

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to student educational
3 improvement; creating s. 229.604, F.S.;
4 defining the term "educational technology";
5 requiring school improvement plans to include
6 strategies for implementing educational
7 technology; providing requirements for the
8 educational technology component of such plans;
9 requiring the development, submission, and
10 annual revision of a district educational
11 technology plan; requiring the Department of
12 Education, in consultation with the Educational
13 Technology Advisory Group, to develop and
14 annually update a state educational technology
15 plan; providing requirements for such plan;
16 requiring the development of technology
17 capability thresholds; requiring the department
18 to establish the Technology Services and
19 Products Bank; requiring the Technology
20 Services and Products Bank to perform certain
21 functions; providing requirements for the
22 distribution and use of technology funding;
23 requiring an annual report; providing
24 requirements for the contents of the report;
25 establishing the Educational Technology
26 Advisory Group; providing duties, membership,
27 reimbursement of per diem and travel expenses,
28 and meeting procedures; establishing the
29 College Fast Start Program; providing
30 legislative intent; defining terms; providing
31 procedures for application to participate in

1 the program; providing guidelines for program
2 approval; providing requirements for approved
3 programs; requiring an advisory council to
4 review proposals and recommend an order of
5 priority for funding; providing membership of
6 the advisory council; providing for funding of
7 the program; providing methodology for
8 competitive funding of approved programs;
9 providing requirements for the continuation of
10 funding for programs; requiring an interim
11 report to the Florida Governor's Alliance for
12 the Employment of Disabled Citizens; requiring
13 an annual end-of-the-year report to the
14 alliance; requiring the alliance and the
15 Postsecondary Education Planning Commission to
16 develop specifications and procedures for the
17 transmission of such data; requiring the
18 alliance to report to the Governor, the
19 Legislature, and the Commissioner of Education
20 annually on the effectiveness of the program;
21 providing an effective date.

22
23 WHEREAS, the most significant populations of students
24 in need of educational improvement methodologies to meet the
25 Constitutional requirement of a high quality education are
26 students with disabilities and students who lack the
27 technology foundation to succeed in school and the workplace,
28 NOW, THEREFORE,

29
30 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
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1 Section 1. Section 229.604, Florida Statutes, is
2 created to read:

3 229.604 Educational Technology Program.--There is
4 created the Educational Technology Program.

5 (1) DEFINITION.--As used in this section, the term
6 "educational technology" includes all technology and
7 technology-related processes used directly or indirectly for
8 instructional purposes, including:

9 (a) The use of hardware, software, networks, distance
10 learning equipment, and related devices that support teaching
11 and learning.

12 (b) Resources that allow students and teachers to
13 exchange information with others, or permit them to access,
14 retrieve, manipulate, and display information available on the
15 Internet and elsewhere.

16 (c) Hardware, software, and processes that facilitate
17 the teaching and learning process, such as those resources
18 that support grade reporting, class scheduling, attendance
19 accounting, assessment, and similar functions.

20 (d) Endeavors relating to supporting the use of
21 technology in the classroom, such as providing technical
22 support.

23 (2) SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PLANS.--Each school,
24 including schools operating for the purpose of providing
25 education services to youth in juvenile justice commitment and
26 detention facilities, must address strategies for implementing
27 educational technology in the school improvement plan which
28 has been approved by the district school board, pursuant to s.
29 230.23(16)(a). The portion of the school improvement plan
30 addressing technology must address:

1 (a) The achievement of technology capability
2 thresholds established by the Department of Education
3 according to this section.

4 (b) Safe access to the school media center or computer
5 center outside of the regular school day.

6 (c) Technical assistance for daily operations.

7 (3) DISTRICT EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PLANS.--Each
8 district school board must submit to the Department of
9 Education, and annually update, a strategic district
10 educational technology plan as part of the district system of
11 planning and budgeting, pursuant to s. 229.555(1)(b). The
12 district educational technology plan shall be developed using
13 information from the technology plans of schools in the
14 district and the technology capability thresholds established
15 by the Department of Education. The plan shall be for a period
16 of at least 3 years, but no more than 5 years, and the initial
17 district plan shall be submitted to the department by August
18 1, 2001. A new plan shall be submitted by August 1 in the
19 final year of the prior plan, and an update must be submitted
20 by August 1 of each of the interim years for the duration of
21 the plan. The plan shall include essential elements as
22 required by the department.

