

CHAPTER 97-234

Committee Substitute for House Bill Nos. 1309, 1143, 847, 697, 1391, and 203

An act relating to student discipline and school safety; amending s. 232.09, F.S.; revising provisions relating to student attendance responsibility and policy; creating s. 232.0205, F.S.; requiring certain disclosure at school registration and providing penalties for willful nondisclosure; amending s. 232.01, F.S.; revising compulsory school attendance requirements to require children over age 16 to file a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment in order to be exempt from compulsory school attendance requirements; amending s. 39.01, F.S.; revising provisions regarding habitual truancy; amending s. 228.041, F.S.; revising the definitions of the terms “habitual truant” and “dropout”; amending s. 232.2462, F.S.; conforming provisions; amending s. 414.125, F.S.; providing Learnfare program requirements; amending s. 232.17, F.S.; revising procedures relating to enforcement of school attendance; amending s. 232.19, F.S.; revising penalties and court procedures relating to habitual truancy; requiring each public school principal to notify the district school board of students who accumulate a specified number of unexcused absences; authorizing the governing body of a private school to provide such information to the Department of Education; requiring that the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles withhold issuance of or suspend the driver’s license or learner’s driver’s license of a student who fails to satisfy school attendance requirements; requiring the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Department of Children and Family Services, and the school districts to develop cooperative agreements for working with habitual truants and their families; providing for court-ordered parent training classes and providing penalties for termination of an employee required to attend such classes, under certain circumstances; authorizing the court to impose civil penalties on, or require participation in community service or counseling by, the child; amending s. 232.195, F.S., relating to truancy activities upon transfer of student, to conform; creating s. 232.197, F.S.; requiring notification to a school of court action directly involving the school; amending s. 232.2452, F.S.; revising requirements relating to student report cards; amending s. 232.25, F.S., relating to pupils subject to control of school; providing for a school child’s daily conduct pledge; amending s. 322.05, F.S., relating to the issuance of driver’s licenses; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; amending s. 322.09, F.S.; prohibiting the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles from issuing a driver’s license or restricted license to a person under a specified age who does not meet requirements for school attendance and is not otherwise exempt from such requirements; creating s. 322.091, F.S.; providing that a minor is not eligible for driving privileges unless the minor is enrolled in school or a home education program, has received a high school diploma or certificate,

is enrolled in certain other educational activities, or obtains a certificate of exemption or hardship waiver; requiring the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to notify a minor before the department suspends the minor's driving privileges because of non-compliance with school attendance requirements; providing for a hardship waiver; providing for a hearing before the public school principal or the designee of the governing body of a private school; providing for the department to reinstate a minor's driving privileges following compliance with school attendance requirements for a specified period; requiring the department to report to school districts on students whose driving privileges are suspended; amending s. 39.015, F.S., relating to rulemaking regarding habitual truants, to conform to the act; creating s. 230.235, F.S.; requiring school districts to adopt a policy of zero tolerance for crime, including criminal substance abuse violations; amending s. 232.277, F.S.; requiring reporting and notification of student substance abuse; amending s. 790.115, F.S.; expanding offenses that are punishable as possessing or discharging weapons or firearms on school property and providing a qualifier to an exception from such offense; amending s. 230.23015, F.S.; clarifying provisions relating to students who commit assault or battery on school personnel; repealing s. 322.0601, F.S., relating to driver's licenses for minors; creating s. 232.433, F.S.; requiring that the Florida High School Activities Association or successor organization adopt statewide uniform safety standards for student cheerleaders; amending s. 228.057, F.S.; requiring school districts with a controlled open enrollment program to afford preferred access to the program to parents of students in multiple session schools; providing intent; amending s. 39.045, F.S., relating to confidential information about juvenile offenders, to provide for disclosure to teachers; amending s. 948.03, F.S.; requiring a juvenile in a community control program to attend a public adult education program or dropout prevention program if available unless an exception is made by the principal; requiring disclosure of certain information if a juvenile attends a regular educational school program; providing effective dates.

WHEREAS, the primary focus of the 1997 Legislature is education, and

WHEREAS, in the first month of the 1997 session, the Legislature has passed two major components of its education agenda, the first of which raises student academic standards across the board and the second of which provides for better-educated and better-prepared teachers, and

WHEREAS, a third major component of the 1997 legislative education agenda is student discipline and school safety, and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Legislature to raise the standards of student discipline and school safety as dramatically as it has raised student academic and teacher certification standards, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

Section 1. Section 232.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

232.09 Parents and legal guardians responsible for attendance of children; attendance policy.—

(1) The Legislature finds:

(a) It is essential that our children receive an education.

(b) Failure to attend school in a regular and timely fashion hinders the education process.

(c) Truancy and poor school performance have a direct relationship to juvenile delinquency and destructive behavior.

(d) A disproportionate percentage of juvenile crime occurs when juveniles should be in school.

(e) Parents and guardians must be responsible, within reason, for sending their children to school.

(f) If a juvenile refuses to attend school or a parent or guardian refuses to compel the child to attend school, there must exist an efficient and expedient process to enforce attendance laws.

(2) Each parent and legal guardian of a child within the compulsory attendance age is shall be responsible for the such child's school attendance as required by law. The absence of a child from school is shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section; however, no criminal prosecution may not shall be brought against a parent, guardian, or other person having control of the child until the provisions of s. 232.17(2)(e) have been complied with. A No parent or guardian of a child is not shall be held responsible for the such child's nonattendance at school under any of the following conditions:

(a)(1) With permission.—The absence was with permission of the head of the school; or

(b)(2) Without knowledge.—The absence was without the parent's knowledge, consent, or connivance, in which case the child shall be dealt with as a dependent child; or

(c)(3) Financial inability.—The parent was unable financially to provide necessary clothes for the child, which inability was reported in writing to the superintendent prior to the opening of school or immediately after the beginning of such inability; provided, that the validity of any claim for exemption under this subsection shall be determined by the superintendent subject to appeal to the school board; or

(d)(4) Sickness, injury, or other insurmountable condition.—Attendance was impracticable or inadvisable on account of sickness or injury, attested to by a written statement of a licensed practicing physician, or was impracticable because of some other stated insurmountable condition as defined by regulations of the state board. If a student is continually sick and repeatedly

absent from school, he or she must be under the supervision of a physician in order to receive an excuse from attendance. Such excuse provides that a student's condition justifies absence for more than the number of days permitted by the district school board.

