

1 SB548
2 141398-1
3 By Senators Beason, Sanford, Holley, Dial and Marsh
4 RFD: Education
5 First Read: 19-APR-12

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8 SYNOPSIS: Existing law does not specifically authorize
9 the State Department of Education to develop and
10 implement an online distance learning program for
11 students in grades K-12.

12 This bill would require the State Department
13 of Education to establish the Alabama Virtual
14 Instruction Program based upon a program proven
15 successful in another state.

16
17 A BILL
18 TO BE ENTITLED
19 AN ACT

20
21 Relating to public K-12 education; to require the
22 State Department of Education to establish the Alabama Virtual
23 Instruction Program; and to provide for the minimum elements
24 of the program.

25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

26 Section 1. (a) The State Department of Education,
27 pursuant to rules promulgated in compliance with the Alabama

1 Administrative Procedure Act, shall establish the Alabama
2 Virtual Instruction Program. Commencing with the 2012 school
3 year, the virtual instruction program shall make quality
4 virtual instruction available to public school students using
5 online and distance learning technology in the nontraditional
6 classroom. The virtual instruction program shall provide a
7 means for each city and county school district to provide all
8 enrolled public school students within its boundaries options
9 for participating in part-time and full-time virtual
10 instruction programs offered in an interactive learning
11 environment created through technology in which students are
12 separated from their teachers by time or space, or both.

13 (b) The department shall model the Alabama Virtual
14 Instruction Program after a program that has been proven
15 successful in another state. At a minimum, the program shall
16 provide for all of the following:

17 (1) Participation parameters for city and county
18 school systems to satisfy before providing part-time or
19 full-time, or both, virtual instruction programs.

20 (2) A means for providing each city and county
21 school system with the flexibility necessary to provide
22 customized virtual instruction programs that address local
23 student needs.

24 (3) Continued participation by students in
25 extracurricular activities provided by the school for which
26 they are zoned to attend.

1 (4) Qualifications for approved providers that a
2 city or county school system may contract with to provide
3 virtual instruction programs and requirements for those
4 contracts.

5 (5) Multi-district contractual agreements among city
6 and county school systems for providing virtual instruction
7 programs.

8 (6) Reporting requirements for participating city
9 and county school systems.

10 (7) Virtual instruction program requirements.

11 (8) Eligibility for student participation.

12 (9) Student participation requirements.

13 (10) Foundation Program funding.

14 (11) Adherence to statewide assessment and
15 performance accountability requirements.

16 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the
17 first day of the third month following its passage and
18 approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.