23 (4) STATE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PLAN.--The Department
24 of Education shall develop and annually update a state
25 educational technology plan, in consultation with the
26 Educational Technology Advisory Group. The state educational
27 technology plan shall:

28 (a) Include technology capability thresholds that
29 represent reasonable levels of technological capability to
30 fully integrate technology into a school in order for the
31 school to effectively utilize grade level appropriate

1 educational technology in teaching and learning. When
2 developing and updating the technology capability thresholds,
3 the department and the Educational Technology Advisory Group
4 shall take into consideration technology currently available,
5 as well as forecasted innovations in technology. The
6 technology capability thresholds shall be designed to build
7 the skills that students will need to meet the demands of
8 Florida businesses and industry. The department shall develop
9 the technology capability thresholds by January 1, 2001. By
10 January 1 each year thereafter, the capability thresholds must
11 be reviewed and updated, as appropriate.

12 (b) Address student access to technology to support
13 students' educational progress in the community, at work, at
14 school, and at home. The plan shall encourage districts and
15 schools to furnish safe access to school media centers or
16 computer centers outside of the regular school day, and to
17 consider the design of entrances to media centers or computer
18 centers which are safely and readily accessible to the
19 community and to students for use before and after school
20 hours when planning for new construction or remodeling
21 projects.

22 (c) Address technology infrastructure, communication
23 updates, and upgrades for new and existing schools. The plan
24 shall encourage designs to accommodate future updating and
25 upgrading needs, to provide multiple technological access
26 points, and to facilitate teacher access to telephones and
27 telephone message systems.

28 (5) TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND PRODUCTS BANK.--The
29 Department of Education shall establish a Technology Services
30 and Products Bank, which shall:

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1 (a) Collect, and disseminate through an Internet site,
2 information regarding hardware, software, and technology
3 services available within the state, including, but not
4 limited to, educational applications.

5 (b) Identify outdated technology; rapid changes in
6 technology; lowest prices for hardware, software, and
7 technology services; sources of hardware, software, and
8 technology services; and fluctuations in prices of hardware,
9 software, and technology services.

10 (c) Serve as a clearinghouse of information regarding
11 software research and development project proposals. Work
12 products produced as a result of publicly funded research and
13 development projects shall be reported to the Technology
14 Services and Products Bank for inclusion in the information
15 clearinghouse.

16
17 The Technology Services and Products Bank may not prohibit a
18 school or district school board from selecting specific
19 technology services or products or from independently
20 obtaining the lowest price. A school or a district school
21 board may select the technology solution that most closely
22 aligns with its educational technology plan, the educational
23 philosophy of the school or district school board, and the
24 technology capability thresholds established by the Department
25 of Education.

26 (6) TECHNOLOGY FUNDING.--Beginning with the 2001-2002
27 school year, district school boards shall distribute to
28 schools the funds received for public school technology on the
29 basis of the educational technology component of the school
30 improvement plan pursuant to s. 230.23(16) and this section.
31 To receive funding, a proposed project must be in a school

1 that has achieved the appropriate technology capability
2 threshold for the proposed project, and the proposed project
3 must be consistent with both the district educational
4 technology plan and the state educational technology plan. In
5 addition, the proposal must describe how the project will
6 assist in improving student performance. Preference for
7 funding shall be given to schools that are designated as
8 performance grade category "D" or "F," pursuant to s. 229.57.
9 Preference may be given to a school that has matched the
10 request with other funds and private sector contributions to
11 the maximum extent possible.

12 (7) REPORTS.--Beginning January 1, 2001, the
13 Commissioner of Education shall make an annual report to the
14 Legislature within 60 days prior to the beginning of the
15 regular legislative session. The report shall include:

16 (a) A summary of the status of the Educational
17 Technology Program, including a description of the technology
18 capability thresholds developed according to this section, and
19 the status of school achievement of the capability thresholds.

20 (b) Recommendations to improve the efficiency and
21 promote the utilization of educational technology.

22 (8) EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY GROUP.--There is
23 created the Educational Technology Advisory Group which shall
24 advise the Department of Education in developing and annually
25 updating the state educational technology plan according to
26 this section. The advisory group shall consist of the
27 following 10 members, who shall not be elected officials:

28 (a) Three members appointed by the Governor, one of
29 whom shall serve as chair of the study group, and one of whom
30 shall be a principal from a school that is active in the area
31 of technology.

1 (b) Three members appointed by the Commissioner of
2 Education, one of whom shall be a teacher who is actively
3 engaged in integrating educational technology into daily
4 teaching and learning.