Each district school board shall establish an attendance policy which includes, but is not limited to, the required number of days each school year that a student must be in attendance and the number of absences and tardinesses after which a statement explaining such absences and tardinesses must be on file at the school. Each school in the district must determine if an absence or tardiness is excused or unexcused according to criteria established by the district school board.

Section 2. Section 232.0205, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

232.0205 Disclosure at school registration.—According to procedures established by the district school board, each student at the time of initial registration for school in a school district shall note previous school expulsions, arrests resulting in a charge, and juvenile justice actions the student has had.

Section 3. Paragraph (c) of subsection (1) of section 232.01, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

232.01 Regular school attendance required between ages of 6 and 16; permitted at age of 5; exceptions.—

(1)

(c) A child who attains the age of 16 years during the school year is shall not subject to compulsory school attendance be required to attend school beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age if the child files a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment with the district school board. The declaration must acknowledge that terminating school enrollment is likely to reduce the student's earning potential and must be signed by the child. The school district must notify the child's parent or legal guardian of the child's declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment. A child who attains the age of 18 years during the school year is not subject to compulsory school attendance beyond the date upon which he or she attains that age.

Section 4. Paragraph (b) of subsection (12) and subsection (73) of section 39.01, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, are amended to read:

39.01 Definitions.—When used in this chapter:

(12) "Child in need of services" means a child for whom there is no pending investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse, neglect, or abandonment; no pending referral alleging the child is delinquent; or no current supervision by the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services for an adjudication of dependency or delinquency. The child must also, pursuant to this chapter, be found by the court:

(b) To be habitually truant from school, while subject to compulsory school attendance, despite reasonable efforts to remedy the situation pursuant to ss. 232.17 and 232.19 ~~s. 232.19~~ and through voluntary participation by the child's parents or legal custodians and by the child in family mediation, services, and treatment offered by the Department of Juvenile Justice or the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services; or

(73) "To be habitually truant" means that:

(a) The child has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or justifiable consent of the child's parent or legal guardian, is subject to compulsory school attendance under s. 232.01, and is not exempt under from attendance by virtue of being over the age of compulsory school attendance or by meeting the criteria in s. 232.06, s. 232.09, or any other exemptions specified by law or the rules of the State Board of Education;

(b) ~~In addition to the actions described in s. 232.17, the school administration has completed the following Escalating activities to determine the cause, and to attempt the remediation, of the child's truant behavior under ss. 232.17 and 232.19 have been completed.:~~

~~1. After a minimum of 3 and prior to 15 unexcused absences within 90 days, one or more meetings have been held, either in person or by phone, between a school attendance assistant or school social worker, the child's parent or guardian, and the child, if necessary, to report and to attempt to solve the truancy problem. However, if the school attendance assistant or school social worker has documented the refusal of the parent or guardian to participate in the meetings, then this requirement has been met;~~

~~2. Educational counseling has been provided to determine whether curriculum changes would help solve the truancy problem, and, if any changes were indicated, such changes were instituted but proved unsuccessful in remedying the truant behavior. Such curriculum changes may include enrollment of the child in an alternative education program that meets the specific educational and behavioral needs of the child, including a second chance school, as provided for in s. 230.2316, designed to resolve truant behavior;~~

~~3. Educational evaluation, pursuant to the requirements of s. 232.19(3)(b)3., has been provided; and~~

~~4. The school social worker, the attendance assistant, or the school superintendent's designee if there is no school social worker or attendance assistant has referred the student and family to the children-in-need-of-services and families-in-need-of-services provider or the case staffing committee, established pursuant to s. 39.426, as determined by the cooperative agreement required in s. 232.19(3). The case staffing committee may request the department or its designee to file a child-in-need-of-services petition based upon the report and efforts of the school district or other community agency or may seek to resolve the truancy behavior through the school or community-based organizations or agencies.~~

If a child who is subject to ~~within the~~ compulsory school attendance age is responsive to the interventions described in ss. 232.17 and 232.19 ~~this paragraph~~ and has completed the necessary requirements to pass the current grade as indicated in the district pupil progression plan, the child shall not be determined to be habitually truant ~~and shall be passed~~. If a child within the compulsory school attendance age has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days or fails to enroll in school, the State Attorney may file a child-in-need-of-services petition. Prior to filing a petition, the child must be referred to the appropriate agency for evaluation. After consulting with the evaluating agency, the State Attorney may elect to file a child-in-need-of-services petition.

(c) ~~A school representative, designated according to school board policy school social worker or other person designated by the school administration, if the school does not have a school social worker,~~ and an intake counselor or case manager of the Department of Juvenile Justice have jointly investigated the truancy problem or, if that was not feasible, have performed separate investigations to identify conditions which may be contributing to the truant behavior; and if, after a joint staffing of the case to determine the necessity for services, such services were determined to be needed, the persons who performed the investigations met jointly with the family and child to discuss any referral to appropriate community agencies for economic services, family or individual counseling, or other services required to remedy the conditions that are contributing to the truant behavior; ~~and~~

(d) The failure or refusal of the parent or legal guardian or the child to participate, or make a good faith effort to participate, in the activities prescribed to remedy the truant behavior, or the failure or refusal of the child to return to school after participation in activities required by this subsection, or the failure of the child to stop the truant behavior after the school administration and the Department of Juvenile Justice have worked with the child as described in s. 232.19(3) shall be handled as prescribed in s. 232.19.

