

By Senator Klein

30-1685-04

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to accreditation requirements
3 for nonpublic schools; requiring nonpublic
4 schools to petition for accreditation, as
5 specified, in order to participate in statewide
6 scholarship programs; providing a deadline for
7 beginning the accreditation process and for
8 undergoing an onsite accreditation visitation;
9 providing for a grace period in which a school
10 may correct violations of accreditation
11 standards; providing consequences of
12 noncompliance with such standards; providing
13 conditions to reregistering to participate in
14 statewide scholarship programs; providing an
15 effective date.

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

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19 Section 1. Accreditation requirements for nonpublic
20 schools that participate in statewide scholarship programs.21 (1) A nonpublic school that desires to participate in
22 statewide scholarship programs must petition for accreditation
23 to an accrediting association that is recognized by the
24 Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools or by
25 another nonpublic-school organization that reviews an
26 accrediting association's philosophy and objectives,
27 curriculum, school plant and facilities, faculty and
28 administrative staff, school calendar and class hours,
29 transfer of student records, financial records, library and
30 media center, health and safety practices, nondiscriminatory
31 policies, and conformity with state laws and rules and that

1 has accreditation procedures that include a self-study, an
2 onsite visitation, and accreditation designation and that
3 requires periodic reports. Such a school may establish an
4 accrediting association and petition for membership with the
5 National Council for Private Schools Accreditation (NCPSA),
6 which validates the school's accrediting association. NCPSA
7 members may also petition for accreditation by the Commission
8 of International and Trans-Regional Accreditation.

9 (2) Beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, all
10 nonpublic schools participating in statewide scholarship
11 programs must be in an accreditation process and, by the
12 2007-2008 school year, must undergo an onsite accreditation
13 visitation. If a school is found to be in violation of any
14 applicable accrediting standards, the school has a 2-year
15 grace period in which to correct any violation. A school that
16 has not corrected the violation by the end of the grace period
17 is ineligible to participate in statewide scholarship programs
18 during the following school year. After a 1-year period
19 expires, the school may reregister if the applicable
20 accreditation association verifies that the school is in
21 compliance with all applicable accrediting standards.

22 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.

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25 SENATE SUMMARY

26 Requires nonpublic schools to petition for accreditation,
27 as specified, in order to participate in statewide
28 scholarship programs. Provides a deadline for beginning
29 the accreditation process and for undergoing an onsite
30 accreditation visitation. Provides for a grace period in
31 which a school may correct violations of accreditation
standards. Provides consequences of noncompliance with
such standards. Provides conditions to reregistering to
participate in statewide scholarship programs.