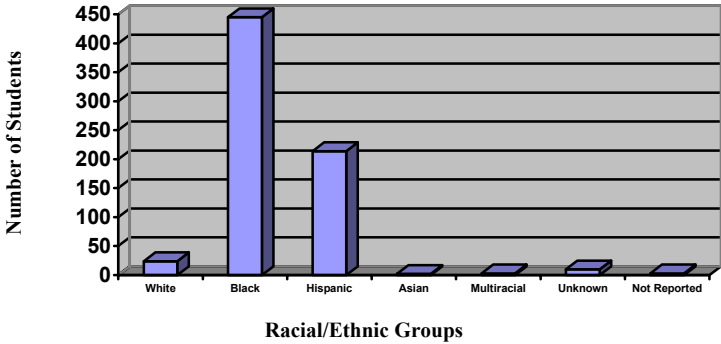
	<p><i>adjacent school district, as long as space is available.</i> If this option is chosen, the parent is responsible for providing transportation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attendance at an eligible private, sectarian or nonsectarian, school.</i> If this option is chosen, the responsibility for acquiring transportation belongs with the parent; however, if the private school chosen provides transportation, any fees which the school charges for providing the transportation are eligible for inclusion in the scholarship amount.
<p>12. What is the award amount for an Opportunity Scholarship?</p>	<p>The actual amount of the scholarship is the <i>calculated</i> amount shown below or the amount of the private school's tuition and fees, <i>whichever is less</i> (eligible private school fees may include book fees, lab fees, and other fees related to instruction, including transportation).</p> <p>The calculated maximum Opportunity Scholarship amount available to a parent of the student is a calculated amount equivalent to the following: the base student allocation (BSA) multiplied by the appropriate cost factor for the educational program that would have been provided for the student multiplied by the district cost differential (DCD). In addition, the calculated amount must include the per-student share of instructional materials (book) funding, technology funding, and other categorical funds provided in the General Appropriations Act.</p> <p>BSA x cost factor x DCD + categorical funds = calculated amount</p> <p><u><i>Example of Student X's actual scholarship amount:</i></u> If the calculated amount for Student X using the formula above is: \$4,800</p> <p>and the private school tuition and fees are: \$3,300 tuition - \$2,500 book fees - \$500 lab fees - \$0 transportation - \$300</p> <p>Then, the <i>actual</i> amount of Student X's Opportunity Scholarship is \$3,300.</p>

Opportunity Scholarships

13. How is an Opportunity Scholarship payment made?	<p>Upon proper documentation by the DOE, the Chief Financial Officer must make Opportunity Scholarship payments in four equal installments (September 1, November 1, February 1, and April 1). The payment must be made by individual warrant payable to the student's parent and mailed by the DOE to the chosen private school. The parent must restrictively endorse the warrant to the private school.</p> <p>The DOE is responsible for verifying the student's initial admission acceptance and continued enrollment and attendance at the private school.</p>
14. How many Opportunity Scholarships are being utilized in Florida?	<p>During the 1999-2000 school year (the initial year of the OSP), students in only two Escambia County elementary schools were eligible to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program .</p> <p>For the 2005-2006 school year, students at 15 schools are eligible to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program in addition to students already participating in the program. These schools received an F grade for the 2004-2005 school year and at least one other F grade in one of the three previous years. Students who were enrolled in one of these schools during the 2004-2005 school year or were scheduled to attend these schools for the 2005-2006 school year may be eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship.</p> <p>For the 2004-2005 school year there were 763 students enrolled in the program. The average scholarship amount per student was \$4,098 for a total of \$3.12 million.</p>

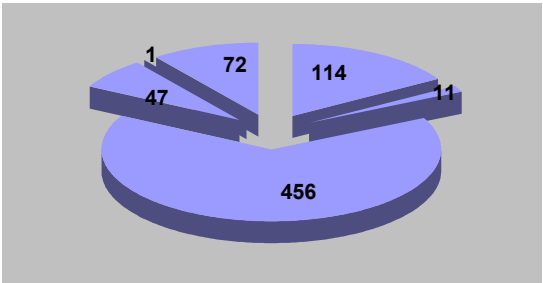
15. What are the demographics of students benefiting from Opportunity Scholarships?

OSP Students Racial/Ethnic Enrollment



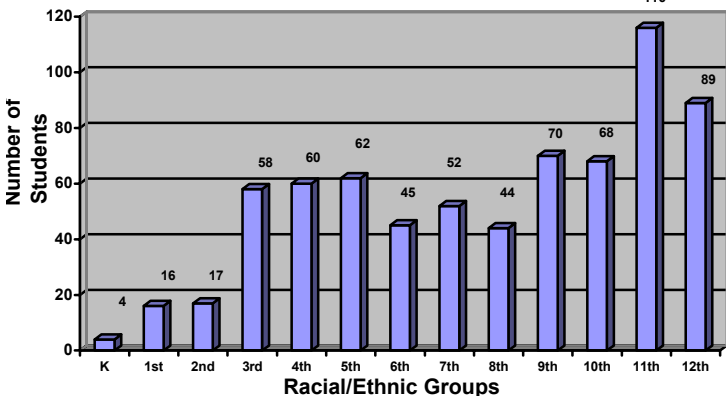
RACE	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
White	24	3.4%
Black	445	63.5%
Hispanic	214	30.5%
Asian	2	0.3%
Multiracial	3	0.4%
Unknown	10	1.4%
Not Reported	3	0.4%
Grand Total:	701	100.0%

OSP Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-price Lunch (FRPL)



LUNCH PROGRAMS	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Did not apply	114	16.3%
Applied, not eligible	11	1.6%
Eligible for free lunch	456	65.0%
Eligible for reduced price lunch	47	6.7%
FRPL School	1	0.1%
Not reported	72	10.3%
Grand Total:	701	100.0%

Opportunity Scholarships

	<p>OSP Student Enrollment by Gender</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">GENDER</th> <th style="text-align: center;">STUDENTS</th> <th style="text-align: center;">PERCENTAGE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Male</td> <td style="text-align: center;">317</td> <td style="text-align: center;">45.2%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td style="text-align: center;">384</td> <td style="text-align: center;">54.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">701</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	GENDER	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE	Male	317	45.2%	Female	384	54.8%	Grand Total:	701	100.0%																																	
GENDER	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE																																												
Male	317	45.2%																																												
Female	384	54.8%																																												
Grand Total:	701	100.0%																																												
<p>16. What type of schools are receiving Opportunity Scholarship students?</p>	<p>Private Schools Participating in OSP by Type</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">SCHOOL TYPE</th> <th style="text-align: center;">SCHOOLS</th> <th style="text-align: center;">%</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Non-Religious</td> <td style="text-align: center;">11</td> <td style="text-align: center;">23.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religious</td> <td style="text-align: center;">36</td> <td style="text-align: center;">76.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">47</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>OSP Student Enrollment by Type of School</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">SCHOOL TYPE</th> <th style="text-align: center;">STUDENTS</th> <th style="text-align: center;">PERCENTAGE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Non-Religious</td> <td style="text-align: center;">316</td> <td style="text-align: center;">45.1%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Religious</td> <td style="text-align: center;">385</td> <td style="text-align: center;">54.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">701</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	SCHOOL TYPE	SCHOOLS	%	Non-Religious	11	23.4%	Religious	36	76.6%	Grand Total:	47	100.0%	SCHOOL TYPE	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE	Non-Religious	316	45.1%	Religious	385	54.9%	Grand Total:	701	100.0%																					
SCHOOL TYPE	SCHOOLS	%																																												
Non-Religious	11	23.4%																																												
Religious	36	76.6%																																												
Grand Total:	47	100.0%																																												
SCHOOL TYPE	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE																																												
Non-Religious	316	45.1%																																												
Religious	385	54.9%																																												
Grand Total:	701	100.0%																																												
<p>17. What is the enrollment by grade level of Opportunity Scholarship students?</p>	<p>OSP Student Enrollment by Grade Level</p>  <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">GRADE LEVEL</th> <th style="text-align: center;">STUDENTS</th> <th style="text-align: center;">PERCENTAGE</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">0.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1st</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2nd</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3rd</td> <td style="text-align: center;">58</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">60</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">62</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">45</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">52</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">44</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">70</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">68</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">116</td> <td style="text-align: center;">16.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12th</td> <td style="text-align: center;">89</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.7%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">701</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE	K	4	0.6%	1 st	16	2.3%	2 nd	17	2.4%	3 rd	58	8.3%	4 th	60	8.6%	5 th	62	8.8%	6 th	45	6.4%	7 th	52	7.4%	8 th	44	6.3%	9 th	70	10.0%	10 th	68	9.7%	11 th	116	16.5%	12 th	89	2.7%	Grand Total:	701	100.0%
GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE																																												
K	4	0.6%																																												
1 st	16	2.3%																																												
2 nd	17	2.4%																																												
3 rd	58	8.3%																																												
4 th	60	8.6%																																												
5 th	62	8.8%																																												
6 th	45	6.4%																																												
7 th	52	7.4%																																												
8 th	44	6.3%																																												
9 th	70	10.0%																																												
10 th	68	9.7%																																												
11 th	116	16.5%																																												
12 th	89	2.7%																																												
Grand Total:	701	100.0%																																												

Opportunity Scholarships

18. What are the Opportunity Scholarship payments by district?	OSP Payment By District																																																											
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%;">DISTRICT</th> <th style="width: 10%;">SCHOOLS</th> <th style="width: 10%;">STUDENTS</th> <th style="width: 10%;">PERCENT</th> <th style="width: 15%;">TOTAL PAYMENT</th> <th style="width: 10%;">PERCENT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>BROWARD</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.0%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$14,811.00</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DADE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">15</td> <td style="text-align: center;">414</td> <td style="text-align: center;">59.1%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$448,636.00</td> <td style="text-align: center;">60.8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>DUVAL</td> <td style="text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="text-align: center;">70</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10.0%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$69,965.00</td> <td style="text-align: center;">9.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ESCAMBIA</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.9%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$11,940.50</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>GADSDEN</td> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>LEON</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>ORANGE</td> <td style="text-align: center;">8</td> <td style="text-align: center;">87</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12.4%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$88,404.75</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>PALM BEACH</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">91</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13.0%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$93,163.50</td> <td style="text-align: center;">12.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grand Total:</td> <td style="text-align: center;">47</td> <td style="text-align: center;">701</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100.0%</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$738,313.75</td> <td style="text-align: center;">100.0%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">*Blanks indicate less than 11 students per district and are not displayed in order to protect student confidentiality.</p>	DISTRICT	SCHOOLS	STUDENTS	PERCENT	TOTAL PAYMENT	PERCENT	BROWARD	4	14	2.0%	\$14,811.00	2.0%	DADE	15	414	59.1%	\$448,636.00	60.8%	DUVAL	6	70	10.0%	\$69,965.00	9.5%	ESCAMBIA	4	13	1.9%	\$11,940.50	1.6%	GADSDEN	2					LEON	1					ORANGE	8	87	12.4%	\$88,404.75	12.0%	PALM BEACH	7	91	13.0%	\$93,163.50	12.6%	Grand Total:	47	701	100.0%	\$738,313.75
DISTRICT	SCHOOLS	STUDENTS	PERCENT	TOTAL PAYMENT	PERCENT																																																							
BROWARD	4	14	2.0%	\$14,811.00	2.0%																																																							
DADE	15	414	59.1%	\$448,636.00	60.8%																																																							
DUVAL	6	70	10.0%	\$69,965.00	9.5%																																																							
ESCAMBIA	4	13	1.9%	\$11,940.50	1.6%																																																							
GADSDEN	2																																																											
LEON	1																																																											
ORANGE	8	87	12.4%	\$88,404.75	12.0%																																																							
PALM BEACH	7	91	13.0%	\$93,163.50	12.6%																																																							
Grand Total:	47	701	100.0%	\$738,313.75	100.0%																																																							
19. What is the status of the Opportunity Scholarship Program in the courts?	<p>On January 5, 2006, the Florida Supreme Court ruled that the Opportunity Scholarship Program violates article IX, section 1(a) of the Florida Constitution. The narrowly tailored opinion addressed only the issue of whether the Florida Constitution prohibits the state from expending public funds to allow students to use an opportunity scholarship to obtain a private school education in kindergarten through grade twelve, as an alternative to public school education. The court held that “through the OSP the state is fostering plural, nonuniform systems of education in direct violation of the constitutional mandate for a uniform system of free public schools.” The court’s decision is stayed until the end of the 2005-2006 school year.</p>																																																											
20. Has any research been done on this program?	<p>Yes.</p> <p>Jay P. Greene, Ph.D. and Marcus A. Winters “When Schools Compete: The Effects of Vouchers on Florida Public School Achievement,” August 2003, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.</p> <p>The results of the Manhattan Institute’s research demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida’s low-performing schools are improving in direct proportion to the challenge they face from voucher competition. These improvements are real, not the result of test gaming, demographic shifts, or the statistical phenomenon of “regression to the mean.” • Schools already facing competition from vouchers showed the greatest improvements of all five categories of low-performing schools, improving by 9.3 scale score points on the FCAT math test, 10.1 points on the FCAT reading test, and 5.1 percentile points on the Stanford-9 math test relative to Florida public schools that were not in any low-performing category. • Schools threatened with the prospect of vouchers showed 																																																											

