

SENATE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 2287
AN ACT

To repeal sections 135.713, 161.670, 168.021, and 571.010, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof seven new sections relating to elementary and secondary education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Sections 135.713, 161.670, 168.021, and
2 571.010, RSMo, are repealed and seven new sections enacted in
3 lieu thereof, to be known as sections 135.713, 161.670, 167.012,
4 167.013, 168.021, 571.010, and 1, to read as follows:

135.713. 1. Any taxpayer who makes a qualifying
2 contribution to an educational assistance organization after
3 August 28, 2021, may claim a credit against the tax
4 otherwise due under chapter 143, other than taxes withheld
5 under sections 143.191 to 143.265, and chapter 153 in an
6 amount equal to one hundred percent of the amount the
7 taxpayer contributed during the tax year for which the
8 credit is claimed. No taxpayer shall claim a credit **[under]**
9 pursuant to sections 135.712 to 135.719 for any contribution
10 made by the taxpayer, or an agent of the taxpayer, on behalf
11 of the taxpayer's dependent or, in the case of a business
12 taxpayer, on behalf of the business's agent's dependent.

13 2. The amount of the tax credit claimed shall not
14 exceed fifty percent of the taxpayer's state tax liability
15 for the tax year for which the credit is claimed. The state
16 treasurer shall certify the tax credit amount to the
17 taxpayer. A taxpayer may carry the credit forward to any of
18 **[such taxpayer's]** his or her four subsequent tax years. All
19 tax credits authorized **[under]** pursuant to the program shall

20 not be transferred, sold, or assigned, and are not
21 refundable.

22 3. The cumulative amount of tax credits that may be
23 allocated to all taxpayers contributing to educational
24 assistance organizations in any one calendar year shall not
25 exceed fifty million dollars, which amount shall be annually
26 adjusted by the state treasurer for inflation based on the
27 Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for the
28 Midwest region, as defined and officially recorded by the
29 United States Department of Labor or its successor, such
30 annual increase will cease when the amount of tax credits
31 reach seventy-five million dollars. The state treasurer
32 shall establish a procedure by which, from the beginning of
33 the calendar year until August first, the cumulative amount
34 of tax credits shall be allocated on a first-come, first-
35 served basis among all educational assistance
36 organizations. If an educational assistance organization
37 fails to use all, or some percentage to be determined by the
38 state treasurer, of its allocated tax credits during this
39 period, the state treasurer may reallocate these unused tax
40 credits to those educational assistance organizations that
41 have used all, or some percentage to be determined by the
42 state treasurer, of their allocated tax credits during this
43 period. The state treasurer may establish more than one
44 period and reallocate more than once during each calendar
45 year. The state treasurer shall establish the procedure
46 described in this subsection in such a manner as to ensure
47 that taxpayers can claim all the tax credits possible up to
48 the cumulative amount of tax credits available for the
49 calendar year.

50 4. A taxpayer who makes a contribution to an education
51 assistance organization shall not designate the student who
52 will receive a scholarship grant.

53 5. The provisions of sections 135.712 to 135.719 and
54 sections 166.700 to 166.720 shall be effective in any fiscal
55 year immediately [subsequent to] after any fiscal year in
56 which the amount appropriated for pupil transportation
57 [under] pursuant to section 163.161 equals or exceeds forty
58 percent of the projected amount necessary to fully fund
59 transportation aid funding for fiscal year 2021. If the
60 amount appropriated for transportation [under] pursuant to
61 section 163.161 in any succeeding year falls below such
62 amount, no additional scholarships for newly qualified
63 students shall be awarded.

 161.670. 1. Notwithstanding any other law, prior to
2 July 1, 2007, the state board of education shall establish
3 the "Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program" to
4 serve school-age students residing in the state. The
5 Missouri course access and virtual school program shall
6 offer nonclassroom-based instruction in a virtual setting
7 using technology, intranet, or internet methods of
8 communication. Any student under the age of twenty-one in
9 grades kindergarten through twelve who resides in this state
10 shall be eligible to enroll in the Missouri course access
11 and virtual school program pursuant to subsection 3 of this
12 section.

