

# BusinessWeek

**NOVEMBER 24, 2003**

**THE WEB SMART 50 -- CUTTING EDGE**

## **Florida Virtual School**

**The Project:** Make a wide array of courses available online to Florida high school students.

**The Payoff:** Broadens curriculum for poor and rural districts, as well as homebound students.

How do you give every kid a place in a specialized class? Seven-year-old Florida Virtual School, the nation's largest statewide public online high school, is showing the way. The school's 150 certified teachers offer 75 courses, including 11 advanced placement offerings. The state foots the \$8 million in costs and offers free instruction to 1.3 million middle and high school students in Florida.

That's creating enriching opportunities. Rural Haines City, for example, long struggled to find teachers for advanced technology electives. Now, 150 of its tech-focused students are taking most of their courses through Florida Virtual. Enrollments are expected to hit 18,000 this year, triple 2000's level. Still small, but growing.

By William C. Symonds

Copyright 2000-2008 by The McGraw-Hill Companies Inc. All rights reserved.