



Bill Snapshot

CS/HB 1: The HOPE Scholarship Program

Every student deserves access to a safe environment. In the 2015-16 school year, over 47,000 Florida public school students were victims of incidents such as battery, bullying, harassment, hazing, physical attacks, and sexual assault.

Studies show that students who are exposed to traumatic events have increased absences and decreased academic performance. For these students, just being at school interferes with their learning.

We know that incidents are often unreported. For example, in 2015, .1% of the total student population reported a bullying incident; however, in a self-reported survey 15% of students stated they were bullied. We also know that not all injuries are visible. Depression, anxiety, and many other psychological problems, including fear, can result from school violence.

CS/HB 1 creates a pathway for students to pursue their education with hope, dignity and an opportunity for success.

The bill establishes the HOPE Scholarship Program, which:

- Allows a parent to choose, whether it be a public or private school, the best environment for their child who experienced violence or abuse in a public school.
- Requires the district to notify the parent of these options within 15 days of the report of an incident.
- Provides a \$750 scholarship for transportation if the student enrolls in a public school outside the district.
- Requires the Department of Education to oversee the program like other scholarship programs.
- Establishes guidelines for scholarship amounts and payments to private schools.
- Allows taxpayers to receive tax credits for eligible contributions to the Hope Scholarship Program.
- Addresses the needs of students who remain by identifying and sharing best practices with schools with a high number of incidents.

LAST SEEN:

Reported Favorably with Committee Substitute out of PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee

Sponsor:
Representative Donalds

CURRENTLY:

Referred to Education Committee

HEADING TO:

Education Committee