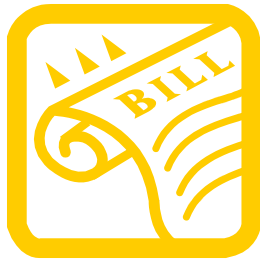


# 2011 Legislative Summary

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## Bills Impacting School Choice Programs

**VPSC Mid-Year Meeting  
July 11-12, 2011  
Florida Department of Education  
Office of Independent Education and  
Parental Choice**

# 2011 Florida Legislative Session

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- Six bills passed that impact School Choice Programs. All took effect July 1, 2011.
  - [HB 1255](#) – Education Accountability
  - [HB 1329](#) – John M. McKay Scholarships
  - [HB 1331](#) – Opportunity Scholarships
  - [HB 7197](#) – Virtual Education
  - [SB 404](#) – Transition-to-adulthood Services
  - [SB 1546](#) – Charter Schools

# HB 1255 – Education Accountability

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- A comprehensive bill that revises various areas of public and private education, including provisions relating to:
  - Opportunity Scholarship Program – defines “school grades” for purposes of this program
  - McKay Scholarships – expands the number of days a student can be in DJJ detention from 15 to 21, without losing the scholarship

# HB 1255 – Education Accountability, cont.

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- Voluntary Prekindergarten Program - requires DOE to approve pre and post tests for VPK students
- Auditory-Oral Education Program – includes, as a school of choice for parents, a school using a program that develops and relies solely on listening skills and uses an implant or assistive hearing device for the purpose of relying on speech and spoken language skills as the method of communication

# HB 1255 – Education Accountability, cont.

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- Special Education Services – includes, for children eligible for the Pre-K program for students with disabilities, services provided by a certified listening and spoken language specialist
- Digital Curriculum – districts may develop curriculum for students in grades 6-12 in order for students to attain competencies in web communications and web design.
- ESE Matrix Levels – requires DOE to review and revise descriptions of support and services

# HB 1329 – John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

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- Expands eligibility for a McKay Scholarship to students with a 504 Plan if:
  - They meet the prior year FTE requirements according to law.
  - The 504 accommodation plan is issued under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
  - The 504 plan issued is valid for **more than 6 months.**

# HB 1329 – John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program

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- ❑ Requires school districts to notify parents of students with 504 plans about the McKay Scholarship by April 1 of each year and/or within 10 days of a 504 plan being issued.
- ❑ States the scholarship amount for a 504 Plan student will be based upon the current student program cost factor generated by the student.

# HB 1331 – Opportunity Scholarships

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- ❑ Changes the definition of a failing school from a school receiving two “F” school grades in a four-year period to a school that receives a “D” or an “F” in the prior year and is in one of the two lowest categories of Differentiated Accountability (DA).
- ❑ Allows the parent to enroll their child in another public school that has available space in any other district *in the state*, and the parent must provide transportation.
- ❑ The Opportunity Scholarship shall remain in force until the student graduates from high school.

# HB 7197 – Virtual Education

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- ❑ Requires each student graduating from high school to complete one on-line course
- ❑ Requires districts to establish multiple opportunities for students to participate in part-time and full-time virtual instruction
- ❑ Authorizes virtual charter schools
- ❑ Requires each charter school governing body to appoint a representative to facilitate parental involvement, provide access to information, assist parents and others with questions and concerns, and resolve disputes

# SB 404 – Transition-to-adulthood Services

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- ❑ Creates the College-Preparatory Boarding Academy Pilot Program to create unique educational opportunities for dependent or at-risk youth
- ❑ Requires the State Board of Education to implement the program

# SB 404 – Transition-to-adulthood Services

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- A child is eligible if he or she is a resident of the state and entitled to attend school in a participating district, is at risk of academic failure, is currently enrolled in grades 5 or 6, is from a family whose income is below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines, and meets one of the following risk factors:
  - The student is in foster care or has been declared an adjudicated dependent by a court
  - The head of household is not the student's custodial parent
  - The student is in a household that receives housing voucher or eligible for public housing assistance
  - A member of the student's immediate family has been incarcerated

# SB 1546 – Charter Schools

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- ❑ Created a definition for “High-performing charter school”
- ❑ Created a definition for “High-performing charter school system”
- ❑ Provides certain privileges for schools or systems attaining “high-performing” status.

# SB 1546 – Charter Schools

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- Requires the charter school governing board to appoint a representative to facilitate parental involvement (also in HB 1255)

The representative:

- Must reside in the school district in which the charter school is located
- May be a governing board member, charter school employee, or individual contracted by the governing board

# SB 1546 – Charter Schools

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- ❑ The representative's contact information must be provided annually in writing to parents and posted prominently on the charter school's website, if a website is maintained by the school.
- ❑ The charter school's governing board must hold at least 2 public meetings per school year in the school's district; meetings must be noticed; and attendees must be provided an opportunity for input during the meeting.
- ❑ The representative appointed by the school's governing board must be physically present at each meeting.

# To find a bill:

Go to <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bills/2011>

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bills/2011>. The browser's address bar and menu bar are visible. The website header includes the Florida Senate logo and navigation links: Home, Senators, Committees, Session, Laws, Media, About, Offices, Reference, and Tracker. A search bar is located at the top right of the page.

The main content area is titled "Senate Bills for 2011 Regular Session" and includes a sub-header: "Bills from sessions prior to 2011 are available on the [Florida Senate archive site](#)." Below this is a "Bill List Filter" section with the following fields:

- Bill Number:
- Search Term:
- Chamber:
- Session:
- Introducer:
- Last Action:

A "Search" button is located below the filter fields. Below the filter section, there is a "Jump To Range:" dropdown menu set to "2-98" and a "Go" button. To the right of the "Go" button are navigation links: "Prev", "1", "2", "3", "4", "5", "6", "7", "8", "9", "10", and "Next".

Below the navigation links, it states "1198 Bills found". At the bottom of the page, there is a table header with the following columns: "NUMBER", "TITLE", "INTRODUCER", "LAST ACTION", and "TRACK BILLS".