Opportunity Scholarships

	<p>the second greatest improvements, making relative gains of 6.7 scale points on the FCAT math test, 8.2 points on the FCAT reading test, and 3.0 percentile points on the Stanford-9 math test.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-performing schools that have never received any grade other than a D, or that have received at least one D since FCAT grading began, produced small and indistinguishable gains, respectively, relative to Florida public schools that were not low-performing. While these schools were similar to schools facing voucher competition, they failed to make similar gains in the absence of competitive incentives. • Some researchers theorize that failing schools improve because of the stigma of a failing grade rather than the threat of voucher competition. The results of this study contradict this thesis. Schools that received one F in 1998-99 but none since are no longer exposed to the potential of voucher competition. These schools actually lost ground relative to non-low-performing Florida public schools, supporting the conclusion that once the threat of vouchers goes away, so does the incentive for failing schools to improve.
<p>21. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1002.38, F.S. -- Opportunity Scholarship Program. Section 1008.33(1), F.S. -- Definition of "2 years in a 4-year period".</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.03315 -- Private School Scholarship Compliance Form.</p>
<p>22. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (850) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org</p> <p>Manhattan Institute Center for Civic Innovation (479) 575-3172 www.manhattan-institute.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council

McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What is the McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program?	The McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program provides scholarships for eligible students with disabilities to attend an eligible public or private school of their choice. Students with disabilities include K-12 students who are mentally handicapped, speech and language impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, dual sensory impaired, physically impaired, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, hospitalized or homebound, or autistic.
2. What options are available to a student with disabilities under the McKay Scholarship Program?	An eligible student with disabilities has several options available, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attendance at another public school within the district;• Attendance at an eligible public school in an adjacent district that has space and provides the services identified in the student's individual education plan; or• Attendance at an eligible private, sectarian or nonsectarian, school. Students at a public school may also choose to remain at that school.
3. Who is eligible for a McKay Scholarship?	Any parent of a public school student with a disability who is dissatisfied with the student's progress may receive a McKay Scholarship if: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• By assigned school attendance area or by special assignment, the student has spent the prior school year in attendance at a Florida public school. Prior school year means that the student was enrolled and reported by a school district for funding during the preceding October and February Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) surveys in kindergarten through grade 12 (However, the 2004 Legislature waived this requirement for the dependents of military families transferred into the state.); <i>and</i>• The parent has obtained acceptance for admission of the student to a private school that is eligible for the program and has notified the school district through a communication directly to the district or through the Department of Education (DOE), in a manner that creates a written or electronic record of the notification and the date of receipt of the notification of the request for a scholarship at least 60 days prior to the date of the first scholarship payment. Students enrolled in Department of Juvenile Justice commitment programs are <u>not</u> eligible for scholarships under this program.
4. How long does a McKay Scholarship last?	There is no statutory limit on the term of a McKay Scholarship. A student can use the scholarship through high school graduation.
5. What are the obligations for participants in the McKay Scholarship Program?	The student's parent and the student must comply with the following criteria to obtain and retain a McKay Scholarship: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The parent must select a private school and apply for admission.• The parent must request the scholarship at least 60 days prior to the date of the first scholarship payment.• The student must remain in attendance throughout the school year, unless excused by the school for illness or other good cause.

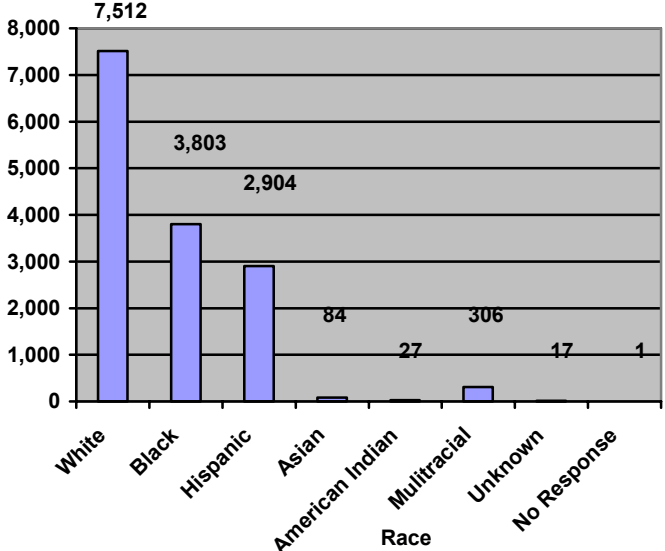
McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student must comply with the school's code of conduct. • The parent of each student participating in the program must comply fully with the private school's parental involvement requirements, unless excused by the school for illness or other good cause. • If the parent requests that the student take all statewide assessments, the parent is responsible for transporting the student to the assessment site designated by the school district. • Upon receipt of a scholarship warrant, the parent to whom the warrant is made must restrictively endorse the warrant to the private school for deposit into the account of the private school. <p>A participant who fails to comply with the above criteria forfeits the scholarship.</p>
<p>6. What are the school district's obligations under the McKay Scholarship Program?</p>	<p>The school district must timely notify the parent of a student with disabilities of all options available under this program, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer the student's parent the option to enroll the student in another public school. • Offer the student's parent the option to enroll the student in an eligible private school if the parent does not choose the public school option. <p>The school district is also required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the Department of Education (DOE) within 10 days after the district receives notice of the parent's intent to apply for a McKay Scholarship. • Complete a matrix that assigns the student to one of the levels of service that existed prior to the 2000-2001 school year, if the student with disabilities does not have a matrix of services. • Notify the DOE of the student's matrix level within 30 days after receiving notification by the student's parent of intent to participate in the program. • Report all students who are attending a private school under this program (students participating in this program must be reported separately from other students reported for purposes of the FEPF). • Provide locations and times for all state assessments to parents who request that the student take statewide assessments.
<p>7. Are all private schools required to participate in the McKay Scholarship Program?</p>	<p>No. Private schools are not required to participate in the program. However, participation is open to all private schools that wish to take part in the program, as long as the schools meet the eligibility criteria set forth by law.</p>
<p>8. What criteria must a private school meet in order to become eligible to participate in the McKay</p>	<p>The private school must be located in Florida, may be sectarian or nonsectarian, and must meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate fiscal soundness by being in operation for 1 school year or provide the DOE with a statement by a certified public accountant confirming that the school is insured and has sufficient capital or credit to operate for the upcoming year. (In lieu of such

McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

<p>Scholarship Program?</p>	<p>a statement, the school may secure a surety bond or letter of credit equal to the scholarship funds for any quarter to be filed with the DOE).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify the DOE and the school district of its intent to participate in the program (the notice must specify the grade levels and services that the private school has available for students with disabilities). • Meet state and local health and safety laws and codes • Comply with antidiscrimination provisions of 42 U.S.C. s. 2000d, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. • Be academically accountable to the parent for meeting the educational needs of the student. • Employ or contract with teachers that meet any one of the following criteria: 1) hold a baccalaureate or higher degree, 2) have at least 3 years of teaching experience in public or private schools, or 3) have special skills, knowledge, or expertise in subjects taught. • Comply with all state statutes relating to private schools. • Adhere to the tenets of its published disciplinary procedures prior to the expulsion of any McKay Scholarship student. • Complete and submit by May 1st of each year the private school compliance form indicating that the private school is compliant with all applicable private school statutory and regulatory requirements.
<p>9. Who provides transportation for McKay Scholarship students?</p>	<p>If the parents choose a public school option:</p> <p>Responsibility for transportation varies depending upon the public school option chosen by the parents of the eligible student. Listed below are the following options and transportation requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Attendance at a public school within the school district that is consistent with the school board's choice plan.</i> If this option is chosen, the school district is responsible for providing transportation to the public school selected by the parent. • <i>Attendance at a public school within the school district that is not consistent with the school board's choice plan.</i> If this option is chosen, the parents are responsible for providing transportation. • <i>Attendance at a public school in an adjacent district that has space available and a program with services agreed to in the student's individual educational plan (IEP).</i> If this option is chosen, the parents are responsible for providing transportation to the school in the adjacent district. <p>If the parents choose the private school option, the parents are responsible for the student's transportation.</p>
<p>10. What is the award amount for a McKay Scholarship?</p>	<p>The amount of the scholarship is equal to the amount the student would have received under the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) in the public school to which the student is assigned or the amount of the private school's tuition and fees, <i>whichever is less.</i></p> <p>During the 2002-2003 school year, \$53 million was awarded to 9,130 scholarship recipients for an average award amount of \$5,840 per student.</p>

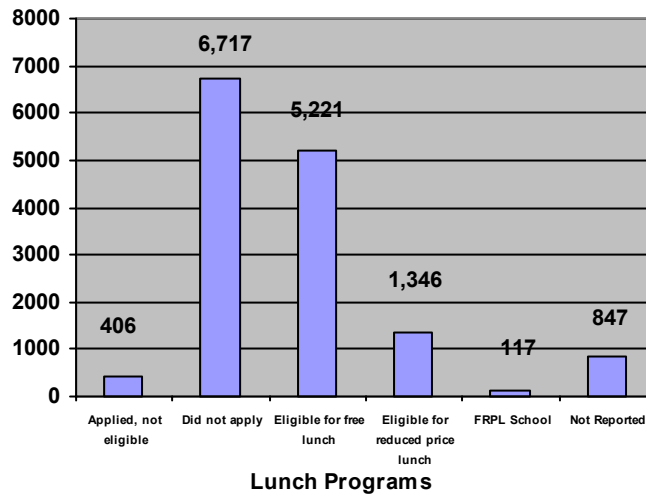
McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

	<p>During the 2003-2004 school year, \$81.7 million was awarded to 13,739 scholarship recipients for an average award amount of \$5,951 per student.</p> <p>During the 2004-2005 school year, \$97.2 million was awarded to 15,910 scholarship recipients for an average award amount of \$6,117 per student.</p>																		
<p>11. What options are available to parents when a private school requires a partial payment in order to reserve space for a student admitted to the school?</p>	<p>The DOE, prior to the first quarterly payment of the year in which the McKay Scholarship is awarded, may pay a partial payment to the private school. The maximum partial payment is \$1,000 and must be deducted from subsequent scholarship payments. The partial payment option is limited to one partial payment per student per year.</p> <p>If a student decides not to attend the participating private school, the partial reservation payment must be returned to the DOE by the participating private school.</p>																		
<p>12. How is a McKay Scholarship payment made?</p>	<p>Upon proper documentation by the DOE, the CFO must make the scholarship payments in four equal installments (September 1, November 1, February 1, and April 15). The payment must be made by individual warrant payable to the student's parent and mailed by the DOE to the chosen private school. The parent must restrictively endorse the warrant to the private school.</p> <p>The DOE is responsible for verifying the student's initial admission acceptance and continued enrollment and attendance at the private school.</p>																		
<p>13. What are the demographics of students benefiting from McKay Scholarships?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">McKay Students Racial/Ethnic Enrollment</p>  <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Race</th> <th>Number of Students</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White</td> <td>7,512</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Black</td> <td>3,803</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hispanic</td> <td>2,904</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>84</td> </tr> <tr> <td>American Indian</td> <td>27</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Multiracial</td> <td>306</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unknown</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>No Response</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Race	Number of Students	White	7,512	Black	3,803	Hispanic	2,904	Asian	84	American Indian	27	Multiracial	306	Unknown	17	No Response	1
Race	Number of Students																		
White	7,512																		
Black	3,803																		
Hispanic	2,904																		
Asian	84																		
American Indian	27																		
Multiracial	306																		
Unknown	17																		
No Response	1																		

McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

RACE	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
White	7,512	51.26%
Black	3,803	25.95%
Hispanic	2,904	19.82%
Asian	84	0.57%
American Indian	27	0.18%
Multiracial	306	2.09%
Unknown	17	0.12%
No Response	1	0.01%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

McKay Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL)



LUNCH PROGRAMS	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Applied, not eligible	406	2.8%
Did not apply	6,717	45.8%
Eligible for free lunch	5,221	35.6%
Eligible for reduced price lunch	1,346	9.2%
FRPL School	117	0.8%
Not Reported	847	5.8%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

McKay Students Enrollment by Gender

GENDER	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Female	4,681	31.9%
Male	9,973	68.1%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

14. What types of schools are receiving McKay Scholarships?

Private Schools Participating in McKay by Type

SCHOOL TYPE	SCHOOLS	%
Non-Religious	225	33.5%
Religious	428	63.8%
Military	1	0.1%
Not Reported	17	2.5%
Grand Total:	671	100.0%

