

HB 2287 -- VIRTUAL SCHOOL PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Christofanelli

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Special Committee on Education Reform by a vote of 9 to 0.

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 calculated as if such attendance equaled the host district's average attendance percentage for the previous year. 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.

The 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 only for part-time virtual school program enrollees. The 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) and HB 827 (2023).

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this is merely clarification language that helps provide necessary language to fix the 2022 legislation. The issues of funding and where a student should go to enroll are addressed with these changes and this will have a positive impact.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Christofanelli; Missouri NEA; Pearson/Connections Academy; Stride, Inc.; Parent School Options Coalition; and American Federation For Children, ACCEL.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.