

By Senator Simmons

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to family charter academies; creating  
3           s. 1002.333, F.S.; providing legislative intent;  
4           authorizing the formation of family charter academies  
5           as part of the state's public school system; providing  
6           guiding principles and purposes for family charter  
7           academies; providing that certain entities may submit  
8           an application to a school district or a Florida  
9           College System institution to open a family charter  
10          academy; requiring that a family charter academy  
11          applicant negotiate and enter into a contract for  
12          funding with the school district or Florida College  
13          System institution; providing requirements for  
14          applications; authorizing a district school board or a  
15          Florida College System institution to sponsor a family  
16          charter academy; providing duties of sponsors;  
17          providing that a sponsor is encouraged to set up a  
18          performance-based contract for each family charter  
19          academy; providing an effective date.

20  
21 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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23           Section 1. Section 1002.333, Florida Statutes, is created  
24 to read:

25           1002.333 Family charter academies.—

26           (1) INTENT.—The legislative intent of this section is to  
27 assist the state in greater cost efficiencies in family  
28 education and, at the same time, to increase the academic  
29 achievement outcomes in family education.

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30       (2) AUTHORIZATION.—Family charter academies shall be part  
31 of the state’s public school system. All family charter  
32 academies in the state are public schools. A family charter  
33 academy may be formed by creating a new school or by allowing an  
34 existing charter school or an existing nonprofit organization to  
35 add a family charter component.

36       (3) GUIDING PRINCIPLES; PURPOSES.—

37       (a) A family charter academy shall be guided by the  
38 following principles:

39           1. Meet high standards of student achievement while  
40 providing family members flexibility to choose among diverse  
41 educational opportunities within the state’s public school  
42 system.

43           2. Promote enhanced academic success and financial  
44 efficiency by aligning responsibility with accountability.

45           3. Provide parents with the opportunity to attend the same  
46 school as their children or to better support their children’s  
47 education.

48       (b) A family charter academy shall fulfill the following  
49 purposes:

50           1. Improve the efficacy of student learning and academic  
51 achievement.

52           2. Increase learning opportunities for all students, with  
53 special emphasis on English language learners and parents.

54           3. Encourage the use of innovative learning methods.

55           4. Require the measurement of learning outcomes.

56       (c) A family charter academy may fulfill the following  
57 purposes:

58           1. Stimulate integration of learning between parents and

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59 their children and provide incentives for K-12 teachers and  
60 family education teachers to seek cooperative learning  
61 opportunities.

62 2. Encourage a performance-based system that rewards  
63 programs for the efficient and effective teaching of adults.

64 (4) APPLICATION FOR CHARTER STATUS; REQUIREMENTS.—

65 (a) A nonprofit organization that has expertise in literacy  
66 or family education services, an existing K-12 charter school, a  
67 municipality, or a legal entity organized under the laws of the  
68 state may submit an application to a school district or a  
69 Florida College System institution to open a family charter  
70 academy.

71 (b) A family charter academy applicant shall negotiate and  
72 enter into a contract for funding with the school district or  
73 the Florida College System institution. School districts and  
74 Florida College System institutions are encouraged to develop  
75 performance-based contracts that assist adults and parents in  
76 setting and obtaining goals for helping their children with  
77 homework, obtaining a job, enrolling in vocational training, or  
78 earning a GED certificate.

79 (c) A person or entity wishing to open a family charter  
80 academy shall prepare and submit an application that:

81 1. Contains goals and objectives for improving and  
82 measuring student learning gains. The goals and objectives must  
83 indicate how much academic improvement the students are expected  
84 to show each year, how success will be evaluated, and what  
85 specific results will be attained through instruction.

86 2. Describes the differentiated learning strategies that  
87 will be used to increase learning gains for students. The

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88 learning strategies may include online learning opportunities,  
89 the joint issuance of parent and child report cards, employment  
90 fairs, or other innovative offerings to spur learning gains.

91 3. Contains a viable initial startup and an annual  
92 financial plan that includes the anticipated cost per student  
93 and the anticipated fund balances based on revenue projections,  
94 a spending plan based on projected revenues and expenses, and a  
95 description of controls that will safeguard finances and  
96 projected enrollment trends.

97 4. Contains a full accounting of expected assets; a  
98 projection of expected sources and amounts of income, including  
99 income derived from projected student enrollment and community  
100 support; and an expense projection that includes a full  
101 accounting of the costs of operation and startup costs.

102 5. Describes the facilities to be used and their location  
103 and cost. The application may also include any perceived  
104 advantages to site location, including the benefits to students,  
105 shared bus lines, programming during after-school hours with  
106 children, or blended learning opportunities.

107 6. Contains the qualifications required of the teachers and  
108 the potential strategies used to recruit, hire, train, and  
109 retain qualified staff to achieve the best value.

110 7. If applicable, documents that the applicant has  
111 contracted with a provider of virtual instruction services. A  
112 family charter academy may implement blended learning courses  
113 that combine traditional classroom instruction and virtual  
114 instruction.

115 (5) SPONSOR; DUTIES.—

116 (a) Sponsoring entities.—

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117 1. A district school board may sponsor a family charter  
118 academy in the county over which the district school board has  
119 jurisdiction.

120 2. A Florida College System institution may sponsor a  
121 family charter academy in its designated service area.

122 (b) Sponsor duties.—

123 1. The sponsor shall monitor and review the family charter  
124 academy in its progress toward the goals established in the  
125 charter.

126 2. The sponsor shall ensure that the family charter academy  
127 participates in the state's education accountability system. All  
128 pretest and posttest scores on the Tests of Adult Basic  
129 Education (TABE) or the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment  
130 System (CASAS) shall be reported to the sponsor for the purpose  
131 of providing an annual assessment of gain scores by students.

132 3. A sponsor's decision to grant or deny an application is  
133 in the sole discretion of the sponsor. The sponsor's decision is  
134 not appealable and is not subject to further review.

135 (6) PERFORMANCE-BASED CONTRACT; BUDGET.—

136 (a) A sponsor is encouraged to establish a performance-  
137 based contract for each family charter academy that is created.  
138 Performance measures may include assessment scores, attendance  
139 data, or other indicia of performance.

140 (b) In order to facilitate an accurate performance-based  
141 budget projection process, a sponsor is encouraged to provide in  
142 writing to a family charter academy applicant the sponsor's  
143 previous year's average cost per adult student and the average  
144 annual gain scores on the TABE and the CASAS. The average cost  
145 shall be based on the annual cost, and the outcomes must include

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146 an average increase in TABE or CASAS scores.

147 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2012.