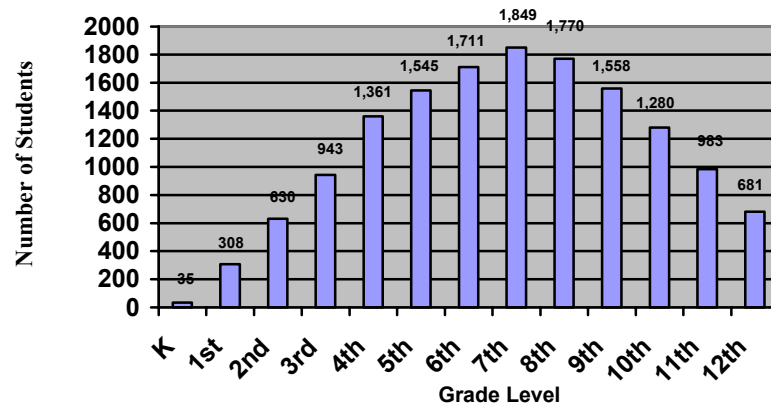
McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

McKay Student Enrollment by Type of School

SCHOOL TYPE	SCHOOLS	%
Non-Religious	6,574	44.9%
Religious	7,883	53.8%
Military	34	0.2%
Not Reported	163	1.1%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

15. What is the enrollment by grade level of McKay Scholarship students?

McKay Students Enrollment by Grade Level

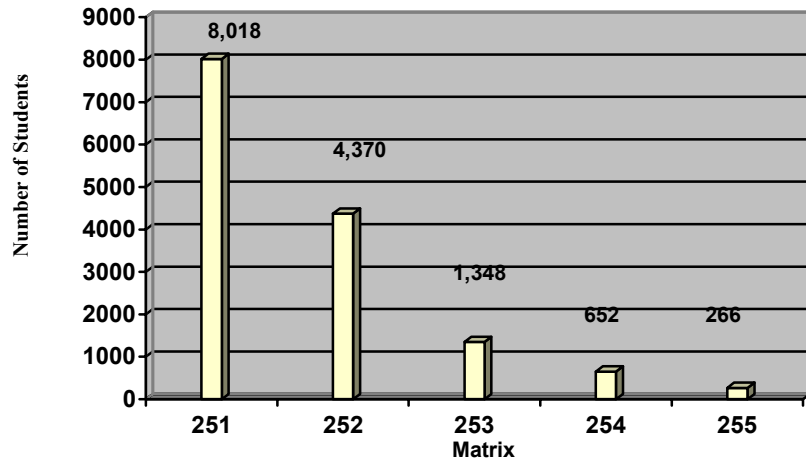


GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
K	35	0.2%
1 st	308	2.1%
2 nd	630	4.3%
3 rd	943	6.4%
4 th	1,361	9.3%
5 th	1,545	10.5%
6 th	1,711	11.7%
7 th	1,849	12.6%
8 th	1,770	12.1%
9 th	1,558	10.6%
10 th	1,280	8.7%
11 th	983	6.7%
12 th	681	4.6%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

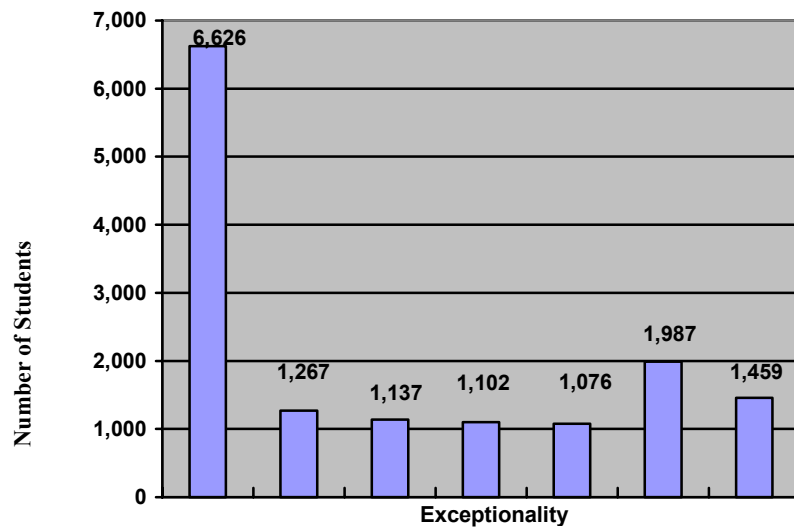
16. What are matrix levels and exceptionalities of McKay Scholarship students?

McKay Students by Matrix



MATRIX	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
251	8,018	54.7%
252	4,370	29.8%
253	1,348	9.2%
254	652	4.4%
255	266	1.8%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

McKay Students by Exceptionality



McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

EXCEPTIONALITY PRIMARY	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Specific Learning Disabled	6,626	45.2%
Language Impaired	1,267	8.6%
Speech Impaired	1,137	7.8%
Emotionally Handicapped	1,102	7.5%
Educable Mentally Handicapped	1,076	7.3%
Other Health Impaired	1,987	13.6%
Others	1,459	10.0%
Grand Total:	14,654	100.0%

17. What are the McKay Scholarship payments by district?

McKay Payment by District

DISTRICT ID	DISTRICT NAME	SCHOOLS	STUDENTS	%	PAYMENT AMOUNT	%
1	ALACHUA	9	108	0.74%	\$149,794.25	0.59%
3	BAY	2	122	0.83%	\$177,609.25	0.70%
4	BRADFORD	2				
5	BREVARD	25	445	3.04%	\$712,579.22	2.81%
6	BROWARD	59	1380	9.42%	\$2,607,343.22	10.28%
8	CHARLOTTE	7	66	0.45%	\$89,349.75	0.35%
9	CITRUS	3	45	0.31%	\$59,245.12	0.22%
10	CLAY	8	267	1.82%	\$446,421.25	1.76%
11	COLLIER	9	128	0.87%	\$223,661.30	0.88%
12	COLUMBIA	3	89	0.61%	\$143,673.25	0.57%
13	DADE	94	3,014	20.57%	\$5,702,905.51	22.48%
14	DE SOTO	1				
15	DIXIE	1				
16	DUVAL	53	1,984	13.54%	\$3,418,794.64	13.48%
17	ESCAMBIA	12	190	1.30%	\$276,672.37	1.09%
20	GADSDEN	2	23	0.16%	\$30,851.00	0.12%
24	HAMILTON	1	22	0.15%	\$29,394.50	0.12%
27	HERNANDO	3	42	0.29%	\$54,784.25	0.22%
28	HIGHLANDS	6	26	0.18%	\$29,944.50	0.12%
29	HILLSBOROUGH	47	754	5.15%	\$1,304,811.29	5.14%
31	INDIAN RIVER	2	20	0.14%	\$21,837.50	0.09%
32	JACKSON	1	21	0.14%	\$30,406.25	0.12%
35	LAKE	9	124	0.85%	\$176,443.50	0.70%
36	LEE	15	344	2.35%	\$679,487.25	2.68%
37	LEON	20	347	2.37%	\$584,765.47	2.31%
38	LEVY	1	29	0.20%	\$35,823.00	0.14%
40	MADISON	1				
41	MANATEE	12	244	1.67%	\$476,432.25	1.88%
42	MARION	8	76	0.52%	\$135,294.75	0.53%
43	MARTIN	4	37	0.25%	\$49,254.50	0.19%
44	MONROE	2	27	0.18%	\$36,974.50	0.15%
46	OKALOOSA	7	182	1.24%	\$284,126.75	1.12%
48	ORANGE	49	920	6.28%	\$1,516,105.25	5.98%
49	OSCEOLA	11	136	0.93%	\$176,147.75	0.69%
50	PALM BEACH	40	898	6.13%	\$1,506,457.29	5.94%
51	PASCO	11	213	1.45%	\$379,358.50	1.50%
52	PINELLAS	35	837	5.71%	\$1,401,074.16	5.52%
53	POLK	22	288	1.97%	\$415,179.50	1.64%
54	PUTNAM	3	15	0.10%	\$19,986.87	0.08%
55	ST. JOHNS	1				
56	ST. LUCIE	7	113	0.77%	\$175,864.25	0.69%
58	SARASOTA	19	280	1.91%	\$527,284.00	2.08%
59	SEMINOLE	22	430	2.93%	\$773,152.00	3.05%
60	SUMTER	1	14	0.10%	\$20,579.75	0.08%
61	SUWANEE	3	51	0.35%	\$60,183.75	0.24%
62	TAYLOR	2				
63	UNION	1	12	0.08%	\$15,990.25	0.06%
64	VOLUSIA	13	222	1.51%	\$315,500.24	1.24%
65	WAKULLA	1	19	0.13%	\$24,978.75	0.10%
66	WALTON	1				
Grand Total:	50	671	14,654	100.00 %	\$25,369,195.20	100.0%

*Blanks indicate less than 11 students per district and are not displayed in order to protect student confidentiality.

McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

<p>18. Has any research been done on this program?</p>	<p>"Vouchers for Special Education Students: An Evaluation of Florida's McKay Scholarship Program" by Jay P. Greene and Greg Forster, Manhattan Institute, 2003.</p> <p>Highlights of this study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 92% of current McKay participants are satisfied or very satisfied with their McKay schools; only 32.7% were similarly satisfied with their public schools; • Those participants also saw class size drop dramatically, from an average of 25.1 students per class in public schools to 12.8 students per class in McKay schools; • Participating students were victimized far less by other students because of their disabilities in McKay schools. In public schools, 46.8% were bothered often and 24.7% were physically assaulted, while in McKay schools 5.3% were bothered often and 6.0% were assaulted; • McKay schools also outperformed public schools on our measurement of accountability for services provided. Only 30.2% of current participants say they received all services required under federal law from their public school, while 86.0% report their McKay school has provided all the services they promised to provide; <p>Perhaps the strongest evidence regarding the McKay program's performance is that over 90% of parents who have left the program believe it should continue to be available to those who wish to use it.</p>
<p>19. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1002.39, F.S. -- The John M. McKay Scholarship for Students with Disabilities Program</p> <p>Rule 6A – 6.03315 -- Private School Scholarship Compliance Form</p>
<p>20. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education & Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org</p> <p>Manhattan Institute Center for Civic Innovation (479) 575-3172 www.manhattan-institute.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What is the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program?	<p>The Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program (CTC) was established by the 2001 Legislature (Ch. 2001-225, L.O.F.) to provide an income tax credit for corporations that contribute money to nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations (SFOs) that award scholarships to students from families with limited financial resources. The purpose of the tax credit is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage private, voluntary contributions to nonprofit SFOs.• Expand educational opportunities for children from families that have limited financial resources.• Enable children to achieve a greater level of excellence in their education.
2. Who is eligible for a scholarship from a nonprofit scholarship-funding organization under this program?	<p>A student is eligible for a scholarship from a nonprofit SFO through this program, if the student qualifies for free or reduced-price school lunches under the National School Lunch Act and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Was counted as a full-time student during the previous state fiscal year for purposes of state per-student funding; or• Received a scholarship from an eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organization during the previous school year; or• Is eligible to enter kindergarten or first grade. <p>As a condition for scholarship payment, the parent must inform the child's school district within 15 days after the parent chooses for the child to attend an eligible private school.</p>
3. What is the maximum award amount of a scholarship?	<p>The amount of the scholarship provided to any child for any single school year by all eligible nonprofit SFOs must not exceed the following limits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$3,500 for a scholarship awarded to a student for enrollment in an eligible nonpublic school.• \$500 for a scholarship awarded to a student for enrollment in a Florida public school that is located outside the district in which the student resides.
4. What types of expenses are covered by the scholarships?	<p>Eligible nonprofit SFOs must provide scholarships, from eligible contributions, to qualified students for the following expenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tuition or textbook expenses for, or transportation to, an eligible nonpublic school (at least 75% must be used to pay tuition expenses); or• Transportation expenses to a Florida public school that is located outside the district in which the student resides.
5. What criteria must a private school meet in order to become eligible to participate in this program?	<p>An eligible private school must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Located in Florida.• Offer an education to students in any grades K-12.• Demonstrate fiscal soundness by: (1) being in operation for one school year, (2) providing the Department of Education (DOE) with a statement by a certified public accountant confirming that the school is insured and has sufficient capital

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

	<p>or credit to operate for the upcoming year, or (3) securing a surety bond or letter of credit equal to the scholarship funds for any quarter to be filed with the Department of Revenue (DOR).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet state and local health and safety laws and codes. • Comply with federal provisions, which prohibit discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. • Comply with all state laws relating to the general regulation of nonpublic schools. • Complete and submit by May 1st of each year the private school compliance form indicating that the private school is compliant with all applicable private school statutory and regulatory requirements.
<p>6. What qualifies as an eligible contribution?</p>	<p>An eligible contribution is a monetary contribution from a taxpayer to an eligible nonprofit SFO. The taxpayer may not designate a specific child as the beneficiary of the contribution and may not contribute more than \$5 million to any single eligible nonprofit SFO.</p>
<p>7. How much of a tax credit may a corporation receive for contributing to a nonprofit scholarship-funding organization?</p>	<p>The taxpayer may receive a dollar for dollar credit for an eligible contribution against any tax due for a taxable year, but the credit may not exceed 75% of the tax due, after the application of all other allowable tax credits.</p> <p>If the credit granted is not fully used in any one year because of insufficient tax liability on the part of the corporation, the unused amount may be carried forward for a period not to exceed 3 years; however, any taxpayer that seeks to carry forward an unused amount of tax credit must submit an application for allocation of tax credits or carry forward credits in the year that the taxpayer intends to use the carry forward. The total amount of tax credits and carry forward of tax credits allowed by statute each state fiscal year is \$88 million. This carry forward applies to all approved contributions made after January 1, 2002. The taxpayer may not convey, assign, or transfer the credit authorized to another entity unless all of the assets of the taxpayer are conveyed, assigned, or transferred in the same transaction.</p>
<p>8. Is there a statewide cap on the amount of the tax credit that may be granted under this program?</p>	<p>Yes. The total statewide amount of the tax credit and the carry-forward of tax credits that may be granted each state fiscal year under this program is limited to \$88 million by statute. At least 5% of the total statewide amount authorized for the tax credit must be reserved for small businesses. Small businesses are defined as taxpayers who independently own and operate businesses that employ 200 or fewer full-time permanent employees and have a net worth of not more than \$5 million at the time of application.</p>
<p>9. What are the contribution limits to a nonprofit SFO?</p>	<p>The amount of eligible contributions that a nonprofit SFO may accept is limited to the amount needed to provide scholarships for qualified students identified and for which vacancies in eligible nonpublic schools have been identified.</p>
<p>10. What are eligible nonprofit</p>	<p>Eligible nonprofit SFOs are charitable organizations that are exempt from the federal income tax as defined in s. 501(c)(3) of</p>

