

By Senator Holzendorf

2-482A-01

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to education; creating the  
3           "Education Investment Act"; providing  
4           definitions; providing legislative intent for  
5           certain investments and enhancements;  
6           authorizing certain programs; authorizing  
7           improved curriculum; requiring improved  
8           counseling ratios in certain schools;  
9           authorizing a test-preparation program for  
10          certain students; providing for separation of  
11          open-enrollment programs within schools for  
12          certain purposes; authorizing expanded student  
13          assistance programs at universities;  
14          authorizing fee waivers for students and former  
15          students of certain schools; providing for  
16          rulemaking by the Department of Education;  
17          authorizing state-funded test-preparation  
18          courses for certain students; providing an  
19          effective date.

20  
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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23           Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Education  
24 Investment Act."

25           Section 2. The Legislature finds that low-performing  
26 high schools are those that receive students from  
27 low-performing elementary and middle schools. Even the top  
28 graduates from those high schools are likely to experience  
29 difficulty in university education. Therefore, the Legislature  
30 intends to invest academic resources in students attending  
31 low-performing schools at all levels. An adequate return on

1 the investment will be earned if the top 20 percent of each  
2 high school's graduating class gains academic skills  
3 sufficient to experience success in postsecondary education.

4 (1) To identify the schools that will benefit from the  
5 resource investments provided in this act, the Department of  
6 Education shall determine which schools having a grade  
7 designation of "C" are at risk of falling beneath that  
8 designation. As used in this act, the term "low-performing  
9 school" means each school that has a grade designation of "C"  
10 and is at risk of receiving a lower grade, as determined by  
11 the Department of Education, and each school that has a grade  
12 designation of "D" or "F."

13 (2) The Department of Education shall determine which  
14 elementary and middle schools provide the majority of students  
15 to low-performing high schools. As used in this act, the term  
16 "feeder-pattern school" refers to any elementary or middle  
17 school the former students of which predominantly enroll in a  
18 low-performing high school, as determined by the Department of  
19 Education.

20 Section 3. The Legislature intends to invest resources  
21 to enhance the programs of low-performing high schools and  
22 their feeder-pattern elementary and middle schools in the core  
23 disciplines of mathematics, language arts, and writing.

24 (1) For a high school, these enhancements may consist  
25 of providing:

- 26 (a) A longer school day;  
27 (b) A longer school year;  
28 (c) Consultants or mentors to help teachers improve or  
29 adapt the curriculum to better meet the needs of students; and  
30 (d) Additional teachers to reduce class size.

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1           (2) For a feeder-pattern school for a low-performing  
2 high school, these enhancements may include:

3           (a) Increased funding to expand special reading  
4 instruction from grade levels 1-3 into grades 4-8.

5           (b) Enhanced instruction in mathematics and writing  
6 skills.

7           (c) After-school programs to provide homework  
8 assistance, recreational reading, or other activities that  
9 will increase a student's association with adults or older  
10 students as positive role models for learning.

11  
12 The Department of Education shall oversee any program of  
13 curriculum enhancement for low-performing high schools and  
14 their feeder-pattern schools and shall adopt measures of  
15 productivity and accountability to judge the success of the  
16 program. For instance, the department should assure that, in a  
17 high school with such a program, a teacher in the core subject  
18 areas does not have responsibility for more than 150 students  
19 per day.

20           (3) The department may assist any school the program  
21 of which is unlikely to produce an adequate return on the  
22 investment provided for under this act.

23           (4) Annually, the department shall report to the  
24 Legislature the number of programs implemented with funds  
25 provided for under this act, the types of assistance provided,  
26 and the results of the productivity and accountability  
27 measures established.

28           Section 4. The Department of Education shall evaluate  
29 the ability of low-performing high schools and their  
30 feeder-pattern schools adequately to counsel students who  
31 would benefit from enrollment in honors courses,

1 advanced-placement courses, dual-enrollment courses, and the  
2 college preparatory courses required for university admission  
3 to the freshman class.

4 (1) Each school district that contains a  
5 low-performing high school shall annually report to the  
6 department the college preparatory, advanced-placement,  
7 honors, or dual-enrollment courses completed by students who  
8 are in the top 20 percent of each class. The department shall  
9 analyze the reports and determine which districts require  
10 intervention in the form of technical assistance or an  
11 enhanced allocation that allows the district to employ or  
12 contract for the services of additional counselors.

13 (2) If a low-performing high school has a greater  
14 ratio of students per counselor than another high school in  
15 the district, the ratio must be lowered by employing  
16 additional counselors. In a district that has only one high  
17 school, the comparison must be made with adjacent districts.  
18 The ratio of students per counselor at a low-performing high  
19 school may be no higher than the ratio at the highest  
20 performing high school in the district or adjacent districts.

21 (3) Beginning in the 2001-2002 school year, each  
22 school district that contains a low-performing high school  
23 shall compute and report to the Department of Education the  
24 following accountability measures related to college  
25 preparatory courses:

26 (a) The percentage of increase in the numbers of  
27 guidance counselors at the middle and high school level who  
28 have completed a seminar on advising students concerning  
29 college.

30 (b) The percentage of increase in the numbers of  
31 students in grades 6-12 who have received a

1 college-preparation curriculum audit that also included a  
2 7-year plan for courses needed to satisfy the 19-credit  
3 admission standard.

4 (c) The number of low-performing high schools and  
5 their feeder-pattern schools which employ at least one  
6 instructional coach per 500 students.

