

SS HB 2287 -- ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

This bill relates to elementary and secondary education.

MISSOURI EMPOWERMENT SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNTS PROGRAM (Section 135.713)

The bill makes changes to Section 135.713, RSMo, by changing words and phrases including "under" to "pursuant to", "subsequent to" to "after" and "such taxpayer's" to "his or her".

MISSOURI COURSE ACCESS AND VIRTUAL SCHOOL PROGRAM (Section 161.670)

As specified in bill, the average daily attendance of a student who is enrolled full-time in the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program shall be defined as the quotient or the sum of the quotients obtained by dividing the total number of hours attended in a term by the actual number of hours that the virtual program was in session. Such attendance shall be calculated by the virtual provider and provided to the host school district for submission to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Host districts that enroll one or more full-time virtual school students shall receive an amount of state aid specified in the bill for such students on a monthly basis.

The bill provides that students who reside in Missouri may enroll in the virtual program of their choice. Provisions of current law regarding a school district's approval of a student's request to enroll in a virtual program shall not apply to full-time virtual program enrollment.

This bill requires host districts to adopt student enrollment policies for full-time virtual students and allows virtual schools to mutually agree with resident and host districts on the services that the resident district might offer, including possible financial reimbursements for those services.

For students with disabilities, the enrollment policy shall ensure the development of an individualized education program and related services agreement, as necessary. The bill also specifies that student progress reports are necessary for part-time and full-time virtual school program enrollees. This bill requires a student's parent or guardian, if the student is not considered homeless, to apply for enrollment directly with the full-time virtual program.

Finally, the bill specifies that a host district may contract with a provider to perform any required services involved with delivering a full-time virtual education.

This bill is similar to SB 921 (2024).

HOME SCHOOL AND FAMILY PACED EDUCATION (FPE) SCHOOLS (Sections 167.012 and 167.013)

This bill creates Section 167.012 with the term "home school" defined for specified sections provided in the bill. This Section prohibits home school students from participation in the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Program under Sections 166.700 to 166.720 and the Student Opportunity Savings Account Program created under Section 163.431. The requirements for homes school children remain the same as current statutory requirements and include proof of 1000 hours of regular instruction.

The bill defines a "family-paced education school" for specified sections as provided in the bill. This section specifies that students enrolled in a family-paced education school may participate in both the Missouri Empowerment Scholarship Program and the Student Opportunity Savings Account Program. The requirements for family-paced education school children are the same as for home school students with proof of 1000 hours of regular instruction and a daily log requirement.

These provisions are similar to HB 2937 (2024).

TEACHER CERTIFICATION (Section 168.021)

This bill requires DESE to develop an 18 credit hour, online teacher preparation program related to subjects appropriate for teachers in different content areas determined by the Department. The Department may contract with an entity skilled in developing online teacher preparation programs or a charitable organization registered in Missouri to develop and maintain the online teacher preparation program. The entity or charitable organization must be certified to develop and maintain the program by the Department. An individual with a bachelor's degree may complete the online training program and receive a certificate of license to teach.

However, the certificate will not be accepted by Missouri public schools, and non-public schools are not required to accept the certificate.

This provision is similar to SB 1394 (2024).

WEAPONS OFFENSES IN SCHOOLS (Section 571.010)

The bill adds a definition of "school" to provisions of law relating to weapons offenses. The definition specifies that for these provisions of law, "school" shall mean a charter school, a

private school, or a public school, as such terms are defined in current law.

FOUR DAY SCHOOL WEEK (SECTION 1)

The bill exempts specified school districts from any state law that would require the district to conduct an election of the voters in order to adopt a four-day school week. The provisions of this section apply to Clinton Co. R-III and Lathrop R-II.