

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Fiscal Policy

BILL: SB 1564

INTRODUCER: Senator Stewart

SUBJECT: Year-round School Pilot Program

DATE: April 24, 2023

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Sabitsch</u>	<u>Bouck</u>	<u>ED</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Gray</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AED</u>	Favorable
3.	<u>Sabitsch</u>	<u>Yeatman</u>	<u>FP</u>	Favorable

I. Summary:

SB 1564 establishes the Year-round School Pilot Program (program) beginning in the 2024-2025 school year. Specifically, the bill creates the program as a four year pilot for the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to assist district school boards in establishing year-round schools and to study the outcomes.

The bill requires the DOE to create an application process that includes certain elements.

The bill requires the DOE to select five school districts for participation in the program and outlines requirements for district school boards participating in the program, which includes submission of specific data to the DOE for an evaluation of the program.

At the conclusion of the program, the bill requires the Commissioner of Education to submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature that includes benefits to students and instructional personnel, barriers to implementation, and recommendation for expansion.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2023.

II. Present Situation:

Year-round Schools in Florida

Florida law requires each district school board to operate all public schools for a term of 180 days or the equivalent on an hourly basis.¹ Each district school board is required to set the opening and closing of schools with the earliest opening date for schools as August 10 of each year.²

¹ Section 1001.42(12)(a), F.S.

² Section 1001.42(4), F.S.

Florida law authorizes year-round-schools.³ For the 2021-2022 school year, there were 16 schools that were identified as year-round schools by the Department of Education (DOE),⁴ most were aimed to serve students in Department of Juvenile Justice facilities or other alternative educational facilities. Charlotte County Public School district operates three elementary schools on year-round calendars. Brevard County Public Schools has one charter school that offers year-round instruction for elementary and middle school grades.

Florida law also provides for extended-school-year (ESY) programs that districts may apply to the Commissioner of Education for funds in order to plan and implement extended-school-year programs in their services areas. These programs allow for extension of the school year to 210 days or more.⁵ An ESY program is specially designed instruction and related services that are provided to a student with a disability beyond the normal school year of the school district, in accordance with the student's individual educational plan (IEP), and at no cost to the parents.⁶

Types of Year-round Calendars

Most year-round schools operate as a “single-track” or “balanced calendar” where the general 180 day school year is spread over the entire year with smaller but more frequent breaks rather than a longer two to three month summer vacation. A common model is the 45/15 version, wherein students attend school for a 45-day period, followed by a 15-day vacation. This cycle repeats four times throughout the school year, taking into account holidays that take place throughout the year.

Some year-round schools have operated on a “multi-track” system whereby scheduling students on different tracks with staggered vacations, administrators could expand the capacity of existing school buildings. Essentially, one of the tracks of students is always on break so that the school can accommodate more students over the course of the year.

From 1999 to 2018 the percentage of U.S. public schools employing year-round calendars fell from about six percent of schools to three percent. Literature characterizes some positive possible outcomes of year-round schools as:

- More frequent and evenly spaced breaks.
- Additional enrichment opportunities during short breaks.
- Less summer learning loss.

The same literature describes the following possible negative outcomes:

- Limited evidence of academic benefits.
- Childcare difficulties.
- Shorter summers.⁷

³ Section 1011.62(1)(q), F.S.

⁴ Email, Keenen Vernon, Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs, Florida Department of Education (Mar. 30, 2023) (on file with Senate Committee Education Pre-K – 12).

⁵ Section 1011.62(1)(r), F.S.

⁶ Rule 6A-6.03028, F.A.C.

⁷ U.S. News and World Report, *Pros and Cons of Year-Round School*, <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/articles/the-pros-and-cons-of-year-round-school-calendars>, (last visited Mar. 30, 2023).

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1564 creates s. 1003.07, F.S., to establish the Year-round School Pilot Program (program) as a four year pilot beginning with the 2025-2025 school year. The program's purpose is to allow the Department of Education (DOE) to assist district school boards in establishing a year-round school program within their service area with a minimum of one elementary school participating. The pilot will study the issues, benefits and schedule options that could be employed across the state.

The bill requires the DOE to create an application process for districts to apply to participate in the program. The DOE is given authority to adopt rules to implement the program. The application process must include a number of elements which include:

- The number of students enrolled in schools that will be part of the program.
- The academic performance of the students in schools enrolled in the program.
- The rate of absenteeism and the tardiness of the students in schools enrolled in the program.
- The commitment of each school's instructional personnel and students to the program.
- An explanation of the benefits of the program.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Education to select five district school boards to participate in the program with an emphasis on having representative districts from a variety of demographics which must include urban, suburban, and rural schools. Program districts will implement either a single-track or multi-track schedule and provide data to the DOE to allow for analysis of the academic and safety benefits of the program, an evaluation of potential barriers for implementation of the program, and strategies for addressing barriers. The evaluation must include the following:

- Issues related to the commitment of personnel and students in the pilot.
- The provision of services during the summer months.
- Parental engagement.
- Coordination with community services.
- Student assessment and progression.
- Issues with transportation.

The bills requires the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) to report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives after the completion of the pilot. The bill includes specific information that must be included in the report as follows:

- The number of students enrolled in the program schools prior, during, and after the program.
- The health, academic, and safety benefits to the students and instructional personnel in the program.
- The barriers to implementation.
- Recommendations from the commissioner on the universal adoption of year-round schools.

The bill takes effect on July 1, 2023.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The fiscal impact to the DOE to oversee and implement the pilot should be minimal and covered by existing resources. There should be no other fiscal impact as long as the districts participating in the pilot has a school schedule that equals 180 days or the hourly equivalent of 180 days.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 1003.07 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
