

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

BILL: CS/SB 514

INTRODUCER: Appropriations Subcommittee on Education; and Senator Flores

SUBJECT: Gender-Specific School Pilot Project

DATE: April 3, 2014

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>McLaughlin</u>	<u>Klebacha</u>	<u>ED</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Sikes</u>	<u>Elwell</u>	<u>AED</u>	Fav/CS
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 514 creates additional requirements for a school district establishing a gender-specific school.

Specifically, the bill requires a school districts establishing a single-gender school to separate students into boys-only and girls-only classes during instruction in core courses, to offer open enrollment to all students in the district, and to provide professional development to the school's administrative and instructional personnel.

Additionally, the bill requires a district establishing a gender-specific school to provide to the Department of Education (DOE) a comparison of the academic performance of students in the gender-specific school with the academic performance of students in the other public schools in the district.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

II. Present Situation:

Under Florida law, a district school board may establish and maintain single-gender schools as long as the district makes available a substantially equal school.¹ Participation in single-gender

¹ Section 1002.311(1), F.S.

schools must be voluntary.² At least every two years, the school district must evaluate each single-gender school to ensure compliance with federal regulations.³

There are 54 single-gender schools in 33 school districts in Florida.⁴ A variety of school models employ single-gender classes, e.g., alternative schools, charter schools, virtual schools, and traditional public schools.⁵

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The bill establishes additional requirements for gender-specific schools. Under the proposed requirements, school districts:

- Must open enrollment to all students within the school district;
- Must separate core courses, by grade-level, into boys-only and girls-only classes; and
- Must require the school's administrative and instructional personnel participate in professional development that includes scheduling and instructional strategies.

The bill requires a school district operating a single-gender school to provide to the DOE, a comparison of the academic performance of students enrolled in the gender-specific elementary, middle, or high school with the academic performance of students in other public elementary, middle, or high schools, as appropriate, in the school district.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2014.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

² Section 1002.311(2)(a), F.S.

³ Section 1002.311(2)(b), F.S.

⁴ Telephone conversation with staff, Florida Department of Education, Office of Governmental Relations (Mar. 10, 2014).

⁵ *Id.*

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

CS/SB 514 requires the gender-specific school's administrative and instructional personnel to participate in professional development that includes scheduling and instructional strategies. School districts have multiple sources of professional development funding that could be used to implement this requirement

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends section 1002.311 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)**Recommended CS by Appropriations Subcommittee on Education on April 2, 2014**

The committee substitute:

- Amends existing law to place additional requirements on a school district establishing a gender specific school.
- Eliminates the Gender-Specific School Pilot Project.
- Eliminates the requirement that the Legislature appropriate funds for the pilot project.
- Eliminates the requirement for the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to provide to the Governor, the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a report comparing the academic performance of students participating in the pilot project with the academic performance of students in the other elementary schools in the district.
- Eliminates the requirement that the DOE must provide a list of professional development providers from which districts must choose a professional development provider to assist in scheduling and instructional strategies.
- Requires the district to provide to the DOE, a comparison of the academic performance of students in the gender-specific schools with the academic performance of students in other public schools in the district.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
