

By Senator Meek

36-724-01

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; creating a  
3           program within the Department of Education to  
4           reduce class size in schools with students from  
5           low-income families; providing for certain  
6           district school boards to enter into an  
7           achievement guarantee contract with the  
8           department; requiring a reduction in the size  
9           of classes in such schools for certain grades  
10          during specified school years; providing  
11          additional requirements under an achievement  
12          guarantee contract; requiring that the district  
13          school board implement a plan of staff  
14          development; requiring evaluations; requiring  
15          that a contract establish performance  
16          objectives for academic achievement; requiring  
17          a review committee to evaluate a school's  
18          progress in implementing an achievement  
19          guarantee contract; providing for the  
20          Department of Education to provide additional  
21          funds to a district school board that enters  
22          into a contract; authorizing the department to  
23          adopt rules; requiring an evaluation and annual  
24          report to the Governor and the Legislature;  
25          providing an effective date.

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

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29           Section 1. Achievement guarantee contracts.--  
30           (1) As used in this section, the term:

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1        (a) "Class size" means the number of students assigned  
2 to a regular classroom on the 3rd Friday of September.

3        (b) "Department" means the Department of Education.

4        (c) "Low-income student" means a student whose family  
5 income is at or below 125 percent of the federally established  
6 poverty level.

7        (2) The district school board of any school district  
8 in which a school in the previous school year had an  
9 enrollment of 50 percent or more low-income students may enter  
10 into an achievement guarantee contract with the department as  
11 provided in this section. If more than one school in a  
12 district is eligible to participate in the program, the  
13 district school board shall apply on behalf of the school with  
14 the largest number of low-income students in grades K through  
15 1.

16        (3) Any school that enters into an achievement  
17 guarantee contract with the department must:

18        (a) Reduce the class size to 15 students for:

19        1. The 2001-2002 school year, in at least grades K and

20 1.

21        2. The 2002-2003 school year, in at least grades K to

22 2.

23        3. The 2003-2004 school year, in at least grades K to

24 3.

25        (b) Keep the school open every day from early in the  
26 morning until late in the day, as specified in the contract.

27        (c) Collaborate with community organizations to make  
28 educational and recreational opportunities, as well as a  
29 variety of community and social services, available in the  
30 school to all residents of the school district.

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1           (d) Provide a rigorous academic curriculum designed to  
2 improve academic achievement. The district school board, in  
3 consultation with the department and the school's teachers and  
4 administrators, shall review the school's curriculum to  
5 determine how well it promotes academic achievement.

6           (e) Develop a 1-year program for all newly hired  
7 teachers to assist them in making the transition from their  
8 previous employment or school to their current employment.

9           (f) Provide sufficient time for teachers to  
10 collaborate and prepare class plans.

11           (g) Require that each teacher and administrator submit  
12 to the district school board a plan for professional  
13 development which focuses on how the individual will improve  
14 student academic achievement. The plan must include a method  
15 by which the individual will be evaluated on the success of  
16 his or her efforts from a variety of sources.

17           (h) Regularly review staff development plans to  
18 determine if they are effective in improving student academic  
19 achievement.

20           (i) Establish an evaluation process for professional  
21 staff members which:

22           1. Identifies individual strengths and weaknesses.

23           2. Clearly describes areas in need of improvement.

24           3. Includes a support plan that provides opportunities  
25 for staff members to learn and improve.

26           4. Systematically documents performance in accordance  
27 with the plan.

28           5. Allows professional staff members to comment on and  
29 contribute to revisions in the evaluation process.

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1           6. Provides for the dismissal of professional staff  
2 members whose failure to learn and improve has been documented  
3 over a 2-year period.

4           (4) Each achievement guarantee contract must include a  
5 description of each of the following:

6           (a) How the school will implement each of the elements  
7 required under subsection (3), including any alternative class  
8 configurations for specific educational activities which may  
9 be used to meet the class-size requirement.

10           (b) The method that the school district will use to  
11 evaluate the academic achievement of the students enrolled in  
12 the school.

13           (c) The school's performance objectives for the  
14 academic achievement of the students enrolled in the school  
15 and the means that will be used to evaluate success in  
16 attaining the objectives. Performance objectives must include:

17           1. Where applicable, improvement in the scores on the  
18 examinations specified by the department.

19           2. The attainment of any educational goals adopted by  
20 the district school board.

21           3. Professional development with respect to improving  
22 student academic achievement.

23           4. Methods by which the school involves students,  
24 parents or guardians, or other residents of the school  
25 district in decisions that affect the school.

26           (d) Any law or rule that is waived under the  
27 provisions of a contract.

28           (e) The means by which the department will monitor  
29 compliance with the terms of the contract.

30           (5) The Commissioner of Education, the chairpersons of  
31 the education committees in the Senate and the House of

1 Representatives, and the person chiefly responsible for the  
2 evaluation under subsection (8) shall review the progress of  
3 each school that has entered into an achievement guarantee  
4 contract with the department. The committee may recommend to  
5 the department that the department terminate a contract if the  
6 committee finds that the district school board has violated  
7 the contract or if the school has made insufficient progress  
8 toward achieving its performance objectives under subsection  
9 (4). The department may terminate the contract upon the  
10 recommendation of the committee.

11 (6) The department shall pay to each district school  
12 board that enters into a contract with the department under  
13 this section an amount that may not exceed \$2,000, multiplied  
14 by the number of low-income students enrolled in the grades  
15 eligible for funding in that district.

16 (7) The department shall adopt rules necessary to  
17 administer this section.

18 (8) The department shall arrange for an evaluation of  
19 this program and shall provide an annual report to the  
20 Governor and the Legislature.

21 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

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24 SENATE SUMMARY

25 Provides for the school board in a district that has a  
26 school with an enrollment of 50 percent or more students  
27 from low-income families to enter into a contract with  
28 the Department of Education to reduce the class size in  
29 that school. Provides for additional funds to be provided  
30 to the district to implement the achievement guarantee  
31 contract. Requires that the district school board  
implement a plan of staff development and evaluation.  
Requires performance objectives for academic achievement.  
Provides for a review committee to evaluate a school's  
progress in implementing an achievement guarantee  
contract. Requires that the Department of Education  
provide for an evaluation of the program and report to  
the Governor and Legislature. (See bill for details.)