By Senator Rossin

35-815-01

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to the small-school
requirement; amending s. 235.2157, F.S.;
eliminating the requirement that schools other
than elementary schools must not exceed a specified student population; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 235.2157, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:
235.2157 Small school requirement.--
(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.--The Legislature finds that:
(a) Florida's schools are among the largest in the nation.
(b) Smaller schools provide benefits of reduced discipline problems and crime, reduced truancy and gang participation, reduced dropout rates, improved teacher and student attitudes, improved student self-perception, student academic achievement equal to or superior to that of students at larger schools, and increased parental involvement.
(c) Smaller schools can provide these benefits while not increasing administrative and construction costs.
(2) DEFINITION.--As used in this section, "small school" means:
(a) an elementary school with a student population of not more than 500 students.
(b) A middle school with a student population of not more than 700 students.

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    (c) A high school with a student population of not
more than 900 students.
    (d) A school serving kindergarten through grade 8 with
a student population of not more than 700 students.
    (e) A school serving kindergarten through grade 12
with a student population of not more than 900 students.
A school on a single campus which operates as a
school-within-a-school, as defined by s. 230.23(20), shall be
considered a small school if each smaller unit located on the
single campus meets the requirements of this subsection.
    (3) REQUIREMENTS.--
    (a) Beginning July 1, 2003, all plans for new
elementary schools educational facilities to be constructed
within a school district and reflected in the 5-year school
district facilities work plan shall be plans for small schools
in order to promote increased learning and more effective use
of school facilities.
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(b) Small schools shall comply with all laws, rules, and court orders relating to racial balance.
(4) EXCEPTIONS.--This section does not apply to plans for new elementary schools educational facilities already under architectural contract on July 1, 2003.

Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

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                    SENATE SUMMARY
    Repeals the requirement that all educational facilities that are placed under architectural contract after July 1, 2003, must be small schools, as defined by the maximum numbers of students specified for each category of schools. Retains the small-school requirements set forth in s. 235.2157, F.S., for elementary schools. 2

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