

**Committee on Education Innovation
& Career Preparation
Meeting Packet**

Tuesday, January 22, 2008

8:30 am — 11:20 am

116 K

Speaker
Marco Rubio

Chair
Thad Altman



The Florida House of Representatives
Schools and Learning Council
Committee on Education Innovation & Career Preparation

Marco Rubio
Speaker

Thad Altman
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Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, January 22, 2008
116 Knott
8:30 am – 11:20 am

I. Opening Remarks by Chair Altman

II. Roll Call

III. Presentations on the following:

- ***Gifted Education***
Mark West, Senior Legislative Analyst
OPPAGA
- ***K-8 Virtual School Program***
Mickey Revenaugh, Vice President of State Relations
Connections Academy

Charles Zogby, Senior Vice President of Education and Policy
Tracy Hall, Teacher
Florida Virtual Academy

- ***Florida Virtual School***
Julie Young, President
Florida Virtual School

IV. Closing Comments / Meeting Adjourned

Gifted Identification and Services

Mark West
Senior Legislative Analyst

Florida Legislature Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability

Overview

- **Methods used to identify gifted students and the numbers identified**
- **Whether districts implement a plan to increase participation of underrepresented groups**
- **Services and programming provided to gifted students**
- **Amount of the Guaranteed Allocation spent on gifted services and programs**
- **Advantages and disadvantages of classifying gifted students as exceptional students**
- **Practices of other states for identifying and funding gifted students**

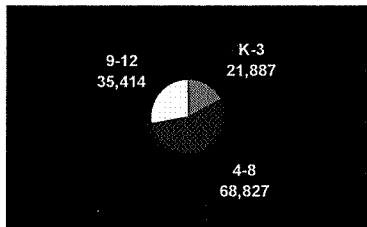
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Background

- **Florida rule defines gifted students as 'having superior intellectual development' and 'capable of high performance'**
- **Gifted students are classified as exceptional students and have ESE rights and protections**
- **Due to their exceptional education status gifted students are included in the state's calculation of the ESE Guaranteed Allocation**

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Most Students Who Receive Gifted Services Are in Grades 4-8



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Findings

- The number of gifted students has increased faster than the overall student population
- Florida school districts do not separate their gifted expenditures from other expenditures on ESE services

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Findings

- Fifty-three of Florida's sixty-seven school districts use alternative requirements to identify gifted students
- The number of students who received gifted services through consultation grew much faster than other gifted services during 2006-07
- In high school, gifted students take fewer gifted courses than in K-8

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Gifted Students Increased More Than the Overall Student Population

Year	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Gifted Students	116,639	124,491 (6.73%)	126,128 (1.31%)
All Students	2,630,062	2,625,949 (-.16%)	2,614,116 (-.45%)

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School Districts Will Receive \$1.158 Billion for Gifted Students in 2007-08

- \$868 million in Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) funds to meet the basic education needs of gifted students
- \$290 million in Exceptional Student Education Guaranteed Allocation funds that were generated by gifted students
- While school districts report their total costs for all Exceptional Student Education services, most school districts could not report the costs of serving gifted students

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How Other States Fund Gifted Services

- Thirteen states fund gifted programs with separate funds (not tied to other programs)
 - Eight states have a ceiling in which the percentage of gifted students they fund is tied to a set proportion of the district's student population
- Seven states mix gifted funds with other funds
 - In addition to Florida, two other states mix gifted funds with other ESE funds

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Fours Steps in Identifying Gifted Students

- **Select students for screening**
- **Perform initial screenings**
- **Based upon initial screening perform individual evaluations**
- **Make final determination about the student's eligibility for gifted services**

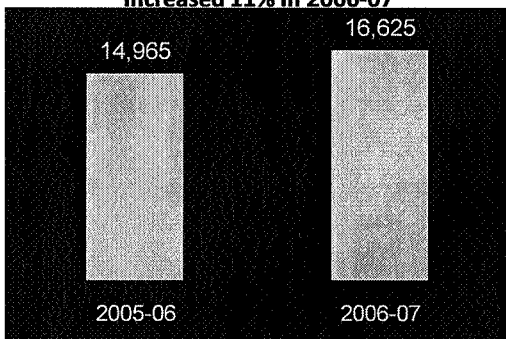
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Final Gifted Eligibility Determination

- **All districts use standard eligibility requirements**
 - Student demonstrates need for a special program
 - Student shows characteristics on a gifted checklist
 - Superior intellectual development (generally an IQ of 130 or higher)
- **53 districts also use alternative eligibility requirements**
 - Student is a member of an underrepresented group (limited English proficiency and/or low socio-economic status)
 - Student still must show gifted characteristics but a minimum IQ of 130 is not required