Section 5. Subsections (28) and (29) of section 228.041, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, are amended to read:

228.041 Definitions.—Specific definitions shall be as follows, and wherever such defined words or terms are used in the Florida School Code, they shall be used as follows:

(28) HABITUAL TRUANT.—A habitual truant is a student who has 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the student's parent or legal guardian, is subject to compulsory school attendance under s. 232.01, and is not exempt under ~~and who is not exempt from attendance by virtue of being over the age of compulsory school attendance, by meeting the criteria in s. 232.06 or s. 232.09, or by meeting the criteria for any other exemption specified by law or rules of the State Board of Education.~~ Such a student must have been the subject of the activities specified in ss. 232.17 and 232.19, without resultant successful remediation of the truancy problem before being dealt with as a child in need of services according to the provisions of chapter 39.

(29) DROPOUT.—A dropout is a student not subject to ~~over the age of~~ compulsory school attendance, as defined in s. 232.01, who meets any one or more of the following criteria:

(a) The student has voluntarily removed himself or herself from the school system before graduation for reasons that include, but are not limited to, marriage or entrance into the military, or the student has withdrawn from school because he or she has failed the statewide student assessment test and thereby does not receive any of the certificates of completion;

(b) The student has not met the relevant attendance requirements of the school district pursuant to State Board of Education rules, or the student was expected to attend a school but did not enter as expected for unknown reasons, or the student's whereabouts are unknown;

(c) The student has withdrawn from school, but has not transferred to another public or private school or enrolled in any vocational, adult, or alternative educational program;

(d) The student has withdrawn from school due to hardship, unless such withdrawal has been granted under the provisions of s. ~~322.091~~ 322.0601, court action, expulsion, medical reasons, or pregnancy; or

(e) The student is not eligible to attend school because of reaching the maximum age for an exceptional student program in accordance with the district's policy.

Students not exempt from attendance pursuant to s. 232.06 and who are subject to under the age of compulsory school attendance under s. 232.01 ~~and who stop attending school~~ are ~~shall be known as~~ habitual truants as defined in subsection (28) and are not to be considered dropouts. The State Board of Education may adopt rules to implement the provisions of this subsection.

Section 6. Subsection (2) of section 232.2462, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

232.2462 Attendance requirement for receipt of high school credit; definition of "credit".—

(2) A student may not be awarded a credit if he or she has not been in for instruction for a minimum of 135 hours unless he or she has demonstrated mastery of the student performance standards in the course of study as provided by rules of the district school board. Excused absences as determined by the district school board and as carried out by the secondary school principal shall not be counted against the 135-hour minimum requirement. Criteria for determining excused absences shall be as provided in s. 232.022, s. 232.0225, absence for religious instruction, or a religious holiday, and s. 232.09(2)(d)(4), absence due to sickness, injury, or other insurmountable condition, and absence due to participation in an academic class or program. Missed work shall be made up, as provided in the pupil progression plan established by the district school board by rule, for all excused absences. The difference between the 135-hour minimum requirement and the 150-hour

definition of full credit established in this section may at the discretion of the secondary school principal be used for noninstructional extracurricular activities unless otherwise provided by district school board rule. In credit programs operated in the period beyond 180 school days, each full-credit course must be established for a minimum of 120 hours.

Section 7. Subsection (2) of section 414.125, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

414.125 Learnfare program.—

(2) Each recipient with a school-age child is required to have a conference with an appropriate school official of the child's school during each grading period to assure that the recipient is involved in the child's educational progress and is aware of any existing attendance or academic problems. The conference must address acceptable student attendance, grades, and behavior and must be documented by the school and reported to the department. The department shall notify a school of any student in attendance at that school who is a participant in the Learnfare program in order that the required conferences are held.

Section 8. Section 232.17, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

232.17 Enforcement of school attendance ~~Attendance assistants; qualifications; compensation; duties.~~—Pursuant to procedures established by the district school board, a designated school representative must complete activities designed to determine the cause and attempt the remediation of truant behavior, as provided in this section. Provisions for the employment, qualifications, compensation, and duties of attendance assistants shall be as follows:

~~(1) EMPLOYMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS OF ATTENDANCE ASSISTANTS.—The school board, upon the recommendation of the superintendent, may employ and fix the compensation, including reimbursement for travel, of a sufficient number of qualified attendance assistants to guarantee regular attendance at school of all children of the district within compulsory school-age requirements who are not herein exempted from attendance.~~

~~(2) DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ATTENDANCE ASSISTANTS.—The duties and responsibilities of the attendance assistant shall be exercised under the direction of the superintendent and shall be as follows:~~

~~(a) Maintain records.—Pupil accounting records, unless maintained by others assigned by the superintendent, shall be kept by attendance assistants. These records shall be on forms approved pursuant to regulations of the state board.~~

(1)(b) INVESTIGATE NONENROLLMENT AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES.—A designated school representative ~~In accordance with procedure established by the state board, attendance assistants shall investigate cases of nonenrollment and unexcused absences from school of all children subject to compulsory school attendance within the compulsory school age.~~

(2)(c) GIVE WRITTEN NOTICE.—Under the direction of the superintendent, a designated school representative ~~the attendance assistant~~ shall give written notice, either in person or by return-receipt registered mail, to the parent, guardian, or other person having control when no valid reason is found for a child's nonenrollment in school or when the child has a minimum of 3 but fewer than 6 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days, requiring enrollment or attendance within 3 days after ~~from~~ the date of notice. If the such notice and requirement are ignored, the designated school representative attendance assistant shall report the case to the superintendent, and may refer the case to the case staffing committee, established pursuant to s. 39.426, if the conditions of s. 232.19(3) have been met. The superintendent may take such steps as are necessary to bring criminal prosecution against the parent, guardian, or other person having control. ~~No further written notice of the child's absence from school is required to be given to the parent, guardian, or other person having control unless the child, upon his or her return to school, remains in attendance for 10 consecutive days.~~

(3)(d) RETURN CHILD TO PARENT.—A designated school representative ~~The attendance assistant~~ shall visit the home or place of residence of a child and any other place in which he or she is likely to find any child who is required to attend school when such child is not enrolled or is absent from school during school hours without an excuse, and, when the such child is has been found, shall return the child to his or her parent or to the principal or teacher in charge of the school, or to the private tutor from whom absent.