5 (c) Two members appointed by the President of the
6 Senate.

7 (d) Two members appointed by the Speaker of the House
8 of Representatives.

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10 Each member must possess knowledge, skills, or experience
11 relating to technology. The Governor, the Commissioner of
12 Education, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the
13 House of Representatives must each appoint one member who has
14 substantial business experience in the private sector relating
15 to the technology industry. Each appointed member of the
16 advisory group shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing
17 official. Members of the advisory group shall serve without
18 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for per diem and travel
19 in accordance with s. 112.061. A student selected by the
20 superintendent of schools of the district in which the
21 advisory group is meeting may be invited to attend and observe
22 the meeting. The advisory group shall meet at the call of the
23 commissioner. The location of each meeting of the advisory
24 group may vary and shall be determined by the commissioner.

25 Section 2. Section 229.05371, Florida Statutes, is
26 amended to read:

27 229.05371 ~~Pilot program~~ Scholarships to public or
28 private school of choice for students with disabilities.--

29 (1) SCHOLARSHIP ~~PILOT~~ PROGRAM.--There is established a
30 ~~pilot~~ program, which is separate and distinct from the
31 Opportunity Scholarship Program, ~~in the Sarasota school~~

1 ~~district,~~to provide scholarships to a public or private
2 school of choice for students with disabilities whose academic
3 progress in at least two areas has not met expected levels for
4 the previous year, as determined by the student's individual
5 education plan. Student participation in the ~~pilot~~ program is
6 limited to 5 percent of the students with disabilities in the
7 school district during the first year, 10 percent of students
8 with disabilities during the second year, ~~and~~ 20 percent of
9 students with disabilities during the third year, and no caps
10 in subsequent years. The following applies to the ~~pilot~~
11 program:

12 (a) To be eligible to participate in the ~~pilot~~
13 program, a private school must meet all requirements of s.
14 229.0537(4), except for the accreditation requirements of s.
15 229.0537(4)(f). For purposes of the ~~pilot~~ program,
16 notification under s. 229.0537(4)(b) must be separate from the
17 notification under the Opportunity Scholarship Program.

18 (b) The school district ~~that participates in the pilot~~
19 ~~program~~ must comply with the requirements in s.
20 229.0537(3)(a)2., (c), and (d).

21 (c) The amount of the scholarship in the ~~pilot~~ program
22 shall be equal to the amount the student would have received
23 under the Florida Education Finance Program in the public
24 school to which he or she is assigned.

25 (d) To be eligible for a scholarship under the ~~pilot~~
26 program, a student or parent must:

27 1. Comply with the eligibility criteria in s.
28 229.0537(2)(b) and all provisions of s. 229.0537 which apply
29 to students with disabilities;

30 2. For the school year immediately prior to the year
31 in which the scholarship will be in effect, have documented

1 the student's failure to meet specific performance levels
2 identified in the individual education plan; or, absent
3 specific performance levels identified in the individual
4 education plan, the student must have performed below grade
5 level on state or local assessments and the parent must
6 believe that the student is not progressing adequately toward
7 the goals in the individual education plan; and

8 3. Have requested the scholarship prior to the time at
9 which the number of valid requests exceeds the district's cap
10 for the year in which the scholarship will be awarded.

11 (2) The provisions of s. 229.0537(6) and (8) shall
12 apply to the ~~pilot~~ program authorized in this section. This
13 ~~pilot~~ program is not intended to affect the eligibility of the
14 state or school district to receive federal funds for students
15 with disabilities.

16 Section 3. Section 239.515, Florida Statutes, is
17 created to read:

18 239.515 College Fast Start Program.--

19 (1) There is established a College Fast Start Program
20 to increase the number of students with disabilities in grades
21 6 through 12 who are admitted to and successfully complete an
22 associate in arts degree or an associate in science degree or
23 a workforce development program. The goal of the program is
24 the completion of a degree or occupational completion points
25 by, and placement into competitive employment of, students who
26 were identified as having a disability, in accordance with the
27 requirements of chapter 6A-6, Florida Administrative Code,
28 prior to their senior year in high school and who otherwise
29 would be unlikely to seek admission to a community college,
30 state university, or independent postsecondary vocational
31 institution without special support and recruitment efforts.