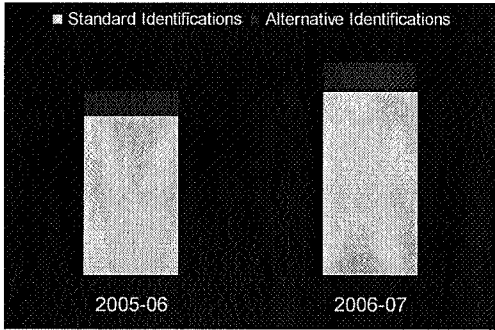
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The Number of New Gifted Identifications Increased 11% in 2006-07



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Alternative Identifications Comprised About 14% of the Identifications in 34 Districts



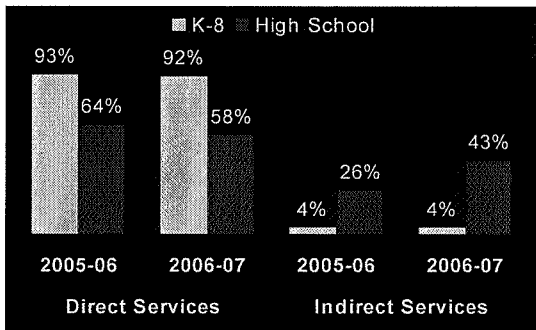
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School Districts Use a Wide Variety of Models to Provide Services

- **Direct Services—A teacher with a gifted endorsement provides instruction**
 - Push-in or support facilitation services
 - Pull-out
 - Cluster schools
 - Co-teaching
 - Self-contained gifted classes
 - Differentiated in mixed ability classes
- **Indirect Services—A teacher or guidance counselor with gifted endorsement works with a gifted student and/or their teacher to ensure the student receives appropriate instruction**
 - Consultation

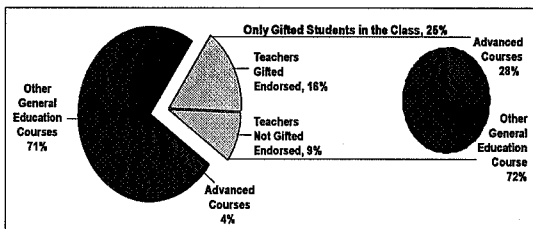
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During 2006-07 High School Indirect Services Increased



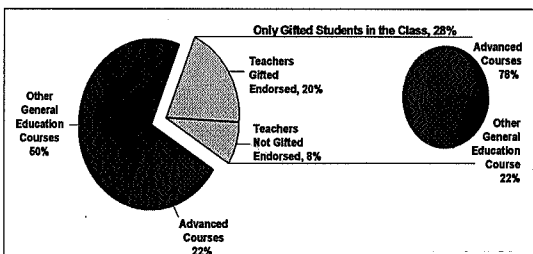
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Courses Taken by K-5 Gifted Students



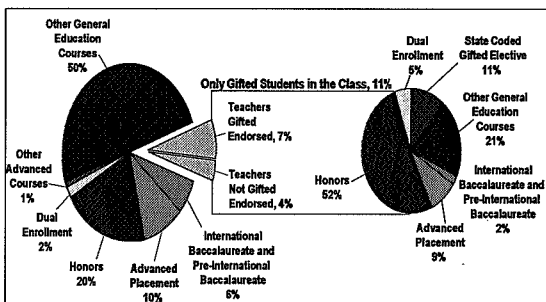
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Courses Taken by 6-8 Gifted Students



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Courses Taken by High School Gifted Students



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ESE Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires that gifted students have an education plan, which can help ensure that gifted students receive needed services• Parents have the right to contest school decisions• Recognizes that gifted students have needs above and beyond the standard curriculum• Allows for a stable funding source for gifted services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including gifted in Exceptional Student Education runs the risk that policies intended for students with disabilities are inappropriately applied to gifted students• Gifted students have widely different needs than students with disabilities• Lack of transparency in how gifted funds are being spent (perception that gifted funds are being used for non-gifted students)

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Recommendations

- The Department of Education should collect information about alternative identifications
- The Department of Education should create course codes that reflect gifted versions of general education classes

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Questions?