~~(e) Visit home.—The attendance assistant shall visit promptly the home of each child of school age in his or her attendance district not in attendance upon the school, and of any child who should attend the Florida State School for the Deaf and the Blind, and who is reported as not enrolled in that school or as absent without excuse.~~

(4) WRITTEN NOTICE.—If no valid reason is found for such nonenrollment or absence, ~~from such school or schools~~ the designated school representative attendance assistant shall give written notice to the parent, requiring the child's enrollment or attendance as prescribed above. The designated school representative attendance assistant shall secure the written approval of the president of the Florida State School for the Deaf and the Blind before he or she directs or requests the parents of any child to take or send such child to that school. Ten days' notice must be given in the case of a child who is ordered sent to that school. On refusal or failure of the parent to meet such requirement, the designated school representative attendance assistant shall report the same to the superintendent, and that official shall proceed to take such action as is prescribed in s. 232.19(2).

(5)(f) REPORT TO THE DIVISION OF JOBS AND BENEFITS.—A designated school representative ~~The attendance assistant~~ shall report to the Division of Jobs and Benefits of the Department of Labor and Employment Security or to any person acting in similar capacity who may be designated by law to receive such notices, all violations of the Child Labor Law that may come to his or her knowledge.

~~(6)(g)~~ RIGHT TO INSPECT.—A designated school representative ~~The attendance assistant~~ shall have the same right of access to, and inspection of, establishments where minors may be employed or detained as is given by law to the Division of Jobs and Benefits only for the purpose of ascertaining whether children of compulsory school age are actually employed there and are actually working there regularly. The designated school representative ~~attendance assistant~~ shall, if he or she finds unsatisfactory working conditions or violations of the Child Labor Law, report his or her findings to the Division of Jobs and Benefits or its agents.

~~(7)(h)~~ RECORDS ~~Record of visits.~~—Each designated school representative who performs duties according to this section ~~The attendance assistant~~ shall keep an accurate record of all children returned to schools or homes, of all cases prosecuted, and of all other service performed. A written report of all such activities shall be made quarterly to the school board and shall be filed in the office of the superintendent. If a child repeats a pattern of nonattendance within one school year, the designated school representative shall resume the series of escalating activities at the point at which he or she had previously left off.

Section 9. Section 232.19, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

232.19 Court procedure and penalties.—The court procedure and penalties for the enforcement of the provisions of this chapter, relating to compulsory school attendance, shall be as follows:

(1) COURT JURISDICTION.—The circuit court has original and exclusive jurisdiction of all proceedings against, or prosecutions of, children under the provisions of this chapter. Proceedings against, or prosecutions of, parents or employers as provided by this section shall be in the court of each county having jurisdiction of misdemeanors wherein trial by jury is afforded the defendant.

(2) NONENROLLMENT AND NONATTENDANCE CASES.—

(a) In each case of nonenrollment or of nonattendance upon the part of a child who is required to attend some school, when no valid reason for such nonenrollment or nonattendance is found, the superintendent shall institute a criminal prosecution against the child's parent.

(b) Each public school principal or the principal's designee shall notify the district school board of each minor under its jurisdiction who accumulates 15 unexcused absences in a period of 90 calendar days. Each designee of the governing body of each private school, and each parent whose child is enrolled in a home education program, may provide the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles with the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor under his or her jurisdiction who fails to satisfy relevant attendance requirements and who fails to otherwise satisfy the requirements of s. 322.091. The superintendent must provide the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor who has been reported under this paragraph and who fails to otherwise satisfy the requirements

of s. 322.091. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles may not issue a driver's license or learner's driver's license to, and shall suspend any previously issued driver's license or learner's driver's license of, any such minor, pursuant to the provisions of s. 322.091.

(3) HABITUAL TRUANCY CASES.—In accordance with procedures established by the district school board, the designated school representative
~~The school social worker, the attendance assistant, or the school superintendent's designee if there is no school social worker or attendance assistant~~ shall refer a student who is habitually truant and the student's family to the children-in-need-of-services and families-in-need-of-services provider or the case staffing committee, established pursuant to s. 39.426, as determined by the cooperative agreement required in this section. The case staffing committee may request the Department of Juvenile Justice or its designee to file a child-in-need-of-services petition based upon the report and efforts of the school district or other community agency or may seek to resolve the truancy behavior through the school or community-based organizations or agencies. Prior to and subsequent to the filing of a child-in-need-of-services petition due to habitual truancy, the appropriate governmental agencies must allow a reasonable time to complete actions required by this subsection to remedy the conditions leading to the truant behavior. The following criteria must be met and documented in writing prior to the filing of a petition:

(a) The child must have 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days with or without the knowledge or consent of the child's parent or legal guardian, must be subject to compulsory school attendance, and must not be exempt under and must not be exempt from attendance by virtue of being over the age of compulsory school attendance or by meeting the criteria in s. 232.06, s. 232.09, or any other exemption specified by law or the rules of the State Board of Education.

(b) In addition to the actions described in s. 232.17, the school administration must have completed the following activities to determine the cause, and to attempt the remediation, of the child's truant behavior:

1. After a minimum of 3 and prior to ~~6~~ 15 unexcused absences within 90 calendar days, one or more meetings must have been held, either in person or by phone, between a designated school representative ~~school attendance assistant or school social worker~~, the child's parent or guardian, and the child, if necessary, to report and to attempt to solve the truancy problem. However, if the designated school representative ~~school attendance assistant or school social worker~~ has documented the refusal of the parent or guardian to participate in the meetings, this requirement has been met.

2. Educational counseling must have been provided to determine whether curriculum changes would help solve the truancy problem, and, if any changes were indicated, such changes must have been instituted but proved unsuccessful in remedying the truant behavior. Such curriculum changes may include enrollment of the child in an alternative education program that meets the specific educational and behavioral needs of the child, including a second chance school, as provided for in s. 230.2316, designed to resolve truant behavior.