1 As part of the College Fast Start Program, the Florida
2 Governor's Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens,
3 in cooperation with community colleges, independent
4 postsecondary institutions, high schools, businesses, and
5 agencies serving youth with disabilities, shall sponsor
6 programs to develop leadership skills, career counseling, and
7 motivation and shall provide grants for internships to further
8 prepare students with disabilities for postsecondary education
9 and employment opportunities.

10 (2) As used in this section:

11 (a) "The alliance" means the Florida Governor's
12 Alliance for the Employment of Disabled Citizens.

13 (b) "Program participant" means a community college,
14 public university, independent postsecondary institution, high
15 school, agency serving youth with disabilities, or a
16 consortium of the above.

17 (3) To apply to participate in the College Fast Start
18 Program, a potential program participant must submit a
19 proposal to the Florida Governor's Alliance for the Employment
20 of Disabled Citizens. Each proposal must contain the following
21 information:

22 (a) A statement of purpose, which includes a
23 description of the need for, and the results expected from,
24 the proposed program.

25 (b) An identification of the service area which names
26 the schools to be served and provides community and school
27 demographics on the number and types of students with
28 disabilities and the number of high school graduates within
29 the area with a disability.

30 (c) An identification of existing programs for
31 providing employment training for persons with disabilities.

1 (d) A description of the proposed training and
2 modifications needed to accommodate students who would
3 participate in the program. At least 40 percent of the
4 students participating in any one year must be in grades 6
5 through 9.

6 (e) A description of the program activities, which
7 must support the following goals:

8 1. To motivate students to pursue a postsecondary
9 education.

10 2. To develop students' basic learning and leadership
11 skills.

12 3. To develop collaboration with the STARS program.

13 (f) An evaluation component that provides for the
14 collection, maintenance, retrieval, and analysis of the data
15 required by this section.

16 (4) The alliance shall consider proposals to determine
17 which proposals to implement as programs that will strengthen
18 the educational motivation and preparation of students with
19 disabilities to seek postsecondary education or job training.
20 In selecting proposals for approval, the alliance shall give
21 preference to:

22 (a) Proposals submitted by a postsecondary institution
23 and a business partner that include innovative approaches,
24 provide a great variety of activities, and interact with
25 business and industry in the development of the learning
26 experience.

27 (b) A program that will use institutional, federal, or
28 private resources to supplement state appropriations.

29 (c) Proposals that demonstrate commitment to the
30 program by proposing to match the grant funds equally in cash
31 or services, with cash being the preferred contribution.

1 (d) Proposals that demonstrate an interest in cultural
2 diversity and that address the unmet regional employment needs
3 of varying communities.

4 (e) A program that identifies potential student
5 participants from among students who are not already enrolled
6 in similar programs that assist students with disabilities.

7 (f) A program that includes a parental involvement
8 component.

9 (5) Program applicants that are approved to
10 participate in the program must implement procedures which
11 provide consistent contact with students from the point at
12 which the student is selected to participate in the program
13 until he or she enrolls in a postsecondary education
14 institution. These procedures must assist students in
15 selecting courses required for graduation from high school and
16 must include occupational forecasting for future job
17 availability and requirements for those positions.
18 Institutions that participate must provide on-campus academic
19 or job training activities, job profiling and career
20 counseling activities during summer vacation, and
21 opportunities for interacting with business leaders and
22 employers, mentors, tutors, or role models. Each program
23 participant is encouraged to use its resources to meet program
24 objectives. Each program participant must establish an
25 advisory committee composed of high school and middle school
26 personnel and business leaders to provide advice and
27 assistance in implementing the program.

28 (6) An advisory council shall review each proposal and
29 recommend to the alliance an order of priority for funding the
30 proposals. The advisory council shall consist of the following
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1 10 members and shall designate a meeting facilitator from
2 among the members:

3 (a) Three persons with disabilities, appointed by the
4 Governor.

5 (b) Two representatives of private or community-based
6 organizations, one each appointed by the President of the
7 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

8 (c) One representative of the State University System,
9 appointed by the chair of the Board of Regents.

10 (d) One representative of the Community College
11 System, appointed by the chair of the State Board of Community
12 Colleges.

13 (e) One representative of the Independent Colleges and
14 Universities of Florida, appointed by the president of the
15 Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida.

16 (f) One representative of a public school district,
17 appointed by the Commissioner of Education.

18 (g) One representative of the Postsecondary Education
19 Planning Commission, appointed by the chair of the commission.

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21 Each member shall be appointed for a 3-year, staggered term of
22 office. Members may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

23 A vacancy must be filled with a person of the same status as
24 the original appointee who shall serve for the remainder of
25 the term. Members are entitled to per diem and travel expenses
26 as provided in s. 112.061 while performing council duties.