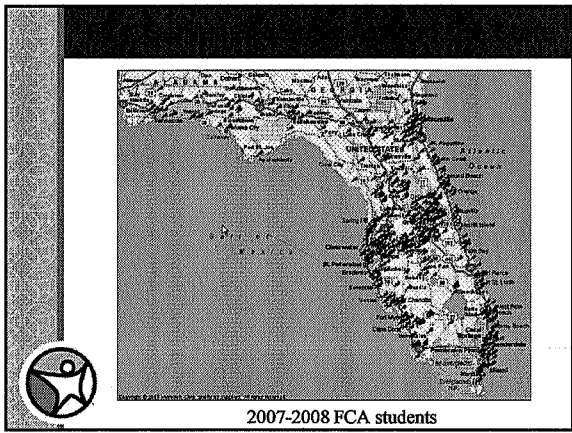
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Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability
OPPAGA supports the Florida Legislature by providing evaluative research and objective analysis to promote government accountability and the efficient and effective use of public resources.

	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Student cap	500	Prior yr + siblings	500	690	940
Applications	900	125	2,324	2,597	2,615
Funded FTE	457	217	496	690	TBD
Funding per FTE	\$4,800	\$4,800	\$4,800	\$5,200	\$5,050
School grade	C	B	B	A	TBD






2007-2008 FCA students




- 2006-2007 (as reported for the FCAT results/ "A" school grade)
 - ✓ 34% Minority
 - ✓ 50% Low income
- November 2007 enrollment
 - ✓ 34% Minority (32% on first FLDOE survey – 68% white)
 - 11% Hispanic
 - 7% African American
 - 2% Asian
 - 10% Multiracial
 - 1% Native American
 - 2% Not reported/other
 - ✓ 47% Low income (44% on first FLDOE survey)



FCA parent satisfaction survey		2006-2007
# of responses		527
Grade for FCA (A +B)		98%
Equal/More satisfied with FCA than prior school		96%
Will your children continue in FCA		80%
More challenging than prior school		77%
High quality curriculum		97%
Children making good progress		98%
Children enjoying the program		93%




Conducted by independent market research firm Leo Shapiro



FCAT Reading Proficiency

Grade	FCAT	FCAT	FCAT	Statewide
	All Students	Returning Students	First Year Students	
Third	71%	74%	68%	69%
Fourth	80%	79%	81%	68%
Fifth	79%	92%	72%	72%
Sixth	82%	79%	83%	62%
Seventh	78%	76%	79%	63%
Eighth	58%	71%	50%	49%


2006-2007 FCA Annual Report





FCAT Math Proficiency

Grade	FCAT	FCAT	FCAT	Statewide
	All Students	Returning Students	First Year Students	
Third	67%	71%	62%	74%
Fourth	65%	79%	59%	69%
Fifth	57%	54%	58%	59%
Sixth	65%	74%	62%	50%
Seventh	55%	62%	50%	59%
Eighth	72%	76%	69%	63%


2006-2007 FCA Annual Report




- ⊗ All teachers are resident and certified in Florida
- ⊗ All teachers are highly qualified
- ⊗ Staff:
 - ✓ Principal, Asst Principal, 2 Support
 - ✓ Special Education Director
 - ✓ 23 teachers
 - ✓ 30% adv degrees
 - ✓ 10.4 yrs avg exp
 - ✓ Avg teacher cost: \$52,131


- ⊗ Age: 13
- ⊗ Grade: 7
- ⊗ Residence: Altamonte Springs (Seminole County)
- ⊗ FCA Gifted and Talented program
- ⊗ Dancer who spends 3-4 hours per day practicing
- ⊗ Sensitive and insightful, Kiersten has become more open and speaks up for herself as a result of FCA teachers' encouragement to feel secure in being able to verbally identify, present and expound upon ideas which they otherwise might keep to themselves.



- ⊗ Age: 7
- ⊗ Grade: 1
- ⊗ Residence: Miami (Miami-Dade County)
- ⊗ Dealing with serious medical issues as a the result of an accident and resulting head injury; physician prohibited attendance at a traditional school due to the risk of further injury and the possibility of ridicule of the student's appearance
- ⊗ The student had to re-learn language capability and has been able to get through numerous reconstructive surgeries while continuing in school with a personalized learning program.



- ☛ Age: 10
- ☛ Grade: 5
- ☛ Residence: Summerfield (Marion County)
- ☛ Entered school with serious skills deficiencies and a negative attitude towards school.
- ☛ Student is in FCA's P.A.C.E. (Program for All Children to Excel) that provides specialized curriculum, direct instruction and teacher-led remediation.
- ☛ Student is demonstrating learning gains and has improved self confidence and a positive attitude towards school.



