

CCS HCS SS SCS SBs 603, 576 & 898 -- VIRTUAL EDUCATION

This bill changes the Missouri Virtual Instruction Program (MOVIP) to "The Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program."

The bill requires school districts and charter schools to adopt a policy for student enrollment in the Missouri course access and virtual school program that is substantially similar to the student enrollment process for courses offered in the brick-and-mortar school.

This bill specifies that each school shall pay the costs of enrollment in virtual courses for full-time students who attended a public school for at least one semester immediately before enrolling in the virtual courses. A school may only deny a student's request to enroll in virtual courses with a good cause determination that enrollment in virtual courses is not in the best educational interest of the student. The student may appeal to the school's governing body and then to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

If a student who is a candidate for A+ tuition reimbursement enrolls in a virtual course the school shall attribute no less than 95% attendance to any such student who completes the course.

This bill specifies that courses already approved through MOVIP by August 28, 2018, shall automatically be authorized to participate in the program. Additionally, any online course or virtual program offered by a school district or charter school which meets the requirements of provisions relating to state funding for virtual schools shall automatically be approved to participate in the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program. Such course or program shall be subject to periodic renewal and a school district or charter school offering such a course or program shall be deemed an approved provider.

The bill requires DESE to establish an authorization process for virtual providers and publish an annual report on the course access and virtual school program.

This bill also adds virtual institutions to the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program so long as they meet several requirements specified in the bill, including an exclusively competency-based education model, 25 full-time Missouri employees, and a physical location or campus within Missouri.