 2. (1) For purposes of calculation and distribution
14 of state school aid, students enrolled in the Missouri
15 course access and virtual school program shall be included
16 in the student enrollment of the school district in which
17 the student is enrolled under the relevant provisions of
18 subsection 3 of this section ; provided that any such] for
19 such enrollment. Student attendance for full-time virtual
20 program students shall only be included in any district
21 pupil attendance calculation under chapter 163 [and any
22 charter school pupil attendance calculation under section

23 160.415,] using current-year pupil attendance for such full-
24 time virtual program pupils[; and further provided that].
25 For the purpose of calculating average daily attendance in
26 full time virtual programs under this section, average daily
27 attendance shall be defined as the quotient or the sum of
28 the quotients obtained by dividing the total number of hours
29 attended in a term by enrolled pupils between the ages of
30 five and twenty-one by the actual number of hours that the
31 program was in session in that term, and the provisions of
32 section 162.1250 shall not apply to such funding
33 calculation. Such calculation shall be generated by the
34 virtual provider and provided to the host district for
35 submission to the department of elementary and secondary
36 education. Such students may complete their instructional
37 activities, as defined in subsection 4 of this section,
38 during any hour of the day and during any day of the week.
39 The hours attended for each enrolled pupil shall be
40 documented by the pupil's weekly progress in the educational
41 program according to a process determined by the virtual
42 program and published annually in the virtual program's
43 enrollment handbook or policy. To the average daily
44 attendance of the following school term shall be added the
45 full-time equivalent average daily attendance of summer
46 school students. In the case of a host school district
47 enrolling one or more full-time virtual school students,
48 such enrolling district shall, as part of its monthly state
49 allocation, receive no less under the state aid calculation
50 for such students than an amount equal to the state adequacy
51 target multiplied by the weighted average daily attendance
52 of such full-time students. Students residing in Missouri
53 and enrolled in a full-time virtual school program operated
54 by a public institution of higher education in this state
55 shall be counted for a state aid calculation by the

56 department, and the department shall pay, from funds
57 dedicated to state school aid payments made under section
58 163.031, to such institution an amount equal to the state
59 adequacy target multiplied by the weighted average daily
60 attendance of such full-time students.

61 (2) The Missouri course access and virtual school
62 program shall report to the district of residence the
63 following information about each student served by the
64 Missouri course access and virtual school program: name,
65 address, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch,
66 limited English proficiency status, special education needs,
67 and the number of courses in which the student is enrolled.
68 The Missouri course access and virtual school program shall
69 promptly notify the resident district when a student
70 discontinues enrollment. A "full-time equivalent student"
71 is a student who is enrolled in the instructional equivalent
72 of six credits per regular term. Each Missouri course
73 access and virtual school program course shall count as one
74 class and shall generate that portion of a full-time
75 equivalent that a comparable course offered by the school
76 district would generate.

77 (3) Pursuant to an education services plan and
78 collaborative agreement under subsection 3 of this section,
79 full-time equivalent students may be allowed to use a
80 physical location of the resident school district for all or
81 some portion of ongoing instructional activity, and the
82 enrollment plan shall provide for reimbursement of costs of
83 the resident district for providing such access pursuant to
84 rules promulgated under this section by the department.

85 (4) In no case shall more than the full-time
86 equivalency of a regular term of attendance for a single
87 student be used to claim state aid. Full-time equivalent
88 student credit completed shall be reported to the department

89 of elementary and secondary education in the manner
90 prescribed by the department. Nothing in this section shall
91 prohibit students from enrolling in additional courses under
92 a separate agreement that includes terms for paying tuition
93 or course fees.

94 (5) A full-time virtual school program serving full-
95 time equivalent students shall be considered an attendance
96 center in the host school district and shall participate in
97 the statewide assessment system as defined in section
98 160.518. The academic performance of students enrolled in a
99 full-time virtual school program shall be assigned to the
100 designated attendance center of the full-time virtual school
101 program and shall be considered in like manner to other
102 attendance centers. The academic performance of any student
103 who disenrolls from a full-time virtual school program and
104 enrolls in a public school or charter school shall not be
105 used in determining the annual performance report score of
106 the attendance center or school district in which the
107 student enrolls for twelve months from the date of
108 enrollment.