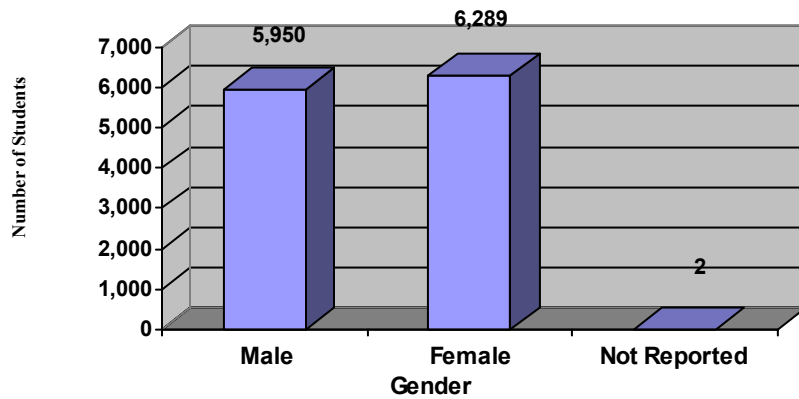
Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

<p>scholarship-funding organizations?</p>	<p>the Internal Revenue Code. Eligible nonprofit SFOs are required to meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide scholarships from eligible contributions to qualified students. • Give priority to qualified students who received a scholarship from an eligible sfo during the previous year. • Spend 100% of the eligible contribution to provide scholarships in the same state fiscal year in which the contribution was received (the state fiscal year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30 of each year). • Not use any portion of eligible contributions for administrative expenses. • Use all interest accrued from contributions for scholarships. • Provide the auditor general with an annual financial and compliance audit of their accounts and records conducted by independent certified public accountants.
<p>11. How is a scholarship payment made?</p>	<p>The payment is made by check payable to the student's parent. If the parent chooses for his or her child to attend an eligible nonpublic school, the check must be mailed by the eligible SFO to the nonpublic school of the parent's choice, and the parent must restrictively endorse the check to the nonpublic school.</p> <p>The SFO must ensure that the parent endorses the check to the nonpublic school of the parent's choice for deposit into the account of the nonpublic school.</p>
<p>12. Who is responsible for administering the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program?</p>	<p>The Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Department of Education (DOE) cooperatively administer the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program.</p> <p>The DOE is responsible for adopting rules necessary to determine the eligibility of SFOs and identify students eligible to participate in the program. The DOE is also responsible for submitting annually, by March 15, a list of eligible SFOs to the DOR.</p> <p>The DOE must monitor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The eligibility of nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations. • The eligibility of nonpublic schools. • The eligibility of expenditures. <p>The DOR is responsible for adopting rules to administer the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing application forms and procedures. • Governing the allocation of tax credits and carry forward credits for this program on a first-come, first-served basis.

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

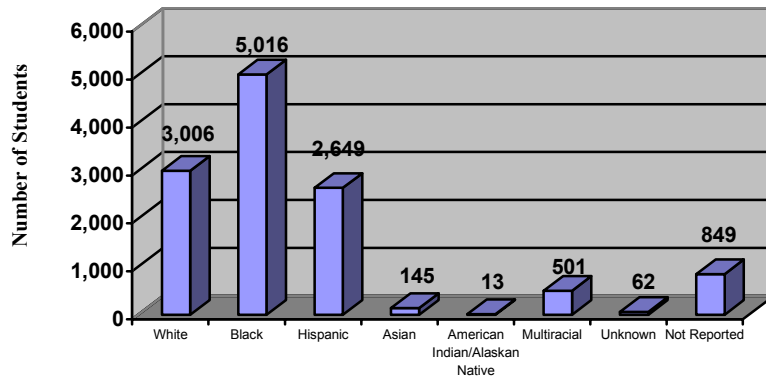
13. What is the gender and racial/ethnic breakdown of students benefiting from Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship?

CTC Students Enrollment by Gender



GENDER	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Male	5,950	48.6%
Female	6,289	51.4%
Not Reported	2	0.0%
Grand Total:	12,241	100.0%

CTC Students Racial/Ethnic Enrollment



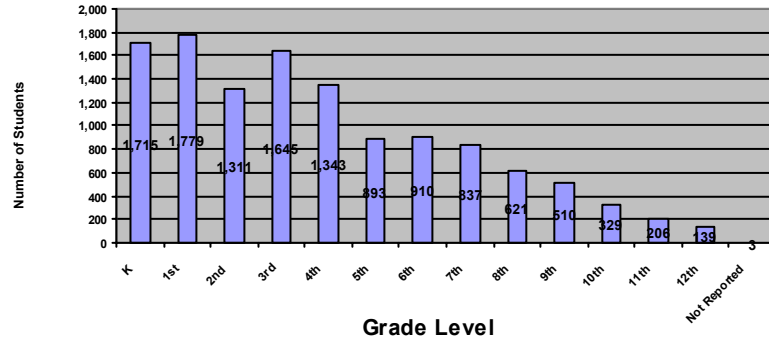
Racial/Ethnic Groups

RACE	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
White	3,006	24.6%
Black	5,016	41.0%
Hispanic	2,649	21.6%
Asian	145	1.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	13	0.1%
Multiracial	501	4.1%
Unknown	62	0.5%
Not Reported	849	6.9%
Grand Total:	12,241	100.0%

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

14. What is the enrollment by grade level of students benefiting from Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship?

CTC Students Enrollment by Grade Level



GRADE LEVEL	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
K	1,715	14.0%
1 st	1,779	14.5%
2 nd	1,311	10.7%
3 rd	1,645	13.4%
4 th	1,343	11.0%
5 th	893	7.3%
6 th	910	7.4%
7 th	837	6.8%
8 th	621	5.1%
9 th	510	4.2%
10 th	329	2.7%
11 th	206	1.7%
12 th	139	1.1%
Not Reported	3	0.0%
Grand Total:	12,241	100.0%

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

15. What are the Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship payments by district?

CTC Student Enrollment by District

DISTRICT ID	DISTRICT NAME	STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	Alachua	116	0.9%
2	Baker		
3	Bay	21	0.2%
4	Bradford	37	0.3%
5	Brevard	347	2.8%
6	Broward	652	5.3%
8	Charlotte	24	0.2%
9	Citrus	94	0.8%
10	Clay	94	0.8%
11	Collier	48	0.4%
12	Columbia	43	0.4%
13	Dade	2,564	20.9%
16	Duval	1,522	12.4%
17	Escambia	152	1.2%
18	Flagler	28	0.2%
19	Franklin	14	0.1%
20	Gadsden	85	0.7%
21	Gilchrist		
24	Hamilton	13	0.1%
27	Hernando	53	0.4%
28	Highlands	18	0.1%
29	Hillsborough	627	5.1%
30	Holmes		
31	Indian River		
32	Jackson		
33	Jefferson	24	0.2%
34	Lafayette		
35	Lake	139	1.1%
36	Lee	123	1.0%
37	Leon	244	2.0%
38	Levy	14	0.1%
39	Liberty		
40	Madison	19	0.2%
41	Manatee	112	0.9%
42	Marion	191	1.6%
43	Martin	31	0.3%
44	Monroe	22	0.2%
45	Nassau	27	0.2%
46	Okaloosa	70	0.6%
47	Okeechobee	22	0.2%
48	Orange	2,242	18.3%
49	Osceola	412	3.4%
50	Palm Beach	255	2.1%
51	Pasco	77	0.6%
52	Pinellas	280	2.3%
53	Polk	252	2.1%
54	Putnam	47	0.4%
55	St Johns	30	0.2%
56	St Lucie	76	0.6%
57	Santa Rosa	49	0.4%
58	Sarasota	55	0.4%
59	Seminole	384	3.1%
60	Sumter		
61	Suwannee	55	0.4%
64	Volusia	391	3.2%
65	Wakulla		
66	Walton		
67	Washington		
Grand Total:		12,241	100.0%

Corporate Tax Credit Scholarship Program

16. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	Section 220.187, F.S. -- Credits for contributions to nonprofitscholarship-funding organizations. Section 288.703(1), F.S. -- Definition of small business. Rule 6A-6.03315 – Private School Scholarship Compliance Form.
17. Where can I get additional information?	Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education & Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline 1-800-447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org Florida Department of Revenue (850) 922-4715 Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451



Education Council Home Education

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. What is home education?	Home education is the sequentially progressive instruction of a student directed by his or her parent in order to satisfy the statutory school attendance requirements.
2. Who can teach in a home education setting?	Any parent or guardian who complies with the reporting, record keeping, and student evaluation requirements specified in statutory law may conduct a home education program. The parent is not required to be a certified teacher.
3. What are the responsibilities of parents who establish a home education program?	A parent who conducts a home education program must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send a written notice of intent to the district school.• Maintain a portfolio of records, consisting of a log of educational activities, writings, worksheets, and creative materials used or developed by the student.• Make the portfolio available for inspection by the district school superintendent upon a 15-day notice.• Provide an annual educational evaluation of the student's educational progress.• Preserve the student's portfolio for two years.• Submit a letter of termination upon completion of the home education program.
4. How is the educational progress of home education students evaluated?	The parent may select the method of evaluation from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A review of the portfolio and discussion with the student by a Florida certified teacher chosen by the parent;• A nationally normed student achievement test administered by a certified teacher;• A state student assessment test administered by a certified teacher, at a location and under testing conditions approved by the school district;• An evaluation by a psychologist holding a valid, active license; or• An evaluation by any other valid measurement tool that is mutually agreed upon by the superintendent and the parent.
5. What oversight does the state or the school district have over home education programs?	A copy of the student's annual education evaluation must be filed in the superintendent's office. If the student does not demonstrate progress commensurate with his or her abilities, based on the annual education evaluation, the superintendent is required to notify the parents that they have one year to provide remedial instruction. At the end of that year, the student will only be allowed to continue in a home education program if re-evaluation shows acceptable educational progress. The district superintendent may inspect a home education student's portfolio at any time, upon 15 days written notice, but is not required to do so. The state or

Home Education

	<p>school district may not prescribe a curriculum or course of study for home education programs.</p>
<p>6. Can home education students attend public school part-time or for selected courses?</p>	<p>Students with identified disabilities who qualify for exceptional student education (ESE) classes may participate in those classes for exceptional students offered in the public schools. School districts are <i>not</i> required to provide course work or instruction on a part-time basis for gifted or non-ESE home education students. School districts may opt to implement policies allowing for such attendance, but such policies are not mandated by the state.</p>
<p>7. What are the provisions for students who exhibit a pattern of nonattendance to enroll in a home education program?</p>	<p>When a student who has been found to exhibit a pattern of nonattendance enrolls in a home education program, the school district home education contact person will provide the parent with a copy of the home education law and the accountability requirements of the truancy law. Also, the parent will be referred to a home education review committee. The parent must submit the student's portfolio to the home education review committee within the first 30 calendar days and every 30 days thereafter until the committee determines that the home education program is in compliance. Failure to provide a portfolio will result in termination of the home education program by the superintendent.</p> <p>The review committee is composed of the school district home education contact person and at least two home educators selected by the parent from a list of eligible home education parents maintained by the district.</p>
<p>8. May a home education student participate in public school extracurricular activities?</p>	<p>Yes. An eligible home education student may participate in extracurricular activities at the public school to which the student would be assigned according to district school attendance area policies, at the public school which the student could choose to attend pursuant to district or interdistrict controlled open enrollment policies, or at a nonpublic school pursuant to a participation agreement. Extracurricular means any school-authorized or education-related activity occurring during or outside the regular instructional school day. If a class is required to take part in the extracurricular activity, such as band class during the day in order to take part in the marching band, the home education student must be afforded the opportunity to enroll for the class. The district may report such a student for FTE purposes on a partial basis.</p> <p>Eligibility for participation is based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student must be registered in a home education program which meets the requirements of Florida law.