FCA



Technology enabled


Field trips

Home Life projects

Caring teachers




At Connections Academy, Science Matters

Top quality curriculum



**Florida Virtual Academy:
A Successful Public Education
Option**



House Education Innovation and Career
Preparation Committee
January 22, 2008

**FLORIDA
VIRTUAL ACADEMY™**

A Successful Public Education Option



- Since 2003, the Florida Virtual Academy (FLVA) has experienced strong demand by families and students
- Currently serve 940 students, with 1200 student waiting list
- Over the past 5 years, 40,000+ families have inquired about FLVA
- In 2007, FLVA students outperformed the state and other public virtual schools in almost all grade levels and subjects tested for the fourth year in a row
- Winner of the 2007 Government Technology Leadership Award from ITFlorida. Curriculum CITA accredited (The Commission on International and Trans-Regional Accreditation)
- Cost-effective for Florida taxpayers. At \$5050 per pupil, FLVA funding is below average state funding for regular education students

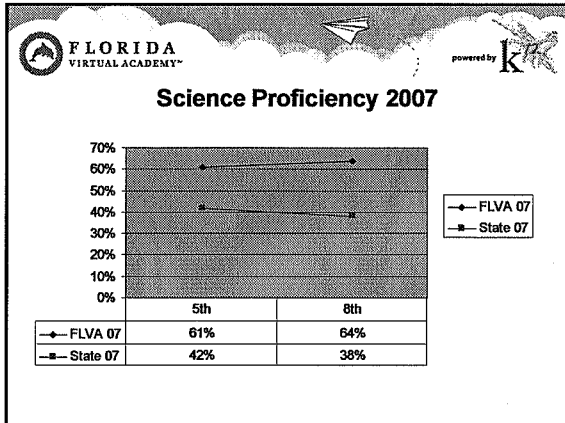



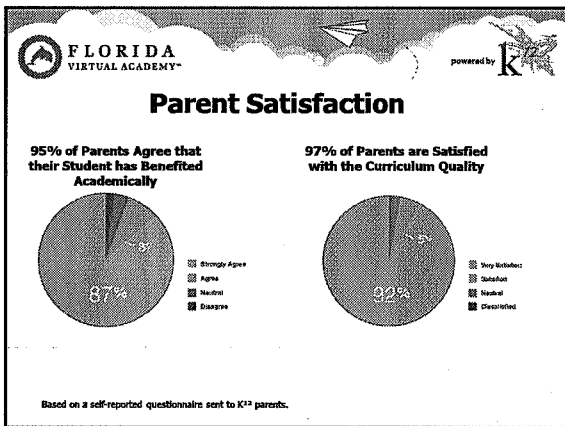
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FLVA Teachers and Students

- 18 Highly Qualified Teachers
- Average 10 years of classroom experience
- Over 40% have Master's Degrees
- Over 60% have multiple certifications including Reading, Gifted, and Special Education.
- 940 Students
- 75% White
- 11% Hispanic
- 8% African-American
- 6% Other
- 32% Free and Reduced Lunch
- 49% Male/ 51% Female







FLORIDA VIRTUAL ACADEMY™ powered by **K12**

Hi Kathy,

I want to thank you so much for your email. Mitch and I are so thankful for all the support that you and Mrs. Benzion have given us. Mrs. Benzion was so caring and understanding throughout the year. I received so much valuable advice from each of our conferences. We feel lucky to be under your guidance and to be a part of FLVA. Congratulations on how great the school did this year and have a great summer!


Jennifer Hirsch


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VIRTUAL ACADEMY™

powered by 

Hi Mrs. Anderson,

I just wanted to say thank you so much for your email to Michaela. It really made her day. It is a very welcome difference from her last experience with a teacher. It is nice to have someone that actually cares (other than family) and I know that your email made her feel very special. Her experience in school was very bad. She didn't get praised from her teacher. We just got notes in her planner about how bad she was because she had a hard time sitting still and paying attention. This is a nice change for us and for her. We tell her all the time how smart she is and how proud we are of how well she is doing but for her to know that you feel the same is a real boost to her confidence. So, again, we (my grandmother and I) would like to say **THANK YOU** for caring and taking the time to make Michaela's experience special.

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K-8 Virtual Schools: Future Possibilities

- > **Maintain High Standards and Accountability**
 - Current program standards (aligned curriculum, state certified teachers, providing all materials and technology to students, and 3-year financial plan) help ensure high quality schools
 - School participates in FCAT, receives school grade, and can have contract revoked for less than a "C"
- > **Expand Program to Meet Student Demand**
 - Applications have significantly outpaced enrollments for 5 straight years. Two K-8 virtual schools have waiting lists of 2800+ students.
- > **Leverage Taxpayer Savings for Class Size Reduction**
 - Tool to meet class size mandates by expanding virtual offerings as an alternative to new school construction. At scale, virtual schools can produce substantial savings in both operating and capital expenditures.
