Breaking Down HB 1: How Would the Florida House's Voucher Expansion Bill Impact Public Education Funding?

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RESEARCH TEAM

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Currently, Florida has 3 kinds of vouchers

- **Family Empowerment Scholarships – Educational Options** are funds paid directly to private schools for tuition (traditional private school voucher)

- **Family Empowerment Scholarships – Unique Abilities** – parents use these funds to pay for approved educational uses (educational savings account)

- Florida Tax Credit scholarship, like the FES-EO, these payments are made directly to private schools for tuition (tax credit scholarship)

What is a voucher?
Who is eligible now?

- **FES– Educational Options** – students with families earning up to 375% of the federal poverty level ($112.5K for a family of four in 2023).

- **FES-Unique Abilities** – students with disabilities regardless of income.
How is FES funded?

- These scholarships are funded with state education funds calculated using a formula called the Florida Education Finance Program.

- These scholarships are a base amount allocated to school districts public schools on a per pupil basis plus additional funds for special needs, and are redirected from a school district’s state aid to the voucher program.

- At the final calculation of FEFP of the 2021-22 school year $8,515 on average per student was redirected to private education from public state aid.
HB 1 expands eligibility for the FES – Educational Options to Florida residents who are eligible to attend public school K-12.

There would no longer be an income ceiling on eligibility.

FES – Unique Abilities cap growth is increased to 3% of the state’s Exceptional Student Education population.

Students currently in private schools are eligible for vouchers, regardless of whether they have previously attended public schools.

Children who are home schooled are now eligible for vouchers.

It also converts all FES vouchers to educational savings accounts and allows for educational expenses outside of tuition costs.
Florida Students with Current Voucher, Students Eligible with HB1, and Estimated Voucher Use 2023-24 with HB1

- 2021-22 Voucher Students: 124,063
- Public School Students: 2,733,807
- Private School Students no FES: 292,022
- Home-schooled Students: 152,109
- 2023-24 Estimated Voucher Students: 457,556
Florida State Aid Rerouted through FES Vouchers

- 2021-22: $1.1B
- 2022-23: $1.4B
- 2023-24 Estimated cost with HB1: $4B
Florida State Aid Per Pupil Change in 2023-24 from HB1

- Public School State Aid: $4,175
- Estimated Public School State Aid with HB1: $3,261
Access these charts at the district level

http://edlawcenter.org/research/interactive-tools/florida-district-views.html
This year more than $1.3 billion public school dollars are diverted to private schools from school district budgets. Much of these funds are taken after school budgets are formulated.

In 2023-24, revised estimates project an annual cost in excess of $4 billion.

There is no funding identified to support the expansion of responsibilities of the public schools to serve more students.

Under HB1, students receiving FES vouchers would form a school district larger than Hillsborough, both in the number of students and needed budget, one of the largest school district in the nation.
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