3. Educational evaluation, which may include psychological evaluation, must have been provided to assist in determining the specific condition, if any, that is contributing to the child's nonattendance. The evaluation must have been supplemented by specific efforts by the school to remedy any diagnosed condition.

If a child ~~who is subject to within the~~ compulsory school attendance age is responsive to the interventions described in this paragraph and has completed the necessary requirements to pass the current grade as indicated in the district pupil progression plan, the child shall be passed.

(4) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—

(e) The district manager of the Department of Juvenile Justice or the district manager's designee, ~~the district administrator of the Department of Children and Family Services or the district administrator's designee,~~ and the superintendent of the local school district or the superintendent's designee must ~~develop~~ have developed a cooperative interagency agreement that: ~~which~~

(a) Clearly defines each department's role, responsibility, and function in working with habitual truants and their families.

(b) Identifies and implements measures to resolve and reduce truant behavior. ~~The interagency agreement shall specify that the participants~~

(c) Addresses ~~address~~ issues of streamlining service delivery, the appropriateness of legal intervention, case management, the role and responsibility of the case staffing committee, student and parental intervention and involvement, and community action plans. ~~The interagency agreement shall~~

(d) Delineates ~~delineate~~ timeframes for implementation and identifies ~~identify~~ a mechanism for reporting results by the district juvenile justice manager or the district manager's designee and the superintendent of schools or the superintendent's designee to the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Education and other governmental entities as needed. ~~The cooperative agreement may designate~~

(e) Designates which agency ~~is shall be~~ responsible for each of the intervention steps in s. 39.01(73), or this section, to if such designation shall yield more effective and efficient intervention services.

(5)(4) ATTENDANCE REGISTER AS EVIDENCE.—The register of attendance of pupils at a public, parochial, denominational, or private school, or of pupils taught by a private tutor, kept in compliance with rules ~~and regulations~~ of the state board is prima facie evidence of the facts which it is required to show. A certified copy of any rule ~~or regulation~~ and a statement of the date of its adoption ~~and promulgation~~ by the state board is admissible as prima facie evidence of the provisions of the ~~such~~ rule ~~or regulation~~ and of the date of its adoption ~~or promulgation~~.

(6)(5) PROCEEDINGS AND PROSECUTIONS; WHO MAY BEGIN.—Proceedings or prosecutions under ~~the provisions of~~ this chapter may be

commenced ~~begun~~ by the superintendent, by a designated school representative ~~an attendance assistant~~, by the probation officer of the county, by the executive officer of any court of competent jurisdiction, or by an officer of any court of competent jurisdiction, or by a duly authorized agent of the Department of Education or the Department of Juvenile Justice. If a proceeding has been commenced against both a parent or legal guardian and a child pursuant to this chapter, the presiding courts shall make every effort to coordinate sanctions against the child and parent or legal guardian, including ordering the child and parent or legal guardian to perform community service hours or attend counseling together.

(7)(6) PENALTIES.—The penalties for refusing or failing to comply with ~~the provisions of this chapter~~ shall be as follows:

(a) The parent or legal guardian.—

1. A parent or legal guardian who refuses or fails to have a child who is under his or her control attend school regularly, or who refuses or fails to comply with the requirements in subsection (3), ~~commits is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083 by law.~~

2. The continued or habitual absence of a child without the consent of the principal or teacher in charge of the school he or she attends or should attend, or of the tutor who instructs or should instruct him or her, is prima facie evidence of a violation of this chapter; however, a showing the court of the appropriate jurisdiction, upon finding that the parent or legal guardian has made a bona fide and diligent effort to control and keep the child in school, shall be an affirmative defense to excuse the parent from any criminal or other liability under this subsection prescribed herein and the court shall refer the parent or legal guardian and child for counseling, guidance, or other needed services.

3. In addition to any other punishment, the court shall order a parent or legal guardian who has violated this section to send the child to school, and may also order the parent or legal guardian to participate in an approved parent training class, attend school with the child unless this would cause undue hardship, perform community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate. If a parent or legal guardian is ordered to attend school with a child, the school shall provide for programming to educate the parent or legal guardian and child on the importance of school attendance. It shall be unlawful to terminate any employee solely because he or she is attending school with his or her child pursuant to a court order.

(b) The principal or teacher.—A principal or teacher in any charge of a school, public, parochial, denominational, or private school, or a private tutor who willfully violates any provision of this chapter may, upon satisfactory proof of such violation, have his or her certificate revoked by the Department of Education.

(c) The employer.—

1. ~~An employer who fails to notify the superintendent when he or she ceases to employ a child commits is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083 by law.~~

2. An employer who terminates any employee solely because he or she is attending school with a child pursuant to court order commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(d) The child.—

1. In addition to any other authorized sanctions, the court shall order a child found to be a habitual truant to make up all school work missed and may order the child to pay a civil penalty of up to \$2, based on the child's ability to pay, for each day of school missed, perform up to 25 community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate.

2. Upon a second or subsequent finding that a child is a habitual truant, the court, in addition to any other authorized sanctions, shall order the child to make up all school work missed and may order the child to pay a civil penalty of up to \$5, based on the child's ability to pay, for each day of school missed, perform up to 50 community service hours at the school, or participate in counseling or other services, as appropriate.

Section 10. Section 232.195, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

232.195 Continuation of truancy remedial activities upon transfer of student; retention of legal jurisdiction.—

(1) If, during the activities designed to remedy truant behavior as described in s. 232.19, the parent or legal guardian of the student who is the subject of such activities transfers the student to another school district in this state in an attempt to circumvent the remedial procedures which have already begun, the administration of the school from which the student transferred shall provide to the administration of the new school, at no charge, copies of all available records and documents relevant to such remedial activities, and the administration of the new school shall begin remedial activities in the program that most closely meets the transfer student's needs.

