

Florida Virtual School advocates fear Senate bill would curtail popular program

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Advocates of the Florida Virtual School worry the fast-growing school could be in jeopardy. That worry has been voiced by the school itself, a national education journal and a student-created online petition.

From all quarters, the fear centers on a Senate bill ([SB 1676](#)). Critics say that if it becomes law (so far, it's gotten the nod from several Senate committees), it would eliminate students ability to use the virtual school for electives, like AP courses, or to make up courses they failed in their traditional high schools.

The bill would "drastically impact" the virtual school's mission of providing access to courses to students all over Florida who, because of their location or schedule, find it easier to take a class online than in a classroom, said Julie Young, the school's president, in a statement issued last week.

The virtual school said enrollment could drop by some 24 percent, if the bill is passed, as that is the percentage of students taking the sorts of courses that soon could be eliminated.

Education Next, a policy journal put out by the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, has a piece out that praises the virtual school for pushing reform without creating a huge political fights with the educational establishment. You can read that article [here](#).

In a press release sent this morning, the group said the legislation threatens the school's success.

Some students and parents think so, too. You can find their online petition [here](#).