



<p>1. What is public school deregulation?</p>	<p>Deregulated public schools can be exempted from all statutes of the Florida School Code except those pertaining to civil rights, public records, and student health, safety and welfare. Deregulated schools may also request a waiver from certification requirements to facilitate innovative practices and to allow local selection of educational methods. The school must be able to provide justification for such a request. Such a waiver requires the approval of the Commissioner of Education.</p> <p>The Commissioner may also grant waivers, upon request, for schools that are not deregulated. However, when non-deregulated schools request waivers, it is usually for a single regulation. If a school wants relief from a significant number of state regulations, it appears to have a better chance of receiving the relief if it is designated as a deregulated school.</p> <p>A statute is not eligible for waiver if the waiver would create an inequity in funding or affect funding allocations. Each deregulated school must submit an annual progress report to the district, which is forwarded to the Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner annually forwards these reports, along with an analysis and comparison of student performance in deregulated schools versus those in non-regulated schools to the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.</p>
<p>2. What is the purpose of deregulating schools?</p>	<p>The legislative purpose is to improve student learning, increase learning opportunities, encourage innovative learning models, establish new forms of accountability, make the school the unit of improvement, and relieve the school of paperwork and procedures. The statute allows selected pilot public schools to have the same benefits as their charter school counterparts.</p>
<p>3. How are schools selected?</p>	<p>The following districts are authorized to conduct pilot programs through the 2003-2004 school year: Palm Beach, Pinellas, Seminole, Leon, Walton, Citrus, and Lee Counties. A proposal to be a deregulated school is developed by the school principal and the school advisory council. A majority of the members of the school advisory council must approve the</p>

## Deregulation of Public Schools

	<p>proposal. Additionally, at least 50 percent of the teachers employed at the school must approve the proposal and the school must conduct a survey to show parental support. The district school board then receives and either approves or rejects the proposal by majority vote.</p> <p>Currently, authorized counties participating in the pilot project are Citrus County with 10 schools, Leon County with 5 schools, Palm Beach County with 5 schools, Pinellas County with 1 school, Seminole County with 6 schools, and Walton with 3 schools. Each of these districts report that they have never denied a school's request to be designated as deregulated.</p> <p>Additionally, the A+ Plan, which passed in 1999 allows schools that receive a grade of "A" and schools that show improvement of at least two performance grade categories to become deregulated if they so choose. The DOE reports that no school has been deregulated via this pathway. <b>(See School Grading System Fact Sheet.)</b></p>
<p>4. Will deregulated schools remain public schools?</p>	<p>Deregulated schools remain public schools for all purposes and must continue to be nonsectarian in programs, admission policies, and employment practices. No tuition may be charged and schools remain subject to annual financial audits as do all other public schools.</p>
<p>5. Will deregulation affect school funding?</p>	<p>No. Under the current law, deregulated public schools must be funded in the same manner as other public schools in the school district. Deregulated public schools must still provide instruction for at least the minimum number of days required by law.</p>
<p>6. Are deregulated schools exempt from the school safety statutes?</p>	<p>Deregulated public schools are not exempted from sections of the Florida School Code that pertain to student health, safety and welfare. Deregulated public schools must only employ or contract with staff that have been fingerprinted as required by law. Facilities used by deregulated public schools must comply with the State Uniform Building Code for Public Education Facilities and adhere to fire protection codes pursuant to law.</p>
<p>7. What are the applicable statutes and rules?</p>	<p>Section 228.0565, F.S. -- Deregulated Public Schools          Section 229.592(9)(e), F.S. -- Deregulated status for "A" schools making excellence progress, and schools that have improved at least two program categories.</p>
<p>8. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Department of Education          Division of Public Schools          Office of Public School Choice          Office of Local Control</p>

(850) 413-9707

Florida State University  
College of Education  
Center for the Study of Teaching and Learning  
"Preliminary Report of the Evaluation of the Deregulated  
School Pilot Project"  
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The Florida House of Representatives  
Committee on General Education  
(850) 414-9780