(2) In the event that a legal proceeding has commenced, as provided in s. 232.19(3), against a student who has been determined to be a habitual truant, the movement of the student who is the subject of such proceeding to another circuit court district in this state will not affect the jurisdiction of the court to proceed with the case under the law.

Section 11. Section 232.197, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

232.197 Notification to schools of court action.—If a court takes action that directly involves a child's school, including, but not limited to, an order that a student attend school, attend school with his or her parent or legal guardian, perform at grade level, or perform community service hours at the

school, the office of the clerk of the court shall provide notice to the school of the court's action.

Section 12. Section 232.2452, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

232.2452 Report cards; end-of-the-year status.—

(1) Each school district shall establish and publish policies requiring the content and regular issuance of student report cards for all elementary school, middle school, and high school students. These report cards must clearly depict and grade:

(a) The student's academic performance in each class or course, which in grades 1 through 12 must be based upon examinations as well as written papers, class participation, and other academic performance criteria.

(b) The student's conduct and behavior.

(c) The student's attendance, including absences and tardiness.

(2) Each school district is encouraged to establish no fewer than two districtwide report card pickup days per year to facilitate teacher-parent conferences and enhance parental responsibility for student performance and behavior. During a report card pickup day, each parent or guardian may visit his or her child's school and teacher and receive the child's report card during hours established by the district school board. School districts are encouraged to establish flexible scheduling of personnel during the hours designated by the district school board for report card pickup to allow before-school, after-school, evening, or weekend opportunities for parents to visit the school and teacher.

(3) A student's final report card for a school year shall contain a statement indicating end-of-the-year status regarding performance or nonperformance at grade level, acceptable or unacceptable behavior and attendance, and promotion or nonpromotion.

School districts shall not allow schools to exempt students from academic performance requirements based on practices or policies designed to encourage student attendance.

Section 13. Subsection (4) is added to section 232.25, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement to read:

232.25 Pupils subject to control of school.—

(4) Each pupil enrolled in a school may be required to take the following school child's daily conduct pledge:

(a) I will be respectful at all times and obedient unless asked to do wrong.

(b) I will not hurt another person with my words or my acts, because it is wrong to hurt others.

(c) I will tell the truth, because it is wrong to tell a lie.

(d) I will not steal, because it is wrong to take someone else's property.

(e) I will respect my body, and not take drugs.

(f) I will show strength and courage, and not do something wrong, just because others are doing it.

(g) I pledge to be nonviolent and to respect my teachers and fellow classmates.

Section 14. Subsections (1) and (2) of section 322.05, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, are amended to read:

322.05 Persons not to be licensed.—The department may not issue a license:

(1) To a person who is under the age of 16 years, except that the department may issue a learner's driver's license to a person who is at least 15 years of age and who meets the requirements of ss. 322.091 and 322.1615 ~~s. 322.161~~ and of any other applicable law or rule.

(2) To a person who is at least 16 years of age but is under 18 years of age unless the person meets the requirements of s. 322.091 and holds a valid:

(a) Learner's driver's license for at least 6 months before applying for a license; or

(b) License that was issued in another state or in a foreign jurisdiction and that would not be subject to suspension or revocation under the laws of this state.

Section 15. Subsection (3) is added to section 322.09, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, as amended by section 4 of chapter 93-144, Laws of Florida, to read:

322.09 Application of minors.—

(3) The department may not issue a driver's license or learner's driver's license to any applicant under the age of 18 years who is not in compliance with the requirements of s. 322.091.

Section 16. Section 322.091, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

322.091 Attendance requirements.—

(1) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR DRIVING PRIVILEGES.—A minor is not eligible for driving privileges unless that minor:

(a) Is enrolled in a public school, nonpublic school, or home education program and satisfies relevant attendance requirements;

- (b) Has received a high school diploma, a high school equivalency diploma, a special diploma, or a certificate of high school completion;
- (c) Is enrolled in a study course in preparation for the Test of General Educational Development and satisfies relevant attendance requirements;
- (d) Is enrolled in other educational activities approved by the district school board and satisfies relevant attendance requirements;
- (e) Has been issued a certificate of exemption according to s. 232.06; or
- (f) Has received a hardship waiver under this section.

The department may not issue a driver's license or learner's driver's license to, or shall suspend the driver's license or learner's driver's license of, any minor concerning whom the department receives notification of noncompliance with the requirements of this section.

(2) NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO SUSPEND; SUSPENSION; RECORD OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—

(a) The department shall notify each minor for whom the department has received notification of noncompliance with the requirements of this section as provided in s. 232.19, and the minor's parent or guardian, of the department's intent to suspend the minor's driving privileges.

(b) The minor, or the parent or guardian of the minor, has 15 calendar days after the date of receipt of this notice to provide proof of compliance with the requirements of this section as provided in subsection (4) or to request a hardship waiver hearing under subsection (3).

(c) Twenty days after the date of issuance of this notice, the department shall suspend the minor's operator's license or learner's driver's license or record the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each minor who does not possess a driver's license or learner's driver's license, unless the minor has provided the department with verification of compliance with the requirements of subsection (1) or the appropriate school official has provided the department with verification of a request for a waiver hearing.

(d) Upon notification of the outcome of a hardship waiver hearing, the department shall suspend the driver's license or learner's driver's license of a minor who was denied a hardship waiver, or record the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of a minor who does not possess a driver's license or learner's driver's license and who was denied a hardship waiver.

(e) The department may not issue a driver's license or learner's driver's license to any minor for whom it has a record of noncompliance with the requirements of subsection (1) unless the minor submits verification of compliance pursuant to subsection (4).

(3) HARDSHIP WAIVER AND APPEAL.—

(a) A minor, or the parent or guardian of a minor, has 15 calendar days after the date of receipt of the notice of intent to suspend to request a hardship waiver hearing before the public school principal, the principal's designee, or the designee of the governing body of a private school for the purpose of reviewing the pending suspension of driving privileges. The school official receiving the request shall notify the department of the request for a waiver hearing within 24 hours after receiving the request. Public school officials shall also notify the district school board of the request for a waiver hearing. The hearing must be conducted within 30 calendar days after the public school principal, the principal's designee, or the designee of the governing body of a private school receives the request.