Home Education

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student must meet the same residency requirements as other students in the school at which he or she participates. • The student must register his or her intent to participate with the school before the beginning date of the season for the activity in which he or she wishes to participate. • During the period of participation, the student must demonstrate educational progress in all subjects and maintain a G.P.A. of 2.0 by a method of evaluation mutually agreed upon by the student's parent and the principal of the school. A public school student who has not maintained academic eligibility may not participate in extracurricular activities as a home education student until he or she successfully demonstrates educational progress in a home education program for one grading period. <p>Public schools may not belong to any governing organization that discriminates against an eligible home education student.</p>
<p>9. What acceleration mechanisms are provided for students in a home education program?</p>	<p>Home education students may participate in dual enrollment, career dual enrollment, early admission, and credit by examination at community colleges and universities. Home education students may enroll directly with the postsecondary institution or use the district's interinstitutional articulation agreement. If the home education student enrolls through the district's interinstitutional articulation agreement, the district may earn FTE and must provide instructional materials.</p>
<p>10. What type of diploma do home education students receive?</p>	<p>School districts, adult high schools, and community colleges may not provide regular high school diplomas to home education students. A home education student may take the General Educational Development (GED) test and be awarded a Florida GED diploma if the student receives a passing score. Thus, some parents choose to utilize a curriculum provider that offers a credentialed diploma to the student.</p>
<p>11. Are home education students eligible for Bright Futures Scholarships?</p>	<p>Yes. Home education students may be eligible for a Bright Futures Scholarship if they are registered as home education students during the 11th and 12th grades. Official documentation of appropriate SAT or ACT test scores as determined by the Department of Education is required.</p>
<p>12. How many students in Florida are registered in home education programs?</p>	<p>The following chart shows the increase in the number of students and families involved in home education programs.</p>

Home Education

	School Year	Families*	Students**
	1997-1998	21,507	31,440
	1998-1999	21,881	33,219
	1999-2000	26,656	37,196
	2000-2001	27,792	41,128
	2001-2002	29,417	44,460
	2002-2003	30,892	45,333
	2003-2004	32,166	47,151
	2004-2005	35,110	51,110
	* - Number of families statewide which registered their intent to establish home education programs. ** - Number of students statewide who participated in home education programs.		
13. What are the applicable statutes?	Section 1002.01(1), F.S. -- Definitions. Section 1002.41, F.S. -- Home Education Programs. Section 1003.01 (13), F.S. -- Definitions. – Regular school attendance. Section 1003.21.(1)(b), F.S. -- School Attendance. Section 1003.26(1)(f), F.S. -- Enforcement of school attendance. Section 1006.15, F.S. -- Student standards for participation in interscholastic extracurricular student activities; regulation. Sections 1009.531, 1009.534, 1009.535 and 1009.537, F.S. Bright Futures Scholarship Program.		
14. Where can I get additional information?	Florida Department of Education Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org General Education Development (GED) information: Toll free phone: 1-800-237-5113 Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451		



Education Council Charter School Districts

Fact Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. What are charter school districts?</p>	<p>In 1999, the Legislature established the Charter School Districts Pilot Program authorizing the State Board of Education to enter into a performance contract with a maximum of six school districts for the purpose of establishing them as charter school districts. Under the pilot program four charter school districts were created. In these districts the school board agreed to comply with certain performance goals contained in a performance contract that was approved by the State Board of Education. In return, the districts were granted statutory and rule exemptions.</p> <p>In 2003, the Legislature eliminated the Charter School District Pilot Program and replaced it with a statewide program allowing the creation of <i>academic performance-based charter school districts</i>. The new program is open to all high performing school districts.</p>
<p>2. How many charter school districts exist in Florida?</p>	<p>Presently, there are four charter school districts in Florida (Volusia County School District, Hillsborough County School District, Orange County School District, and Palm Beach County School District). These charter school districts were created under the 1999 pilot program, and have had their status grandfathered in until no later than 2007 at which time if they wish to continue to hold a charter they must conform to the standards applicable to <i>academic performance-based charter school districts</i>.</p>
<p>3. What is an academic performance-based charter school district?</p>	<p>An academic performance-based charter school district is one that is granted statutory and rule exemptions based upon its record as a high performing school district as determined by the grades its public schools achieve. In order to be classified as "high performing" a school district must have at least 50% of its schools achieving grades of "A" or "B" for two consecutive years with no school earning two consecutive "D's" or "F's" during the same period.</p>
<p>4. How does a charter school district become an academic performance-based charter school district?</p>	<p>Provided that a school district meets the "high performing" criteria, the State Board of Education may, upon application by the district, grant a pre-charter agreement giving the district limited flexibility and direction for developing the full academic performance-based charter school district contract. Once that contract is completed and approved by the State Board of Education, the district becomes an academic performance-based charter school district with expanded administrative flexibility and exemption from specified state statutes and rules.</p>
<p>5. Is an academic performance-based</p>	<p>No. Neither a charter school district under the pilot program nor an academic performance-based charter school district is</p>

Charter School Districts

<p>charter school district required to have new or converted charter schools in the district?</p>	<p>statutorily required to have charter schools residing within it.</p>
<p>6. How long does academic performance-based charter school district status last?</p>	<p>Under the academic performance-based charter school district program each qualifying district is granted an indefinitely renewable one-year charter. If at the end of any given year that district still qualifies based upon its school grades the charter is renewed. If at the end of the year the district no longer qualifies on the basis of school grades the district is given one year to come back into compliance. If it fails to do so by the end of the one year extension the charter is to be terminated.</p>
<p>7. Does a charter school district have a governing board?</p>	<p>Yes. The governing board of a charter school district must be the school district's elected board members. The school board (governing board) is responsible for supervising all schools in the school district. Additionally, the school board is authorized to convert its existing public schools to charter schools or establish performance-based contractual relationships with its public schools for the purpose of providing them with greater autonomy in return for performance accountability.</p>
<p>8. Are charter school districts exempt from state statutes?</p>	<p>An academic performance-based charter school district is exempt from rules and statutes in accordance with its charter, as approved by the State Board of Education. The State Board must determine if the exemption will help the district maintain or improve its high-performing status. However, the State Board of Education may not exempt a charter school district from statutes pertaining to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of services to students with disabilities; • Civil rights; • Student health, safety and welfare; • Election or compensation of school board members; • Student assessment program and school grading system, including chapter 1008; • Financial matters, including chapter 1010; • Planning and budgeting, including chapter 1011, except for sections 1011.64 and 1011.69 • Sections 1012.22(1)(c) and 1012.27(2) relating to performance pay policies; and • Educational facilities, including chapter 1013. <p>Charter school districts must comply with statutes pertaining to public records and meetings; financial disclosure by elected officials; and conflicts of interest by elected officials.</p>

9. What waivers have been granted by the SBE for the charter school districts?

Volusia County Waivers		
All waiver requests are available on district website: http://www.volusia.k12.fl.us/charter .		
Statute	SBE Rule	Description
1001.452		Waives the requirement that the School Advisory Council be composed of members who represent the economic community served by the school.
1003.26		Waives the requirement that parents be notified in writing of absences.
1003.27		Waives the penalties for habitual truancy/ nonattendance.
1003.43		Waives the requirement that all high school students take one full credit of physical education and maintenance of personal fitness. This waiver allows high school students to use 1/2 credit of marching band for PE towards their one credit requirement.
1003.43 (7)(d)		Waives the requirement that a parent must sign the written assessment when a child is enrolled in Level 1 course.
1003.436		Waives the 135 hours of class time per high school credit requirement.
1003.53		Waives the requirement that the certified mail, return receipt requested notification be returned by parents within three days of receipt prior to placement in a dropout prevention program.
1004.04		Waives the requirement for administrators who supervise or direct teacher preparation students during field experience courses or internships have evidence of "clinical educator" training and successfully demonstrate effective classroom management strategies that consistently result in improved student performance.
1006.37		Waives the requirement that state approved instructional materials be purchased from the publisher's depository with whom a contract has been made.
1006.40		Waives the requirement that at least 50% of the instructional materials budget must be spent on state approved materials.
1008.25		Waives the procedures and protocol requirements for Academic Improvement Plans for remediation.
1011.62		Waives the restriction that students in grades 7-12 and with more than four semesters of exploratory career education may not be counted for FTE.
1011.64		Waives the requirement that PECO dollars be expended on needed projects as shown by the district's survey which must be compiled in accordance with established space allocations.
1012.42(2)	6A-1.0503	Waives the requirement that students' parents be notified in writing with the names of all teachers currently teaching out of field.
1013.03(10)(a)1		Waives the requirement that DOE review education plant surveys to verify that student station and auxiliary space allocations do not exceed statutory limits and related rules.
1013.20		Waives the requirement that portables be accessible by adequately covered walkways.
1013.68		Waives the requirement that Classroom First funds will only be received and spent if the district certifies that it has no unmet needs for permanent classrooms in its five-year capital outlay work plan. The waiver will not change the district's previous election under s. 1013.68, F.S., to pledge moneys to pay debt service on issued bonds.
1013.72		Waives the requirements related to allocation of space; however, the waiver does not apply to cost per student station caps.
	6A.1.012	Waives the requirements that all purchases made be based on requisitions.

Hillsborough County Waivers		
Statute	SBE Rule	Title
1001.452		Waives the requirement that the School Advisory Council be composed of members who represent the economic community served by the school.
1003.33		Waives the use of the required format and rules for determining student performance and restricts the school board's ability to determine their own grading policy.
1003.43(1)(j)	6A-1.0953/6A-1.09532	Waives the requirement that all high school students take one full credit of physical education and maintenance of personal fitness. This waiver allows high school students to use 1/2 credit of marching band for PE towards their one credit requirement.
1003.43(7)(d)		Waives the requirement that a parent must sign the written assessment when a child is enrolled in Level 1 course.
1003.436		Waives the 135 hours of class time per high school credit requirement.
1003.53(5)		Waives the requirement that the certified mail, return receipt requested notification be returned by parents within three days of receipt prior to placement in a dropout prevention program.
1004.04(5)(a)		Waives the requirement for administrators who supervise or direct teacher preparation students during field experience courses or internships have evidence of "clinical educator" training and successfully demonstrate effective classroom management strategies that consistently result in improved student performance.
1006.37		Waives the requirement that state approved instructional materials be purchased from the publisher's depository with whom a contract has been made.
1006.40(3)(a)		Waives the requirement that at least 50% of the instructional materials budget must be spent on state approved materials.
1008.25(4)(b)		Waives the procedures and protocol requirements for Academic Improvement Plans for remediation.
1008.345(2)	6A-1.09981(3)(4)	Waives the requirement that a program of school improvement include the determination of whether or not adequate progress is made.
1010.20(2)(a)		Waives the requirement for the reporting of in-service and categorical in-service expenditures on district disaggregated basis.
1011.62		Waives the restriction that students in grades 7-12 and with more than four semesters of exploratory career education may not be counted for FTE.
1012.56		Waives the requirement that a teacher with a three-year temporary certificate must pass the general knowledge test within one year of issuance of the temporary certificate.
1013.03(10)(a)		Waives the requirement that DOE review education plant surveys to verify that student station and auxiliary space allocations do not exceed statutory limits and related rules.
1013.20		Waives the requirement that portables be accessible by adequately covered walkways.
	6A-1.0503	Waives the definition of qualified instructional personnel.