27 (7) Funding for the College Fast Start Program shall
28 be provided annually in the General Appropriations Act. From
29 these funds, an annual allocation shall be provided to the
30 alliance to conduct the program. Approved programs must be
31 funded competitively according to the following methodology:

1 (a) Eighty percent of funds appropriated annually to
2 the College Fast Start Program must be distributed as grants
3 to projects that include, at the minimum:

4 1. A summer business internship program.

5 2. A minimum number of hours of academic instructional
6 and developmental activities, career counseling, and personal
7 counseling.

8 (b) The remaining 20 percent of funds appropriated
9 annually may be used by the Florida Governor's Alliance for
10 the Employment of Disabled Citizens for college preparatory
11 leadership training programs.

12 (c) Subject to legislative appropriations, funds for
13 the continuation of projects that satisfy the minimum
14 requirements shall be increased each year by the same
15 percentage as the rate of inflation. Projects funded for 3
16 consecutive years must have a cumulative institutional cash
17 match of not less than 50 percent of the total cost of the
18 project over the 3-year period. Any College Fast Start Program
19 operating for 3 years which does not provide the minimum 50
20 percent institutional cash match shall not be considered for
21 continued funding.

22 (8) On or before February 15 of each year, each
23 participant or consortium of participants shall submit to the
24 alliance an interim report of program expenditures and
25 participant information as requested by the alliance.

26 (9) On or before October 15 of each year, each program
27 participant shall submit to the alliance an end-of-the-year
28 report on the effectiveness of its participation in the
29 program during the preceding fiscal year. The end-of-the-year
30 report must include, without limitation:

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1 (a) An itemization of program expenditures by funding
2 category, including: state grant funds, institutional
3 matching contributions disaggregated by cash and in-kind
4 services, and outside funding sources disaggregated by cash
5 and in-kind services.

6 (b) The number of students participating by grade
7 level, gender, race, and disability.

8 (c) The student identification number and social
9 security number, if available, the name of the public school
10 attended, and the gender, ethnicity, grade level, and grade
11 point average of each student participant at the time of entry
12 into the program.

13 (d) The grade point average, grade, and promotion
14 status of each student participant at the end of the academic
15 year and notification of suspension or expulsion of a
16 participant, if applicable.

17 (e) The number and percentage of high school
18 participants who satisfactorily complete 2 sequential years of
19 a foreign language and Levels 2 and 3 mathematics and science
20 courses.

21 (f) The number and percentage of participants eligible
22 for high school graduation who receive a standard high school
23 diploma or a high school equivalency diploma pursuant to s.
24 229.814.

25 (g) The number and percentage of 12th grade
26 participants who are accepted for enrollment and who enroll in
27 a postsecondary institution and the program of study in which
28 they are enrolled.

29 (h) The number of participants who receive
30 scholarships, grant aid, and work-study awards.

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1 (i) The number and percentage of participants who
2 enroll in a public postsecondary institution and who fail to
3 achieve a passing score, as defined in State Board of
4 Education rule, on college placement tests pursuant to s.
5 240.117.

6 (j) The number and percentage of participants who
7 enroll in a postsecondary institution and have a minimum
8 cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, or its
9 equivalent, by the end of the second semester.

10 (k) A statement of how the program addresses the three
11 program goals identified in paragraph (3)(e).

12 (l) A brief description and analysis of program
13 characteristics and activities critical to program success.

14 (m) A description of the cooperation received from
15 other units, organizations, businesses, or agencies.

16 (n) An explanation of the program's outcomes,
17 including data related to student performance on the measures
18 provided for in paragraph (3)(f).

19
20 The Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, in
21 consultation with the alliance and the Department of
22 Education, shall develop specifications and procedures for the
23 collection and transmission of the data.

24 (10) By February 15 of each year, the alliance shall
25 submit to the Governor, the President of the Senate, the
26 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Commissioner
27 of Education a report that evaluates the effectiveness of the
28 College Fast Start Program. The report must be based upon
29 information provided by program participants, the Board of
30 Regents, the State Board of Community Colleges, and the
31 Division of Workforce Development pursuant to subsections (1)

1 and (7). To the extent feasible, the performance of College
2 Fast Start Program participants must be compared to the
3 performance of comparable cohorts of students in public school
4 and postsecondary education.

5 Section 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a
6 law.

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