(b) The public school principal, the principal's designee, or the designee of the governing body of a private school shall waive the requirements of subsection (1) for any minor under the school's jurisdiction for whom a personal or family hardship requires that the minor have a driver's license for his or her own, or his or her family's, employment or medical care. The minor or the minor's parent or guardian may present other evidence that indicates compliance with the requirements of subsection (1) at the waiver hearing. The public school principal, the principal's designee, or the designee of the governing body of a private school shall take into consideration the recommendations of teachers, other school officials, guidance counselors, or academic advisers before waiving the requirements of subsection (1).

(c) The public school principal, the principal's designee, or the designee of the governing body of a private school shall notify the department of the outcome of a minor's hardship waiver hearing within 24 hours after conducting the hearing. Public school officials shall also notify the district school board of the outcome of the hearing.

(d) Any person denied a hardship waiver by a public school principal, the principal's designee, or the designee of the governing body of a private school may appeal the decision to the district school board or the governing body of the private school. The district school board or the governing body of the private school shall notify the department if the hardship waiver is subsequently granted.

(4) VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE AND REINSTATEMENT.—A district school board shall provide a minor with written verification that he or she is in compliance with the requirements of subsection (1) if the district determines that he or she has been in compliance for 30 days prior to the request for verification of compliance. Upon receiving written verification that the minor is again in compliance with the requirements of subsection (1), the department shall reinstate the minor's driving privilege. Thereafter, if the school district determines that the minor is not in compliance with the requirements of subsection (1), the department shall suspend the minor's driving privilege until the minor is 18 years of age or otherwise satisfies the requirements of subsection (1), whichever occurs first.

(5) REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY.—The department shall report quarterly to each school district the legal name, sex, date of birth, and social security number of each student whose driving privileges have been suspended under this section.

Section 17. Section 39.015, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

39.015 Rules relating to habitual truants; adoption by Department of Education and Department of Juvenile Justice.—The Department of Juvenile Justice and the Department of Education shall work together on the development of, and shall adopt, rules as necessary for the implementation of ss. 39.01(73), 39.403(2), and 232.19~~(3)~~ and (6)(a).

Section 18. Section 230.235, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

230.235 Policy of zero tolerance for crime.—

(1) Each school district shall adopt a policy of zero tolerance for crime and substance abuse pursuant to this section. Such a policy shall include the reporting of delinquent acts and crimes occurring whenever and wherever students are under the jurisdiction of the school district.

(2) Each school district shall enter into an agreement with the county sheriff's office or local police department specifying guidelines for ensuring that felonies and violent misdemeanors, whether committed by a student or adult, and delinquent acts that would be felonies or violent misdemeanors if committed by an adult, are reported to law enforcement. Such agreements shall include the role of school resource officers, if applicable, in handling reported incidents, special circumstances in which school officials may handle incidents without filing a report to law enforcement, and a procedure for ensuring that school personnel properly report appropriate delinquent acts and crimes. The school principal shall be responsible for ensuring that all school personnel are properly informed as to their responsibilities regarding crime reporting, that appropriate delinquent acts and crimes are properly reported, and that actions taken in cases with special circumstances are properly taken and documented.

Section 19. Section 232.277, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

232.277 Reports of suspected substance or alcohol abuse; exemption from liability.—

(1) School personnel are required to report to the principal or principal's designee any suspected unlawful use, possession, or sale by a student of any controlled substance, as defined in s. 893.02; any counterfeit controlled substance, as defined in s. 831.31; any alcoholic beverage, as defined in s. 561.01(4); or model glue. School personnel are exempt from civil liability when reporting in good faith to the proper school authority such suspected unlawful use, possession, or sale by a student. Only a principal or principal's designee is authorized to contact a parent or legal guardian of a student regarding this situation.

(2)(a) It is the intent of the Legislature that all school students understand that the magnitude of the harm caused by unlawful use, possession, or sale of the substances set forth in subsection (1) mandates the reporting of occurrences of such unlawful acts for prosecution or other action as appropriate.

(b) Reports made and verified under subsection (1) shall be forwarded to an appropriate agency.

(c) School personnel shall timely notify the student's parent, guardian, or legal custodian that a verified report made under subsection (1) with respect to the student has been made and forwarded as provided for in this subsection.

Section 20. Effective October 1, 1997, section 790.115, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

790.115 Possessing or discharging weapons or firearms on school property prohibited; penalties; exceptions.—

(1) A person who exhibits any sword, sword cane, firearm, electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon, including a razor blade, box cutter, or knife, except as authorized in support of school-sanctioned activities, in the presence of one or more persons in a rude, careless, angry, or threatening manner and not in lawful self-defense, on the grounds or facilities of any school, school bus, or school bus stop, or within 1,000 feet of the real property that comprises a public or private elementary school, middle school, or secondary school, during school hours or during the time of a sanctioned school activity, commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084. This subsection does not apply to the exhibition of a firearm or weapon on private real property within 1,000 feet of a school by the owner of such property or by a person whose presence on such property has been authorized, licensed, or invited by the owner.

(2)(a) A person shall not possess any firearm, electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon, including a razor blade, box cutter, or knife, except as authorized in support of school-sanctioned activities, on the property of any school, school bus, or school bus stop; however, a person may carry a firearm:

1. In a case to a firearms program, class or function which has been approved in advance by the principal or chief administrative officer of the school as a program or class to which firearms could be carried;

2. In a case to a vocational school having a firearms training range; or

3. In a vehicle pursuant to s. 790.25(5); except that school districts may adopt written and published policies that waive the exception in this subparagraph for purposes of student and campus parking privileges.

For the purposes of this section, "school" means any preschool, elementary school, middle school, junior high school, secondary school, vocational school, or postsecondary school, whether public or nonpublic.