Charter School Districts

Orange County Waivers		
Statute	Rule	Title
1003.436		Waives the requirement that one full credit means a minimum of 120 hours of bona fide instruction in a designated course of study that contains student performance standards for purposes of meeting high school graduation requirements in a district school that has been authorized to implement block scheduling by the district school board.
1003.53		Waives the requirement that the certified mail, return receipt requested notification be returned by parents within three days of receipt prior to placement in a dropout prevention program.
1006.37		Waives the requirement that state approved instructional materials be purchased from the publisher's depository with whom a contract has been made.
1006.40		Waives the requirement that at least 50% of the instructional materials budget must be spent on state approved materials.
1009.27		Waives the law that applies to students enrolled in workforce development programs who are reported for funding through the Workforce Development Educational Fund.
1011.62		Waives the restriction that students in grades 7-12 and with more than four semesters of exploratory career education may not be counted for FTE.
1012.56		Waives the requirement that a teacher with a three-year temporary certificate must pass the general knowledge test within one year of issuance of the temporary certificate.
1013.28		Waives the law that prevents the sale of property by direct negotiation.
1013.31		Waives the requirements that address the calculation of capacity for design and for determining need. The waiver does not apply to capital outlay and debt service funds.
1013.69		Waives the law that requires full bonding for participation in Classrooms First, the School Infrastructure Thrift (SIT) Program, or the Effort Index Grants Program.
	6A-1.012	Waives the requirements that all purchases made be based on requisitions.
	6A-1.0503	Waives the requirement for school board approval of out-of-field teacher assignments before the FTE survey week which follows the hire date of a prospective teacher.
Palm Beach Waivers		
Statute	SBE Rule	Title
1013.03(10)(a)		Waives the requirement that DOE review education plant surveys to verify that student station and auxiliary space allocations do not exceed statutory limits and related rules.
1013.64(6)(b)1		Waives the law prohibiting a district school board, including a district school board of an academic performance-based charter school district, from using funds from the following sources: Public Education Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund; School District and Community College District Capital Outlay and Debt Service Trust Fund; Classrooms First Program funds; effort index grant funds; nonvoted 2-mill levy of ad valorem property taxes; Classrooms for Kids Infrastructure Program funds; or District Effort Recognition Program funds for any new construction of educational plant space with a total cost per student station, including change orders, that equals more than: \$12,755 for an elementary school, \$14,624 for a middle school, or \$19,352 for a high school, (January 2002) as adjusted annually to reflect increases or decreases in the Consumer Price Index.
1013.72		Waives the requirements related to allocation of space; however, the waiver does not apply to cost per student station caps.
	6A-1.0503	Waives the requirement for school board approval of out-of-field teacher assignments before the FTE survey week which follows the hire date of a prospective teacher.
03.436(2)		Waives the requirement relating to awarding credit for high school graduation.
1006.28(3)(b)		Waives requirement that principal must collect money for lost or damaged instructional materials.
10. What are the applicable statutes?	Section 1003.62, F.S. — Academic performance-based charter school districts.	
11. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education K-12 Office of the Chancellor (850) 245-0509</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>	



Education Council Charter Schools -- Overview

Fact Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. What are charter schools?</p>	<p>Charter schools are public schools that operate under a performance contract, or a “charter,” which frees them from many regulations created for traditional public schools while holding them accountable for academic and financial results. The charter contract between the charter school governing board and the sponsor details the school’s mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. The length of time for which charters are granted varies but most are granted for three to five years.</p> <p>The legislative guiding principles behind charter schools are to meet high standards of student achievement while increasing parental choice, aligning responsibility with accountability, and providing parents information on reading levels and learning gains of their children.</p> <p>Charter schools are required to improve student learning, increase learning opportunities with special emphasis on low performing students and reading, create new professional opportunities for teachers, encourage innovative learning methods, and measure learning outcomes. Charter schools may create innovative measurement tools, provide competition to stimulate improvement in traditional schools, expand capacity of the public school system, and mitigate the educational impact created by the development of new residential units.</p>
<p>2. How many charter schools are currently operating in Florida?</p>	<p>Since 1996, which was the first year the Legislature authorized charter schools, the number of charter schools operating in Florida has grown from five to approximately 338 in 2005-2006. The five schools in 1996 served 574 students and the 338 schools serve approximately 98,266 students. Florida’s charter schools are growing by record numbers. Growth could accelerate more in the future since the 2003 Legislature removed the limit on the number of newly-created charter schools in a district.</p>
<p>3. Who is eligible to attend charter schools?</p>	<p>Charter schools are open to all students residing within the district. Enrollment preference may be given to siblings of current charter school students, children of a member of the charter school governing board, or children of the charter school governing board members or employees.</p> <p>A charter school may limit the enrollment process in order to target the following student populations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students within specific age groups or grade levels.

- Students considered at risk of dropping out of school or academic failure.
- Students who wish to enroll in a charter school-in-the-workplace or a charter school-in-a-municipality.
- Students residing within a reasonable distance of the charter school.
- Students who meet reasonable academic, artistic, or other eligibility standards established by the charter school.
- Students articulating from one charter school to another.

4. How do the demographic characteristics of students in charter schools compare with students in traditional public schools?

The table below compares the characteristics of students enrolled in charter schools with those of students enrolled in traditional public schools.

2004-2005 Demographic Data for Charter School Students Compared to Traditional Public School Students

Ethnic Student Population		
Ethnic	Charter Schools	Traditional Schools
White	44%	49%
African American	24%	24%
Hispanic	25%	23%
Asian	1%	2%
Multiracial	2%	3%
Educational Needs		
Need		
Exceptional Student Education (ESE)	14%	15%
Limited English Proficiency	6%	8%
Economic Indicator		
Free or Reduced Price Lunch	37%	45%

5. How are charter schools created, organized, and operated?

Charter schools are created when an individual, a group of parents or teachers, a business, a municipality, or a legal entity submits an application to the school district; the school district approves the application; the applicants form a governing board that negotiates a contract with the district school board; and the applicants and district school board agree upon a charter or contract. The district school board then becomes the *sponsor* of the charter school. A state university may grant a charter to the university lab school and is considered to be the school's sponsor. The negotiated contract outlines expectations of both parties regarding the school's academic and financial performance.

A charter school is organized and privately *operated* by teachers, parents, community leaders, businesses, or legal entities (which may include a for-profit management company). The charter school may serve at-risk students, offer a specialized curriculum or core academic program,

	<p>provide early intervention programs, or serve exceptional education students.</p> <p>Charter schools operated by for-profit management companies represented about 20% of charter schools in Florida in 2004-2005. The management companies are responsible for establishing the educational philosophy and design, including curriculum; assessment methods and tools; handling administrative, compliance, and business responsibilities; hiring and supervising personnel; and recruiting students.</p>
<p>6. How does the application process work for a charter school?</p>	<p>A school board receives and reviews all charter school applications and, within 60 days of receipt, must approve or deny the application. All charter applications must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how the school will use the guiding principles. • Provide a detailed curriculum. • Contain goals and objectives for improving student learning. • Describe the separate reading curricula and strategies. • Contain an annual financial plan. <p>If a school board denies an application, it must provide specific written reasons within 10 calendar days. The charter school applicant then has 30 calendar days to appeal after denial or after the school board has not rendered a decision within 60 days of receiving the application. The appeal is to the State Board of Education and the State Board's decision is a final action subject to judicial review.</p>
<p>7. What is the Charter School Appeal Commission?</p>	<p>The Charter School Appeal Commission assists the State Board of Education in reviewing appeals from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denial of charter applications; and • Non-renewal or termination of charter contracts. <p>The commission convened six times during January through December 2004 to hear 23 appeals. The State Board of Education adopted the commission's recommendations 83% of the time.</p> <p>The eight-member commission is comprised of four charter school operators and four school district staff.</p>
<p>8. Once an application has been approved what must the charter itself contain?</p>	<p>Current law requires charters to contain the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School's mission, the students and their ages, and the grades that will be included in the charter school. • Focus of the school's curriculum, the instructional methods that will be used, any distinctive instructional techniques that will be employed, and the identification and acquisition of technology needed to improve educational and administrative performance. • Assurance that reading is a primary focus of the curriculum and that resources are provided to identify and

	<p>provide specialized instruction for students who are reading below grade level. The reading curriculum and the instructional strategies for implementation <i>must</i> be consistent with the Sunshine State Standards and be grounded in scientifically based reading research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current incoming baseline standard of individual student achievement, the outcomes that will be achieved, and the method of measurement that will be used. • Methods that will be used to identify the educational strengths and needs of students. • Method for determining if a student satisfies high school graduation requirements. • Method for resolving conflicts between the governing body of the charter school and the sponsor. • Admission and dismissal procedures, as well as the school's student conduct code. • Methods by which the charter school will achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves or other public schools within the same school district. • Financial and administrative management of the charter school. • Incorporation of asset and liability projections required in the application into the charter to facilitate comparison with information provided in the charter school's annual report. • Specific provisions regarding audit, safety, insurance, term, facilities, teacher qualifications, governance, and timetable provisions.
<p>9. What specific statutory requirements apply to charter school operations?</p>	<p>A charter school is statutorily required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and operations. • Admit students as specified in Question 3. • Be accountable to the school district for its performance. • Not charge tuition and fees. • Comply with all applicable state and local health, safety, and civil rights requirements. • Not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, sex, handicap, or marital status. • Subject itself to an annual financial audit. • Maintain all financial records that constitute its accounting system in accordance with current law. • Annually adopt and maintain an operating budget. • Fully participate in the state's education accountability program.
<p>10. Are charter schools exempt from state statutes?</p>	<p>Charter schools are generally exempt from the Florida K-20 Education Code (Ch. 1000-1013, F.S.), except those statutes specifically applying to charter schools; pertaining to the provision of services to students with disabilities; pertaining to civil rights; and pertaining to student health, safety, and welfare.</p> <p>Charter schools are not exempt from any statute governing</p>

	<p>public records; public meetings and records; public inspection; and penalties.</p> <p>The 2004 Legislature provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter schools are exempt from compliance with the State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF) but are required to comply with the Florida Building Code and the Florida Fire Prevention Code. • A local governing authority may not impose local building requirements more stringent than those in the Florida Building Code. • Charter schools are exempt from fees charged for building licenses.
<p>11. What are conversion charter schools?</p>	<p>Conversion charter schools are traditional public schools that have been converted to charter schools. The school must have operated for at least two years as a traditional public school (including a school-within-a-school) in a school district before conversion. Application for a conversion may be made by a parent, teacher, principal, district school board or school advisory council, but must be approved by a majority of the teachers and a majority of the parents. A majority of the parents must participate in the vote. Twenty-three conversion charter schools operated in Florida in 2004-2005, representing about 8% of the total number of charter schools in the state.</p> <p>The charter for a conversion charter school must identify the alternative arrangements that will be put in place to serve current students that choose not to attend the school after it is converted.</p> <p>Conversion charter schools are not eligible for charter school capital outlay funding if the conversion charter school operates in facilities provided to them by the school district.</p>
<p>12. What are community partnership charter schools?</p>	<p>Community partnership charter schools are sponsored by local school districts in partnership with outside entities. Any portion of a facility used for a charter school is exempt from ad valorem taxes. These schools target specific student populations or neighborhoods or focus on specific areas of interest. This category includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter schools-in-the-workplace, • Charter schools-in-a-municipality, • Community college charter schools, and • Museum partnership charter schools focus on specific areas of interest. <p>Examples are Terrace Community Charter School in Hillsborough County and Palm Beach Maritime Academy in Palm Beach County.</p>

<p>13. What are charter schools-in-the workplace?</p>	<p>Charter schools-in-the-workplace are sponsored by local school districts in partnership with a company or business. Such charter schools usually target the children of the employees of a company or business. The business partner provides the school facility to be used; enrolls students based upon a random lottery that involves all of the children of the employees of the business; and enrolls students according to the racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community or other public schools in the same school district.</p> <p>Examples of charter schools-in-the-workplace are The Villages Charter Schools in Sumter County, the JFK Medical Center Charter School in Palm Beach County, and Renaissance Elementary Charter School in Miami-Dade County.</p>
<p>14. What are charter schools-in-a-municipality?</p>	<p>Charter schools-in-a-municipality are sponsored by local school districts in partnership with a municipality. Such schools enroll students based upon a random lottery that involves all of the children of the residents of the municipality and according to the racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community or other public schools in the same school district.</p> <p>If a municipality applies to establish a charter school feeder pattern and the district school board has approved each individual charter for each elementary, middle, and high school in the feeder pattern, the schools are designated as one charter school. (Refer to Charter Schools Funding Fact Sheet).</p> <p>Examples of charter schools-in-a-municipality are the City of Pembroke Pines Charter Schools, Coral Springs Charter Schools, and North Lauderdale Academy, all in Broward County; Marco Island Charter School in Collier County; Kissimmee Charter School in Osceola County; and Aventura City of Excellence Charter School in Miami-Dade County. The Coral Springs and Kissimmee charter schools are operated by for-profit management companies.</p>
<p>15. What are community college charter schools?</p>	<p>Community college charter schools are statutorily authorized when a public community college, in cooperation with the school board or boards within the college's service area, develops a charter school that offers secondary education and allows students to obtain an associate's degree upon graduation from high school. Students have full access to all college facilities, activities, and services.</p> <p>Florida had four community college partnership schools operating in 2004-2005. The Okaloosa-Walton Community College (OWCC) Collegiate High School in Okaloosa County, St. Petersburg Collegiate Charter School in Pinellas County, Polk Community College Collegiate Charter School in Polk County, and the Clark Advanced Learning Center in Martin</p>

	County.
<p>16. How do the instructional and administrative personnel of a charter school compare with the personnel of a traditional public school?</p>	<p>Florida Statutes require that teachers employed by or under contract with a charter school be certified in the same manner as all other public school teachers in Florida.</p> <p>On a statewide average, charter schools have 21% more instructional staff than traditional public schools and 4% more administrative staff than traditional public schools.</p>
<p>17. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1002.32 (2) and (9), F.S. -- Developmental Research (Laboratory) Schools. Section 1002.33, F.S. -- Charter schools. Section 1013.62, F.S. -- Charter schools capital outlay funding.</p> <p>Chapter 2004-268, L.O.F. -- General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 20.</p> <p>Chapter 2005-70, L.O.F. -- General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 17.</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.0781, F.A.C. -- Procedures for appealing a district board decision denying application for charter school.</p>
<p>18. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org/charter.html</p> <p>DOE Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Funding and Financial Management of Florida's Public Charter Schools</i>, Technical Assistance Paper, November 2005. • <i>Implementation of the Class Size Amendment in Charter Schools</i>, Technical Assistance Paper, November 2005. • <i>Student Achievement in Florida's Charter Schools</i>, June 2005. <p>Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) www.oppaga.state.fl.us</p> <p>Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Charter School Performance Comparable to Other Public Schools; Stronger Accountability Needed</i>, Report No. 05-21, April 2005. • <i>Charter School Application Requirements Are Reasonable; Financial Management Problematic</i>, Report No. 05-11, March 2005. <p>Charter School Audits by Florida Auditor General http://www.state.fl.us/audgen/pages/subjects/charterschool.htm</p>

	<p>Websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Florida Charter School Resource Center http://www.charterschools.usf.edu <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>
--	--



Education Council Charter School Accountability

Fact Sheet

January 2006

1. How are charter schools held accountable?

The central aspect to charter school accountability is parent and student choice and the charter or the contract between the charter school and the sponsor, usually the school district. Dissatisfied parents can withdraw students. The sponsor may close a charter school if the school fails to participate in Florida's accountability system, fails to meet the student performance outcomes agreed upon in the charter, fails to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management, violates the law, or shows other good cause. In 2004-2005, sixteen charter schools closed; six were closed by the sponsor (school district) and ten were closed by the school's governing board. The schools closed by the sponsor were due to schools receiving two F grades in a three-year period, declining enrollment, facility safety issues, and non-disclosure of background information.

