

Committee on Education

CS/HB 723 — Juvenile Justice Education Programs

by Education and Employment Committee; and Rep. Massullo and others

The bill modifies how juvenile justice education programs are operated and funded. These modifications include how instructional time is defined and how funds are allocated between school districts and educational providers.

The bill updates the definition of “juvenile justice education programs or schools” to permit the calculation of the mandatory period of operation for nonresidential programs to be expressed in hours. If hours are selected as the means of calculating the period of operation, then the calculation of hours must conform to State Board of Education (SBE) rules and the SBE must review the calculation each year. The bill also permits hours, with similar SBE review requirements, to be used to calculate the optional decrease in instructional days for nonresidential programs.

The bill requires that the SBE rule governing funding of the juvenile justice education programs provide that at least 95 percent of the Florida Education Finance Program funds generated by students in those programs be spent on instructional costs. Additionally, the bill clarifies that Department of Juvenile Justice education programs are entitled to 100 percent of formula-based categorical funds generate by students in the programs.

The bill provides additional requirements for contracts between district school boards and juvenile justice education programs. Specifically, the bill requires:

- All contracts to be in writing between district school boards desiring to contract directly with juvenile justice education programs to provide academic instruction.
- New or renewal contracts to be executed and negotiated within 40 days after the district school board provides the proposal, unless both parties agree to an extension.
- District school boards to satisfy invoices issued by the juvenile justice education program within 15 working days after receipt.
- o If a district school board does not timely issue a warrant for payment, it must pay to the juvenile justice education program interest at a rate of one percent per month, calculated on a daily basis, on the unpaid balance until such time as a warrant is issued for the invoice and accrued interest amount.
- o District school boards may not delay payment to a juvenile justice education program of any portion of funds owed pending the district’s receipt of local funds.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2021.

Vote: Senate 40-0; House 116-0