(b) A person who willfully and knowingly possesses any electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon, including a razor blade, box cutter, or knife, except as authorized in support of school-sanctioned activi-

ties, in violation of this subsection commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

(c)1. A person who willfully and knowingly possesses any firearm in violation of this subsection commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

2. A person who stores or leaves a loaded firearm within the reach or easy access of a minor who obtains the firearm and commits a violation of subparagraph 1. commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083; except that this does not apply if the firearm was stored or left in a securely locked box or container or in a location which a reasonable person would have believed to be secure, or was securely locked with a firearm-mounted push-button combination lock or a trigger lock; if the minor obtains the firearm as a result of an unlawful entry by any person; or to members of the Armed Forces, National Guard, or State Militia, or to police or other law enforcement officers, with respect to firearm possession by a minor which occurs during or incidental to the performance of their official duties.

(d) A person who discharges any weapon or firearm while in violation of paragraph (a), unless discharged for lawful defense of himself or another or for a lawful purpose, commits a felony of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

(e) The penalties of this subsection shall not apply to persons licensed under s. 790.06. Persons licensed under s. 790.06 shall be punished as provided in s. 790.06(12), except that a licenseholder who unlawfully discharges a weapon or firearm on school property as prohibited by this subsection commits a felony of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

(3) This section does not apply to any law enforcement officer as defined in s. 943.10(1), (2), (3), (4), (6), (7), (8), (9), or (14).

Section 21. Section 230.23015, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

230.23015 Students violating s. 784.081; expulsion ~~or~~ and placement in alternative school setting.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, each district school board shall adopt rules providing that any student found to have committed a violation of s. 784.081(1), (2), or (3) shall be expelled ~~or~~ and placed in an alternative school setting ~~or other youth services or justice program, as appropriate for a minimum period of 1 year.~~ Upon being charged with the offense, the student shall be removed from the classroom immediately and placed in an alternative school setting pending disposition.

Section 22. Section 322.0601, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

Section 23. Section 232.433, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

232.433 Safety standards for cheerleaders.—The Florida High School Activities Association or successor organization shall adopt statewide uni-

form safety standards for student cheerleaders and spirit groups that participate in any school activity or extracurricular student activity. The Florida High School Activities Association or successor organization shall adopt the "Official High School Spirit Rules," published by the National Federation of State High School Associations, as the statewide uniform safety standards.

Section 24. Subsection (8) is added to section 228.057, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, to read:

228.057 Public school parental choice.—

(8) Notwithstanding any provision of this section, a school district with schools operating on both multiple session schedules and single session schedules shall afford parents of students in multiple session schools preferred access to the controlled open enrollment program of the school district.

Section 25. The intent of sections 26 and 27 of this act is to create a positive and safe learning environment for the children of Florida and to keep disruptive children from affecting the ability of public school students to learn.

Section 26. Subsection (5) of section 39.045, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

39.045 Oaths; records; confidential information.—

(5) Except as provided in subsections (3), (8), (9), and (10), and s. 943.053, all information obtained under this part in the discharge of official duty by any judge, any employee of the court, any authorized agent of the Department of Juvenile Justice, the Parole Commission, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, the Department of Corrections, the district juvenile justice boards, any law enforcement agent, or any licensed professional or licensed community agency representative participating in the assessment or treatment of a juvenile is confidential and may be disclosed only to the authorized personnel of the court, the Department of Juvenile Justice and its designees, the Department of Corrections, the Parole Commission, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Board, law enforcement agents, school superintendents and their designees, any licensed professional or licensed community agency representative participating in the assessment or treatment of a juvenile, and others entitled under this part to receive that information, or upon order of the court. Within each county, the sheriff, the chiefs of police, the district school superintendent, and the department shall enter into an interagency agreement for the purpose of sharing information about juvenile offenders among all parties. The agreement must specify the conditions under which summary criminal history information is to be made available to appropriate school personnel, and the conditions under which school records are to be made available to appropriate department personnel. Such agreement shall require notification to any classroom teacher of assignment to the teacher's classroom of a juvenile who has been placed in a community control or commitment program for a felony offense. The agencies entering into such agreement must comply with s. 943.0525, and must maintain the confidenti-

ality of information that is otherwise exempt from s. 119.07(1), as provided by law.

Section 27. Subsection (9) of section 948.03, Florida Statutes, 1996 Supplement, is amended to read:

948.03 Terms and conditions of probation or community control.—

(9)(a) As a condition of community control, probation, or probation following incarceration, require an offender who has not obtained a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma or who lacks basic or functional literacy skills, upon acceptance by an adult education program, to make a good faith effort toward completion of such basic or functional literacy skills or high school equivalency diploma, as defined in ~~s. ss. 228.0713 and 229.814~~, in accordance with the assessed adult general education needs of the individual offender. The court shall not revoke community control, probation, or probation following incarceration because of the offender's inability to achieve such skills or diploma but may revoke community control, probation, or probation following incarceration if the offender fails to make a good faith effort to achieve such skills or diploma. The court may grant early termination of community control, probation, or probation following incarceration upon the offender's successful completion of the approved program. As used in this subsection, "good faith effort" means the offender is enrolled in a program of instruction and is attending and making satisfactory progress toward completion of the requirements.

(b) A juvenile on community control who is a public school student must attend a public adult education program or a dropout prevention program, pursuant to s. 230.2316, which includes a second chance school or an alternative to expulsion, if the school district where the juvenile is enrolled offers such programs, unless the principal of the school determines that special circumstances warrant continuation in the regular educational school program.

(c) If a juvenile on community control attends a regular educational school program because a public adult education program or dropout prevention program, which includes a second chance school or an alternative to expulsion, is not available in the school district, the identity of the juvenile on community control, the nature of the felony offense committed by the juvenile, and the conditions of community control must be made known to each of the student's teachers.

Section 28. Except as otherwise provided in this act, this act shall take effect July 1, 1997.

Became a law without the Governor's approval May 30, 1997.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 29, 1997.