The foundation for a charter school's evaluation based on the charter agreement is the school's annual report submitted to the sponsor. The sponsor then submits the report to the Commissioner of Education. At a minimum, each charter school's annual report must include:

- Student achievement performance data.
- Data on the financial status of the charter school.
- Documentation of the currently used and planned facilities.
- Descriptive information about the charter school's personnel.

Charter schools are evaluated and assigned a school grade using the same standards and criteria as traditional public schools. (**Refer to the School Grading System Fact Sheet.**)

The Department of Education (DOE) is statutorily required to annually provide an analysis and comparison of the overall performance of charter school students to traditional public school students. The comparison is based on the student performance of charter school students as measured by the statewide assessment program and information reported in each school's annual progress report.

<p>2. What were the findings of the annual accountability report?</p>	<p>Of charter schools receiving a grade in 2004-2005 as part of Florida's A+ Plan, 74% received a grade of C or higher. In 2004-2005, 32% of Florida's charter schools met all the criteria for AYP, as compared with 28% of traditional public schools.</p> <p><i>Student Achievement in Florida's Charter Schools</i>, a report released by the DOE in June 2005, found that students entering charter schools often have lower math and reading developmental scale scores on the FCAT than do their traditional public school counterparts. As a result, the average scores for Florida's charter school students often initially lag behind the average scores of traditional public school students. The achievement gap soon narrows, however, and student learning gains in charter schools match the learning gains of students in traditional public schools.</p>
<p>3. How are the constitutionally mandated class size reduction requirements being implemented in charter schools?</p>	<p>Although traditional public schools are allowed to measure compliance based upon district averages until 2006-2007, charter schools are not included in district averages because they are independently governed public schools. Annually, charter schools, in conjunction with their sponsors, are required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop individualized class size reduction plans for the use of class size reduction funds. • Measure progress toward meeting school-level compliance. <p>All charter schools receive class size reduction funds, which is an operating categorical. Charter schools that are not in compliance with the constitutional maximums (Refer to Class Size Fact Sheet) may use the funds to help achieve the class size requirements. For those charter schools that achieve, and then maintain, the maximum allowable class sizes prior to the 2010 deadline, the funds may be used for operational expenses, with priority given to increasing teacher salaries.</p> <p>In 2006-2007 and 2007-2008, compliance with the class size reduction requirements for all public schools, including charter schools, will be measured at the school level. In 2008-2009, compliance will be measured at the classroom level. All Florida public schools, including charter schools, must be in full compliance with the constitutional provisions beginning in 2010-2011.</p>
<p>4. What are the applicable statutes?</p>	<p>Section 1002.32 (2) and (9), F.S. -- Developmental Research (Laboratory) Schools. Section 1002.33, F.S. -- Charter schools.</p> <p>Chapter 2005-70, L.O.F. -- General Appropriations Act,</p>

<p>5. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Specific Appropriation 17.</p> <p>Florida Department of Education (DOE) Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org/charter.html</p> <p>DOE Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Student Achievement in Florida's Charter Schools</i>; June 2005.• <i>Funding and Financial Management of Florida's Public Charter Schools</i>, Technical Assistance Paper; November 2005.• <i>Implementation of the Class Size Amendment in Charter Schools</i>, Technical Assistance Paper; November 2005. <p>Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) www.oppaga.state.fl.us</p> <p>Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Charter School Performance Comparable to Other Public Schools; Stronger Accountability Needed</i>, Report No. 05-21; April 2005.• <i>Charter School Application Requirements Are Reasonable; Financial Management Problematic</i>, Report No. 05-11; March 2005. <p>Charter School Audits by Florida Auditor General http://www.state.fl.us/audgen/pages/subjects/charterschool.htm</p> <p>Websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Florida Charter School Resource Center www.florida.bx.net <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>
--	---



Education Council Charter School Funding

Fact Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. How are charter school operations funded?</p>	<p>The charter school receives operating funds from the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) based on the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students enrolled. Charter school funding includes gross state and local funds, discretionary lottery funds, and funds from the school district's current operating discretionary millage levy; divided by the total funded weighted FTE students in the school district; multiplied by the weighted FTE students in the charter school. Charter schools are entitled to their proportionate share of categorical program funds, for eligible students and programs.</p> <p>Charter schools may also access federal funds through a grant process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning, program design, and implementation funding from the Public Charter School Grant Program is available for newly-approved charter schools for up to 36 months. In the 2005-06 school year, 71 planning, program design, and implementation projects were awarded, totaling about \$21 million. The average project award was about \$300,000 per school. Fifty-one charter schools in the second year of operation received awards totaling approximately \$11.4 million. Each award was approximately \$200,000.• Charter schools that have been in operation for at least three consecutive years and have demonstrated overall success may apply for a competitive federal charter school dissemination grant. In 2005-2006, dissemination grant project awards may total \$1.5 million. The awards may range from \$10,000 to \$500,000 each.
<p>2. What services does the district provide for the charter school?</p>	<p>The sponsor, or school district, must provide certain administrative and educational services to charter schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contract management services.• FTE and data reporting services.• Exceptional student education administration services.• Test administration services, including payment of costs of state-required or district-required student assessments.• Processing of teacher certificate data services.• Information services, including equal access to student information systems that are used by public schools in the district in which the charter school is located.

	<p>The school district may charge a charter school, including a conversion charter school, a total administrative fee based on 5% of the available per student FEFP funds. The fee is to cover district costs for the administrative services listed above. For schools with 501 students and above, the calculation is made only on 500. Any charter school with an enrollment over 500 calculates the 5% for those students over 500, but retains the calculated amount to be used for capital outlay purposes only. Conversion charter schools must use these funds for renovation, repair, and maintenance of facilities owned by the sponsor.</p> <p>School districts may not charge additional fees or surcharges for the above services unless the school district <i>contracts</i> with the charter school to provide additional goods and services.</p>
<p>3. How do charter schools provide transportation?</p>	<p>Charter schools are entitled to their proportionate share of transportation funds for eligible students. The charter school and the school district are required to cooperate in making arrangements so that transportation is not a barrier to equal access for all students residing within a reasonable distance of the charter school. Transportation of charter school students must be consistent with the district school board requirements for transportation of all public K-12 students. The charter school may provide transportation through an agreement or contract with the school district, a private provider, or parents.</p>
<p>4. How are charter school facilities funded?</p>	<p>Capital outlay funding is allocated to each eligible charter school by multiplying the charter school's projected student enrollment by one-fifteenth of the cost-per-student station for an elementary, middle, or high school, unless otherwise provided in the General Appropriations Act.</p> <p>Beyond this basic calculation the eligibility criteria and the distribution pattern for those funds is tied to the amount of charter school capital outlay funds appropriated for the 2002-2003 fiscal year, or \$27.7 million. The same amount has been appropriated every year since 2001.</p>
<p>5. What is the eligibility criteria and distribution pattern for the appropriated funds for charter school capital outlay?</p>	<p>If the amount appropriated for charter school capital outlay in a given year is equal to \$27.7 million, capital outlay funds will be distributed to the following three classes of charter schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same charter schools that received funding during the 2002-2003 fiscal year. • Charter schools that are part of an expanded feeder pattern of schools that received funding during fiscal year 2002-2003. • Schools that hold a charter and were serving students at the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year, and which incurred long-term (5 years or more) financial obligations <i>prior</i> to January 31, 2003, or began

	<p>construction of educational facilities <i>prior</i> to December 31, 2002.</p> <p>If the amount appropriated in a given year is less than \$27.7 million, then the available funds are to be prorated among the three classes of charter schools, including charter lab schools.</p> <p>If the amount appropriated in a given year is greater than \$27.7 million, the available capital outlay dollars must be distributed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first \$27.7 million must be distributed in the same manner as an appropriation that is equal to \$27.7 million, listed above. • All funds over \$27.7 million must be distributed on a priority basis with the first priority going to those charter schools, including charter lab schools, with long term (5 years or more) debt or leases. If there are insufficient funds to give each first priority school an allocation equal to 1/15th per student station then the money is to be prorated among them. Once the first priority schools have been served if there is further capital outlay money available then all other charter schools deemed eligible are to receive funding.
<p>6. For purposes of capital outlay, when is a charter school part of an expanded feeder pattern?</p>	<p>A charter school is part of an expanded feeder pattern if it is paired with a school, located in the same school district, that received capital outlay funding during fiscal year 2002-2003, and if the charters of both schools contain a provision either to send (feed) or receive (be fed) a majority of the transfer-eligible students to and from the school with which it is paired. The grade level connection must be direct. A grade K-4 school and a grade 9-12 school cannot be considered a feeder pattern since there is a missing intermediate step.</p>
<p>7. What are the permissible uses of capital outlay funds by charter schools?</p>	<p>The permissible uses of capital outlay funds by charter schools are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of real property. • Construction of school facilities. • Purchase, lease-purchase, or lease of permanent or relocatable school facilities. • Purchase of vehicles to transport students to and from the charter school. • Renovation, repair, and maintenance of school facilities that the charter school owns or is purchasing through a lease-purchase or long-term lease of 5 years or longer.
<p>8. What happens to charter school funds and property when a charter school is closed?</p>	<p>When a charter is not renewed or is terminated, unencumbered public funds from the charter school revert to the district school board; all district school board property and improvements, furnishings, and equipment purchased with public funds automatically revert to full ownership by</p>

	<p>the district school board subject to complete satisfaction of any lawful liens or encumbrances.</p>
<p>9. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1002.32(2) and (9), F.S. -- Developmental Research (Laboratory) Schools. Section 1002.33, F.S. -- Charter schools. Section 1013.62, F.S. -- Charter schools capital outlay funding.</p> <p>Chapter 2005-70, L.O.F. -- General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 17</p> <p>Rule 6A-6.0781, F.A.C. -- Procedures for appealing a district board decision denying application for charter school</p>
<p>10. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education (DOE) Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org</p> <p>DOE Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Funding and Financial Management of Florida's Public Charter Schools</i>, Technical Assistance Paper, November 2005. • <i>Implementation of the Class Size Amendment in Charter Schools</i>, Technical Assistance Paper, November 2005. • <i>Student Achievement in Florida's Charter Schools</i>, June 2005. <p>Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) www.oppaga.state.fl.us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Charter School Application Requirements Are Reasonable; Financial Management Problematic</i>, Report No. 05-11, March 2005. <p>Charter School Audits by Florida Auditor General http://www.state.fl.us/audgen/pages/subjects/charterschool.htm</p> <p>Websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida Charter School Resource Center http://florida.bx.net <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council
K-8 Virtual School Pilot Program

Fact Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. What is the K-8 Virtual School pilot program?</p>	<p>The K-8 Virtual School pilot program allows eligible K-8 virtual schools to be created as independent public schools that use on-line and distance learning technology to deliver instruction to full-time students in kindergarten and grades one through eight. The 2003 Legislature authorized the Department of Education (DOE) to provide for the creation of at least two pilot K-8 virtual schools. The two companies selected by the DOE in response to the request for proposal to operate a virtual school in Florida were the Connections Academy, Inc., founded by Sylvan Ventures, and K12, Inc., a technology-based curriculum company and the nation's largest virtual school manager. The two schools operated by these companies, Florida Connections Academy and Florida Virtual Academy, began delivering on-line instruction to Florida students in September 2003.</p> <p>Florida certified teachers work with parents or other designated learning coaches to deliver instruction to students. Both schools in the pilot program utilize on-line curriculum, lessons, progress tests, and record keeping as well as books and other more traditional learning materials. Students participate in field trips and other group activities so they have contact with other virtual school students. The schools provide computers and a stipend sufficient to cover the cost of Internet access for their students who complete 5 to 40% of their work on-line depending on the grade level.</p> <p>Both of the schools in the pilot program require a minimum of one parent-teacher telephone conference every two weeks. Teachers are available at other times via e-mail, telephone, or other technology tools provided by the schools. The teachers oversee students' progress through checking samples of their work.</p>
<p>2. What criteria are required for a K-8 virtual school to participate in the pilot program?</p>	<p>To be eligible to participate in the pilot program, a K-8 virtual school must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conform all curriculum and course content to the Sunshine State Standards;• Coordinate with the DOE and school districts to ensure their grade 3-8 students participate in the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) or, for those students in grades K-2, administer local and other standardized assessments; and• Employ on-line teachers who are certified in Florida.
<p>3. What are the eligibility</p>	<p>Proviso language in the 2003 General Appropriations Act</p>

