



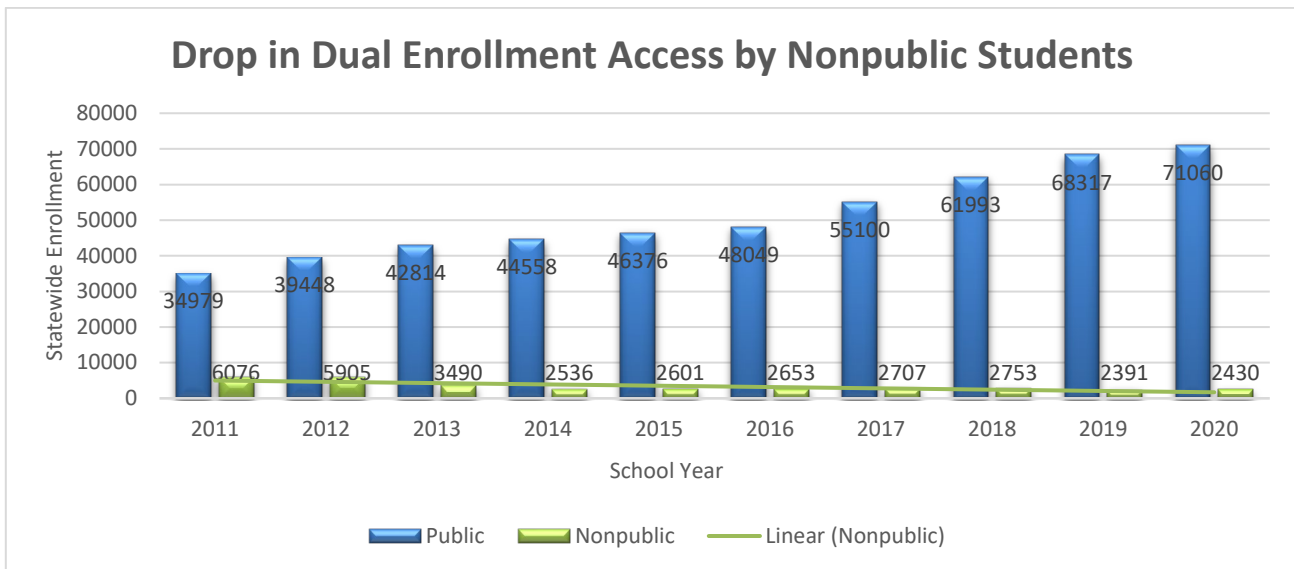
**Nonpublic School Families Urge Support for SB 52 by Sen. Rodrigues and HB 281
By Representatives Duggan and Zika to Restore Dual Enrollment Program Access**
FAANS Position Paper for 2021 Legislative Session

Introduction: For nearly 20 years, Florida law recognized the value of dual enrollment courses by allowing free access by all students whether educated in public or nonpublic schools or home education programs. This changed during the 2012 session. For the first time, the Legislature allowed public colleges and universities to charge nonpublic middle and high schools for courses.

Consequently, there has been an alarming 60 percent drop in access to dual enrollment by nonpublic school students since the 2010-2011 school year. Public and home education student enrollment increased by 103 and 110 percent, respectively, during this same period (see charts below).

*Statewide Participation Data for Florida’s Dual Enrollment Program			
School Year:	Public Students:	Homeschool Students:	Nonpublic Students:
2010-2011	34979	1746	6076
2011-2012	39448	1916	5905
2012-2013	42814	2069	3490
2013-2014	44558	2088	2536
2014-2015	46376	2401	2601
2015-2016	48049	2553	2653
2016-2017	55100	2814	2707
2017-2018	61993	3268	2753
2018-2019	68317	3643	2391
2019-2020	71060	3667	2430
Percentage Change:	103.2% Increase	110% Increase	60% Decrease

***Source:** This is December 2020 data from the Florida Department of Education showing dual enrollment students enrolled in at least one course at a Florida College System institution (unduplicated by credit- or clock-hour enrollment).



Analysis: Most independent and faith-based schools keep tuition and fees well below the true cost to educate each child. This is accomplished by actively soliciting alumni and community support. Current Florida policy for dual enrollment hampers school choice by providing free dual enrollment courses to some groups of students but not others.

Furthermore, according to multiple studies, dual enrollment courses provide key benefits to students and society. Research shows the following:

- First-generation students in college gain confidence in navigating the postsecondary realm.
- These students are thus more likely to attend and complete college.
- A 2017 study by Columbia University found that 68 percent of dual enrollment students went on to attend college and earn a bachelor's degree.
- Though more research is needed, some evidence suggests that a reduction in overall student debt occurs for individuals with access to these courses.

Rationale: A change in law could restore the long-standing policy that dual enrollment courses – as an integral part of the state's system of education – should be offered free to all students.

- The 2012 legislative change was a well-intentioned effort to make sure the State clarified how districts and colleges received funding for dual-enrollment students.
- The move to allow colleges to invoice nonpublic schools – as an unintended impact – drives up the costs of nonpublic school education for all of those who desire it.
- Nonpublic schools would no longer be forced to pass along the cost of doing business to families by increasing overall tuition and fees.
- This approach makes education policy fairer for all Florida families. Tuition and fees are kept affordable since dual enrollment would no longer increase total education costs regardless of whether students desire to participate in the program.

Solution: The Legislature should fully restore dual enrollment access by creating the Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program as proposed under Senate Bill 52 by Sen. Ray Rodrigues (R, Fort Myers) and House Bill 281 by Rep. Wyman Duggan (R, Jacksonville) and Rep. Ardian Zika (R, Land O'Lakes). This would reimburse eligible colleges and universities for dual enrollment tuition and instructional material costs. Furthermore, adequate funding for these scholarships should be included in the General Appropriations Act.

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