

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

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

Prepared By: Education Pre-K - 12 Committee

BILL: SB 2598

INTRODUCER: Senator Wise

SUBJECT: Governor's School for Science and Technology

DATE: April 3, 2007

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

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

**I. Summary:**

This bill creates the Governor's School for Science and Technology (Governor's School) to provide accelerated science, math, and technology curriculum to qualified students in grades 9-12. The Governor's School would also provide summer training programs for teachers. The bill appropriates \$1 million from the General Revenue Fund as start-up costs for the Governor's School opening in the 2009-2010 academic year.

The Governor's School would be located in Brevard County but would have statewide admissions as adopted by the Florida Virtual School (FLVS). Enrolled students must reside on the campus. The Governor's School would be operated by the Florida Virtual School (FLVS) under the direction of an appointed director.

The Governor's School for Science and Technology Advisory Council is created, comprised of 13 members appointed by the FLVS Board of Trustees. The council would provide technical assistance to FLVS concerning the development and implementation of a plan for the Governor's School.

The bill exempts the Governor's School from Florida School Code requirements relating to curriculum and operations, with the exception of laws relating specifically to civil rights or student health, safety, and welfare. The FLVS serves as the fiscal agent for the Governor's School and would be required to submit a legislative budget request annually. The Governor's School may secure additional funds from state agencies and private entities.

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

## II. Present Situation:

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

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

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

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

### **Florida Virtual School**

The FLVS was founded in 1997 as the nation's first state-wide Internet-based public high school and currently offers more than 90 courses for middle and high school students. In 2000, the Florida Legislature established FLVS as an independent educational entity with an appointed board. FLVS provides online instruction for grades 6 to 12, as well as for adults seeking GED alternatives both in Florida and out-of-state through their Global Services Division. In 2005-2006, FLVS served more than 31,000 students in 68,000 half-credit courses. FLVS is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. All FLVS teachers possess a valid Florida

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

teaching certificate and are certified specifically in the subject they teach. More than 64 percent of staff hold advanced degrees, and 76 are national board certified.<sup>8</sup>

### III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

This bill creates the Governor's School for Science and Technology (Governor's School) to provide accelerated science, math, technology curriculum to qualified students in grades 9-12. The Governor's School would also provide summer training programs for teachers. The bill provides that the Governor's School be established in Brevard County and in close proximity to the Kennedy Space Center, and to be operational by the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year. Enrolled students must reside on the campus.

The Florida Virtual School (FLVS) would operate the Governor's School. The FLVS would appoint a school director and adopt rules to specify requirements for admission, standards for selection of students, and the number of students to be enrolled. Students would apply and be selected for enrollment based on test scores or favorable recommendations from teachers or school staff.

The Governor's School for Science and Technology Advisory Council is created, comprised of 13 members appointed by the FLVS Board of Trustees. The 13 members would represent individual institutions with a vested interest in math, science, and technology education. The members are from the following entities:

- The Technological Research and Development Authority;
- The Sunshine State Scholars Recognition Program (two members);
- The Florida Institute of Technology;
- The Department of Education;
- The Florida Center for Mathematics and Science Research (two members);
- The Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University;
- The University of Central Florida;
- The University of Florida;
- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); and
- The Florida Virtual School (two faculty members).

The bill provides for staggered terms. The Council would meet quarterly and members would serve without compensation but would be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses in accordance with s. 112.061, F.S.

The bill exempts the Governor's School from Florida School Code requirements relating to curriculum and operations, with the exception of laws relating specifically to civil rights or student health, safety, and welfare. The bill makes the Governor's School subject to ch. 119, F.S., relating to public records, and s. 286.011, F.S., relating to public meetings.

The FLVS is authorized under the bill to serve as the fiscal agent for the Governor's School and to submit a legislative budget request annually. The bill also permits the Governor's School to

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

secure additional funds from state agencies and private entities. Students enrolled in the Governor's School would generate funding through the FEFP and other appropriate categorical funds in the same manner as those students enrolled in other public schools.

Funding for the Governor's School would be provided through the General Appropriations Act to provide for student room, board, and transportation.

The bill also makes conforming changes to the School Code in recognition of the creation of the Governor's School.<sup>9</sup>

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2007.

#### **IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

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

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Qualified Florida students would have access to state-of-the-art instruction in math, science, and technology, perhaps providing the state with an enhanced education community.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Students enrolled in the Governor's School would generate funding through the FEFP and other appropriate categorical funds in the same manner as those students enrolled in other public schools.

Funding for the Governor's School would be provided through the General Appropriations Act to provide for student room, board, and transportation. The costs to

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

support these provisions is indeterminate and would depend in part on the number of students enrolled.

The bill includes a \$1 million appropriation to the FLVS from General Revenue to provide for start-up costs prior to the Governor's School opening in the 2009-2010 academic year.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

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

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

None.

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