

By Senator Thompson

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to a community schools initiative;
3 requiring the Department of Education to implement the
4 Reigniting Education Achievement with Coordinated Help
5 (REACH) Program as a public-private partnership in the
6 lowest-performing public schools; authorizing funding;
7 specifying services to be offered with the goal of
8 improving student academic achievement; providing
9 requirements for implementation of the program;
10 requiring the department to submit a report to the
11 Legislature at the conclusion of the program;
12 requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules
13 to administer this program; providing an effective
14 date.

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

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18 Section 1. Community schools initiative; Reigniting
19 Education Achievement with Coordinated Help (REACH) Program.-
20 (1) Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, the Department
21 of Education shall establish a 4-year community schools
22 initiative by implementing the Reigniting Education Achievement
23 with Coordinated Help (REACH) Program in three to five of the
24 state's lowest-performing traditional public schools with a
25 large percentage of low-income, at-risk students. Program
26 funding may not exceed \$900,000 for the initial year of the
27 program and each subsequent year unless increased by an act of
28 the Legislature. The Commissioner of Education shall establish
29 criteria for participation in the program, including school,

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30 health, and community services that must be offered. A school
31 interested in participating in the program must submit a letter
32 of interest to the Commissioner of Education by July 15, 2015.

33 (2) The program shall consist of a public-private
34 partnership to supply wrap-around services to students attending
35 the schools, including, but not limited to, tutorial and after-
36 school programs, student counseling, nutrition education, health
37 and dental services, parental counseling, and adult education.

38 (3) The program shall focus on improving academic
39 achievement through a holistic approach in which students
40 receive the academic, medical, nutritional, and social support
41 they need to develop strong literacy and mathematical skills, as
42 well as the qualities of responsibility, self-control,
43 attentiveness, and cooperation. The program shall make available
44 support services that encourage healthy family dynamics and
45 home-school connections by providing parents with skills and
46 opportunities to get involved in their children's education and
47 help their children succeed in school. The program shall be
48 based on the following research-driven elements that lead to
49 student success: improving student achievement and learning,
50 leveraging community assets and improving school and community
51 collaboration, improving staff capacity and effectiveness, and
52 developing family and community partnerships.

53 (4) The program shall be implemented as follows:

54 (a) During the first year of operation, a school shall
55 build partnerships with such entities as the school district,
56 the local teachers' union, parents, social service agencies,
57 medical and dental professionals, community and civic groups,
58 and businesses. The school shall also plan services, advertise

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59 the program, establish baseline data, begin offering the
60 services, and report costs and benefits.

61 (b) During the second, third, and fourth years of the
62 program, the school shall continue the partnerships; continue
63 offering the services; seek input and refine services; monitor
64 the academic, health, and nutritional progress of students and
65 families; and report progress, costs, and benefits.

66 (5) At the conclusion of the program, the Department of
67 Education shall submit to the President of the Senate and the
68 Speaker of the House of Representatives a report that must
69 include information on successful practices identified and their
70 impact on student performance and success, and include a
71 recommendation for continuing or terminating the program.

72 (6) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
73 administer this section.

74 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.