7 (d) A comparison of students in low-achieving high  
8 schools and their feeder-pattern schools with schools of  
9 comparable size which earned a grade of "A." The comparison  
10 must include the percentages of change (increase or decrease)  
11 in the gap between students at each type of school who:

12 1. Enroll in and complete with a grade of "C" or  
13 better gatekeeper courses by grade level. Gatekeeper courses  
14 include pre-algebra in grade 8 and English, mathematics,  
15 science, social studies, and foreign language in each grade  
16 from grade 6 through grade 12.

17 2. Enroll in and complete with a grade of "C" or  
18 better in honors, advanced-placement, and dual-enrollment  
19 courses.

20 3. Earn college credit by passing a dual-enrollment  
21 course or passing an advanced-placement test with a score of 3  
22 or better.

23 Section 5. (1) The Legislature intends to assist  
24 students whose initial sitting for the Preliminary Scholastic  
25 Assessment Test provides evidence of poor test-taking skills.

26 (a) The Department of Education and each school  
27 district shall use PSAT scores of students in low-performing  
28 high schools to adopt priorities for identifying students who  
29 could most benefit from a course designed to prepare students  
30 for taking the Scholastic Assessment Test of the College  
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1 Entrance Examination or an equivalent test in the American  
2 College Testing Program.

3 (b) The department may adopt rules or policies  
4 establishing criteria for selecting students for a  
5 test-preparation program, and the criteria may include  
6 financial need, teacher recommendations, or other measures of  
7 the student's ability to benefit.

8 (2) If funding for a test-preparation program is  
9 provided in the annual General Appropriations Act, the  
10 department shall develop a test-preparation program or  
11 initiate a grant process to contract with a provider of such  
12 programs. If the department selects private providers, the  
13 selection must be based upon evidence of previous success,  
14 especially with low-achieving students. The funds provided  
15 must be allocated to school districts and used to provide  
16 test-preparation courses to students who attend low-performing  
17 high schools and whose scores on the PSAT indicate that they  
18 could benefit from such preparation.

19 Section 6. Any self-contained public education program  
20 located within a high school constitutes a separate school for  
21 purposes of implementing the "Talented Twenty Percent"  
22 component of the state's policy for university admissions. An  
23 open-enrollment magnet program is, therefore, a school for  
24 purposes of this act and the identification of the "Talented  
25 Twenty Percent." Such a program must determine its top-ranked  
26 20 percent in each graduating class, and the high school that  
27 contains the program shall separately identify its top-ranked  
28 graduates. Both groups of graduates are eligible for any  
29 benefits provided by policy, rule, or law which are to be  
30 awarded on the basis of their standing.

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1           Section 7. The Legislature intends to improve the  
2 ability of public universities to expand undergraduate student  
3 recruitment, retention, and support services provided to  
4 students from low-performing high schools.

5           (1) Each university that enrolls students from  
6 low-performing high schools because of the "Talented Twenty  
7 Percent" admissions policy shall develop student services to  
8 assist those students, if funding for such services is  
9 provided in the annual General Appropriations Act. These  
10 services may include admitting students early for orientation  
11 programs, providing mentors or additional opportunities for  
12 personal advisement, and conducting meetings to identify  
13 additional opportunities for assistance.

14           (2) Any funds provided for this purpose must be used  
15 to enhance any similar program funded by the Federal  
16 Government or the university and must address the unique needs  
17 of students admitted because of the policy who would not have  
18 met the admissions standards prior to implementation of the  
19 policy.

20           Section 8. The Legislature intends to provide waivers  
21 of matriculation fees for residents of this state who begin a  
22 post-baccalaureate-degree program within a public state  
23 university within 2 years after graduating from a public or  
24 independent university in this state and who received a Pell  
25 Grant or a subsidized Stafford Loan as an undergraduate  
26 student.

27           (1) During the first 3 years of the fee-waiver  
28 program, priority must be given to students who also graduated  
29 from a high school that was low-performing either when the  
30 student graduated from high school or when the student  
31 graduated from college.

1           (2) If funded in the annual General Appropriations  
2 Act, the fee waivers must be distributed to students  
3 identified by the university in which the student wishes to  
4 enroll.

5           (3) The Department of Education shall adopt rules for  
6 allocating an equitable number of fee waivers to each  
7 university. If funds are not adequate to provide fee waivers  
8 to each student whose university makes a request on his or her  
9 behalf, the university shall limit the selected students to  
10 the number authorized by the department, based upon  
11 considerations that include the student's need and the low  
12 performance of the student's high school.

13           Section 9. The Legislature intends to provide  
14 preparation courses for the Law School Admission Test to  
15 aspiring law-school students who are graduates of a state  
16 university and of a low-performing high school.

17           (1) If funds are provided for this program in the  
18 General Appropriations Act, each university shall identify and  
19 inform eligible students of this opportunity. Eligible  
20 students are students in each incoming group of admissions and  
21 in each graduating class who are graduates of a low-performing  
22 high school.

23           (2) First priority for a free course is for students  
24 who enrolled in the university as freshmen, and other  
25 graduates may be included if funds are available.

26           (3) A student is eligible if his or her former high  
27 school was low-performing either in the year the student  
28 graduated from high school or in the year the student  
29 graduated from college. However, a student who graduates from  
30 the university more than 6 years after graduating from high  
31 school is eligible only if his or her high school was

1 low-performing in the year of the student's graduation from  
2 high school.

3 Section 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2001.

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6 SENATE SUMMARY

7 Creates the "Education Investment Act." Provides  
8 legislative intent. Provides for programs and fee waivers  
for students of certain schools. See bill for details.

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