

By Representative Ogles

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to truancy in the public
3 schools; requiring the Commissioner of
4 Education to establish demonstration projects
5 to reduce truancy; providing project
6 components; requiring recommendations for
7 legislation; providing an effective date.

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9 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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11 Section 1. (1) The Commissioner of Education shall
12 establish demonstration projects in selected school districts
13 during the 1997-1998 school year to reduce truancy in the
14 schools. In selecting school districts to participate in the
15 1-year projects, the commissioner shall ensure participation
16 by school districts of different sizes and characteristics.
17 The demonstration projects shall include, but not be limited
18 to, the following components:

19 (a) Maintenance of a ratio of one truancy officer for
20 each 5,000 students.

21 (b) Creation of a community grant fund to assist
22 schools in their efforts to reduce truancy, substance abuse,
23 and crime in the schools.

24 (c) Establishment of uniform reporting of absentees
25 and suspensions for purposes of tracking truancy.

26 (2) Based on the results of the demonstration
27 projects, the Commissioner of Education shall make
28 recommendations by December 1, 1998, to the President of the
29 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives for
30 legislation to:

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1 (a) Implement the components of the demonstration
2 projects which are successful in furthering the goal of
3 reducing truancy in the public schools.

4 (b) Provide for revocation or suspension of the
5 driver's license of a chronic truant.

6 (c) Provide for imposition of penalties, with
7 consideration given to the following:

8 1. A fine for any business that employs a student
9 during school hours.

10 2. A fine for any adult who harbors a truant during
11 school hours.

12 3. A \$25 fine per incident for a parent or guardian
13 who interferes with a student's school attendance.

14 4. A fine or required performance of community service
15 for a parent or guardian whose elementary school child has
16 more than five unexcused absences per year.

17 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997.

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20 HOUSE SUMMARY

21 Requires the Commissioner of Education to establish
22 demonstration projects to reduce truancy in the public
23 schools and to recommend legislation relating thereto.