K-8 Virtual School Pilot Program

<p>criteria set in the proviso language for students to enroll in a K-8 virtual school?</p>	<p>limited student eligibility to students who had attended a Florida public school the previous year. However, in 2003-2004, kindergarteners and first graders who met the minimum age requirements for attendance at regular public schools were allowed to participate in the K-8 virtual school pilot program. Enrollment for the 2003-2004 school year included 227 kindergarten and first graders.</p> <p>In 2003, total enrollment was not allowed to exceed 1,000 students. Students were served on a first enrolled, first served basis. If students with special needs were served, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for those students was to designate that on-line learning met their needs.</p> <p>In 2004, enrollment was limited to a total of 800 students comprised of those who were enrolled in either of the two pilot K-8 virtual schools during the 2003-2004 school year and siblings of those students.</p> <p>In 2005-06, enrollment is limited to a total of 1,000 students. Eligible students include those entering kindergarten or first grade, those who have participated in the pilot in previous years and their siblings, or students in grades 2-8 who attended a Florida public school the previous year.</p>
<p>4. What are the advantages of enrollment in the pilot K-8 virtual schools?</p>	<p>Enrolled students are equipped with loaned computers, software, subsidized Internet access, complete curriculum packages, and other relevant course materials so instruction may take place in a site other than an overcrowded classroom. The premise is to meld public education and strong parental involvement.</p>
<p>5. How is the pilot program funded?</p>	<p>In 2003, the pilot K-8 virtual schools were funded with grants of up to \$4,800 per student with total enrollment not to exceed 1,000 students. The total appropriation was \$4,800,000.</p> <p>The 2004 Legislature funded the grants in the same amount per student with total funding not to exceed \$3,840,000; thus, reducing the cap to 800 students.</p> <p>The 2005 Legislature appropriated \$4,800 per student with total funding not to exceed \$4,800,000, thus allowing enrollment up to 1,000 students.</p>
<p>6. How did the pilot program schools and students perform at the end of the first year of operation?</p>	<p>2005 FCAT results indicated that students in both schools tested well in reading and science at all grade levels. Florida Virtual Academy exceeded state averages in math in five of six grade levels and Florida Connections Academy exceeded state averages in three of six grade levels. Florida Virtual Academy students scored below state average in writing in grade 4 and matched state writing results in grade 8. Florida Connections Academy scored</p>

K-8 Virtual School Pilot Program

	<p>below state averages in writing at both grade levels.</p> <p>In 2004, Connections Academy earned a letter grade of C and Florida Virtual Academy earned a letter grade of B. In 2005, both schools earned a letter grade of B and Connections Academy made AYP.</p> <p>Surveys indicate very high parent satisfaction.</p>
7. What are the applicable appropriations?	<p>2003 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 4D.</p> <p>2004 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 10B.</p> <p>2005 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 88.</p>
8. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Connections Academy 1000 Lancaster Street, 6th Floor Baltimore, MD 21202 info@connectionsacademy.com</p> <p>K12, Inc. 8000 Westpark Drive Suite 500 McLean, Virginia 22102 1-888-YOURK12 (968-7512) www.k12.com www.flva.org</p> <p>Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice (850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council
Florida Virtual School

Fact Sheet

January 2006

<p>1. What is the Florida Virtual School?</p>	<p>The Florida Virtual School (FLVS) is a public on-line school offering virtual education options for students in grades 6 through 12, including honors, advanced placement, and GED courses. Courses are free to all Florida students and are available to public, private, and home education students. Priority is given to students who need expanded access to courses in order to meet their educational goals, such as home education students, students in inner-city and rural high schools that do not have access to higher-level courses, and students seeking accelerated access to a high school diploma.</p> <p>School districts may not limit student access to courses offered through the FLVS; they are required to provide students with access to enroll in courses available through the FLVS and award credit for successful completion of such courses. Access must be made available to students during or after the normal school day and through summer school enrollment.</p>
<p>2. How are the courses and delivery system designed?</p>	<p>All FLVS courses are delivered over the Internet. To help assure student success with virtual learning, a variety of web-based, technology-based and traditional resources are provided. These include phone, fax, stand-alone software, print-based material, websites, and real-world experts.</p> <p>FLVS has a full high school and middle school curriculum and offers more than 80 courses, which are based on the Sunshine State Standards. FLVS course grades are accepted for credit and are transferable. FLVS is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.</p> <p>Students may take different routes through their courses depending upon their learning styles and previous knowledge of the subject. When first designed, learners could progress through courses at any pace; however, this feature was modified since the school works in conjunction with districts on a traditional calendar and credit system. In order for districts to give graduation credits and plan for a student, a time-certain finish date was needed. Students must now specify whether they will work at a traditional, accelerated, or extended pace.</p>
<p>3. What are the credentials and availability of the teachers?</p>	<p>All FLVS teachers possess a valid Florida teaching certificate and are certified specifically in the subject they teach. At least 39 of the teachers are certified by the</p>

	<p>National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).</p> <p>Teachers can keep the content alive and current. They have the option of inputting current events and new graphical representations on an as-needed basis for their students. Teachers are available by e-mail, pager and telephone. Calls from students are returned within 24 hours. Teachers do monthly progress reports and are required to make at least one monthly telephone contact with students and parents. Although the administrative and technical functions of FLVS are primarily housed in Orange County, all of the teachers and many of the support and administrative staff are based throughout the state.</p>
<p>4. How do students and districts participate?</p>	<p>The FLVS is affiliated with all 67 Florida school districts. Adopting policies to encourage students to take courses from FLVS is one of the options that district school boards must consider implementing in order to meet the constitutional class size maximums. At the beginning of each school year, district school boards must notify parents of students in or entering high school of the opportunity and benefits of acceleration mechanisms, including the FLVS.</p> <p>The FLVS board of trustees may enter into franchise agreements with Florida district school boards. Currently, FLVS franchises are active in eight (8) school districts: Brevard, Broward, Miami-Dade, Hillsborough, Marion, Okaloosa, Pasco, and Polk.</p>
<p>5. How did the Florida Virtual School get started?</p>	<p>The web-based on-line high school was initially a 1997 pilot project. In 2000, the Legislature established a FLVS board of trustees to adopt rules, policies, and procedures; enter into agreements with distance learning providers; and acquire, enjoy, use, and dispose of patents, trademarks, copyrights, licenses, rights and interests.</p> <p>In 2001, the FLVS was administratively housed within the Commissioner of Education's Office of Technology and Information Services. The legislation also provided a mission statement. See Ch. 2001-89, L.O.F.</p> <p>The 2003 Legislature authorized franchise agreements, required the board of trustees to submit to the State Board of Education both forecasted and actual enrollments and credit completions for FLVS, including the number of public, private, and home education students served by program and by county of residence, and included the FLVS as a public school choice option for students.</p>
<p>6. What is the history of funding and enrollments for the Florida Virtual</p>	<p>Florida has historically supported FLVS through funding: \$200,000 in 1996 through a Department of Education (DOE) Break-the-Mold grant; and specific legislative appropriations until 2003-04.</p>

<p>School?</p>	<p>The following table shows historical funding amounts and enrollments for FLVS. Enrollment is defined as the number of half-credits that students have taken or are currently taking. The enrollment number is consistently larger than the student count because students may sign up for more than one course. If a student enrolls in three courses, the student count is one while the enrollment count is six. The average number of on-line classes is 2.2 half-credit enrollments per student.</p> <p>In 2003-04, FLVS funding transitioned from a grant basis to the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), which is the funding formula that allocates operating funds to public school districts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Florida Virtual School Funding and Enrollments</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Amount</th> <th>Enrollments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1997-98</td> <td>\$1.3 million</td> <td>225</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1998-99</td> <td>\$4.36 million</td> <td>1100</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1999-2000</td> <td>\$3.8 million</td> <td>3,900</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2000-01</td> <td>\$6.17 million</td> <td>8,900</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2001-02</td> <td>\$6.17 million</td> <td>11,500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2002-03</td> <td>\$6.9 million</td> <td>14,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2003-04*</td> <td>\$8.4 million</td> <td>31,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004-05</td> <td>\$14.6 million</td> <td>48,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2005-06</td> <td>\$21.8 million</td> <td>51,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>*In 2003-04, FLVS funding transitioned from a grant basis to the FEFP. (See Question 7.)</p>	Year	Amount	Enrollments	1997-98	\$1.3 million	225	1998-99	\$4.36 million	1100	1999-2000	\$3.8 million	3,900	2000-01	\$6.17 million	8,900	2001-02	\$6.17 million	11,500	2002-03	\$6.9 million	14,000	2003-04*	\$8.4 million	31,000	2004-05	\$14.6 million	48,000	2005-06	\$21.8 million	51,000
Year	Amount	Enrollments																													
1997-98	\$1.3 million	225																													
1998-99	\$4.36 million	1100																													
1999-2000	\$3.8 million	3,900																													
2000-01	\$6.17 million	8,900																													
2001-02	\$6.17 million	11,500																													
2002-03	\$6.9 million	14,000																													
2003-04*	\$8.4 million	31,000																													
2004-05	\$14.6 million	48,000																													
2005-06	\$21.8 million	51,000																													
<p>7. How does funding through the FEFP work?</p>	<p>The 2003 Legislature transitioned FLVS funding from a grant basis to the FEFP. In the FEFP, funding is based on “credit successfully completed” with six credits equaling one full-time equivalent student (FTE). No funding is earned if the student does not successfully complete the course. A student who completes less than six credits is a fraction of a full-time equivalent student. Half credit completions are included in determining a full-time equivalent student. Credit completed by a student in excess of the minimum required for that student for high school graduation is not eligible for funding. The 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-06 funding for the FLVS in the FEFP was as follows:</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th># of Unweighted FTE</th> <th>Amt/FTE</th> <th>Total Funds (includes Categorical Funds)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2003-2004</td> <td>1,764.23</td> <td>\$4,859.02</td> <td>\$8,572,428</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2004-2005</td> <td>2,938.75</td> <td>\$5,079.83</td> <td>\$14,928,357</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2005-2006</td> <td>3,746.32</td> <td>\$5,306.27</td> <td>\$19,879,003</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The FLVS receives categorical funding for instructional materials, public school technology, class size reduction, and teacher training. The FLVS does not receive funding for the remaining two categoricals, which are Florida Teacher</p>	Year	# of Unweighted FTE	Amt/FTE	Total Funds (includes Categorical Funds)	2003-2004	1,764.23	\$4,859.02	\$8,572,428	2004-2005	2,938.75	\$5,079.83	\$14,928,357	2005-2006	3,746.32	\$5,306.27	\$19,879,003														
Year	# of Unweighted FTE	Amt/FTE	Total Funds (includes Categorical Funds)																												
2003-2004	1,764.23	\$4,859.02	\$8,572,428																												
2004-2005	2,938.75	\$5,079.83	\$14,928,357																												
2005-2006	3,746.32	\$5,306.27	\$19,879,003																												

	<p>Lead and transportation.</p> <p>In addition to the FEFP funding, the 2004 Legislature provided \$800,000 to FLVS to support activities associated with development and implementation of a grade six through eight curriculum and \$1,373 in District Cost Differential (DCD) Transition Supplemental funds. The 2005 legislature provided \$2,948 in DCD Transition Supplemental funds.</p>
<p>8. How does the governance structure of the FLVS work?</p>	<p>The FLVS board of trustees has the responsibility for sustaining a self-sufficient delivery system through the FEFP. They must aggressively seek avenues to generate revenue to support FLVS's future endeavors. FLVS may accrue supplemental revenue from supplemental support organizations, including alumni associations, foundations, parent-teacher associations, and booster associations. Additionally, FLVS may receive other funds from grants and donations.</p> <p>School districts operating a virtual school that is certified by the Commissioner of Education as an approved franchise of the FLVS may count full-time equivalent students for funding purposes in the FEFP. The FLVS board of trustees establishes the criteria defining the elements of an approved franchise, the terms and conditions governing franchise agreements, and the performance and accountability measures for a school district franchise. The board of trustees also reports the performance of each school district franchise to the Commissioner of Education.</p> <p>Although the ownership of patents, trademarks, and copyrights remains with the state, the board has the full right of use and the right to retain any revenues derived from their use to support the school's research and development in order to improve courses and services for students.</p>
<p>9. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 1002.37, F.S. -- The Florida Virtual School. Section 1011.62, F.S. -- Funds for Operation of Schools</p> <p>2005 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 73 2004 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 10B and 87A 2003 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 65</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.099, F.A.C. -- Cooperative Projects and Activities</p>
<p>10. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>The Florida Virtual School 445 West Amelia Street Orlando, FL 32801 (407) 317-3326 http://www.flvs.net</p> <p>Florida Department of Education Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice</p>

	<p>(850) 245-0502 Toll-Free Information Hotline: (800) 447-1636 www.floridaschoolchoice.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>
--	---