109 (6) For the purposes of this section, a public
110 institution of higher education operating a full-time
111 virtual school program shall be subject to all requirements
112 applicable to a host school district with respect to its
113 full-time equivalent students.

114 3. (1) A student who resides in this state may enroll
115 in Missouri course access and virtual school program courses
116 of his or her choice as a part of the student's annual
117 course load each school year, with any costs associated with
118 such course or courses to be paid by the school district or
119 charter school if:

120 (a) The student is enrolled full-time in a public
121 school, including any charter school; and

122 (b) Prior to enrolling in any Missouri course access
123 and virtual school program course, a student has received
124 approval from his or her school district or charter school
125 through the procedure described under subdivision (2) of
126 this subsection.

127 (2) Each school district or charter school shall adopt
128 a policy that delineates the process by which a student may
129 enroll in courses provided by the Missouri course access and
130 virtual school program that is substantially similar to the
131 typical process by which a district student would enroll in
132 courses offered by the school district and a charter school
133 student would enroll in courses offered by the charter
134 school. The policy may include consultation with the
135 school's counselor and may include parental notification or
136 authorization. The policy shall ensure that available
137 opportunities for in-person instruction are considered prior
138 to moving a student to virtual courses. The policy shall
139 allow for continuous enrollment throughout the school year.
140 If the school district or charter school disapproves a
141 student's request to enroll in a course or courses provided
142 by the Missouri course access and virtual school program,
143 the reason shall be provided in writing and it shall be for
144 good cause. Good cause justification to disapprove a
145 student's request for enrollment in a course shall be a
146 determination that doing so is not in the best educational
147 interest of the student, and shall be consistent with the
148 determination that would be made for such course request
149 under the process by which a district student would enroll
150 in a similar course offered by the school district and a
151 charter school student would enroll in a similar course
152 offered by the charter school, except that the determination
153 may consider the suitability of virtual courses for the
154 student based on prior participation in virtual courses by

155 the student. Appeals of any course denials under this
156 subsection shall be considered under a policy that is
157 substantially similar to the typical process by which
158 appeals would be considered for a student seeking to enroll
159 in courses offered by the school district and a charter
160 school student seeking to enroll in courses offered by the
161 charter school.

162 (3) For students enrolled in any Missouri course
163 access and virtual school program course in which costs
164 associated with such course are to be paid by the school
165 district or charter school as described under this
166 subdivision, the school district or charter school shall pay
167 the content provider directly on a pro rata monthly basis
168 based on a student's completion of assignments and
169 assessments. If a student discontinues enrollment, the
170 district or charter school may stop making monthly payments
171 to the content provider. No school district or charter
172 school shall pay, for any one course for a student, more
173 than the market necessary costs but in no case shall pay
174 more than fourteen percent of the state adequacy target, as
175 defined under section 163.011, as calculated at the end of
176 the most recent school year for any single, year-long course
177 and no more than seven percent of the state adequacy target
178 as described above for any single semester equivalent course.

179 (4) For students enrolling in a full-time virtual
180 program, the department of elementary and secondary
181 education shall adopt a policy that delineates the process
182 by which] (a) A student who lives in this state may enroll
183 in a virtual program of their choice as provided in this
184 subdivision, and the provisions of subdivisions 1 to 3 of
185 this subsection shall not apply to such enrollment in a full-
186 time virtual program. Each host school district operating a
187 full-time virtual program under this section shall adopt,

188 operate and implement [the state] an enrollment policy[,
189 subject to] as specified by the provisions of this
190 subdivision. [The policy shall:

191 (a) Require the good faith collaboration of] The
192 student, the student's parent or guardian if the student is
193 not considered homeless, the virtual program, the host
194 district, and the resident district[;] shall collaborate in
195 good faith to implement the enrollment policy regarding the
196 student's enrollment, and the resident school district and
197 the host school district may mutually agree that the
198 resident district shall offer or continue to offer services
199 for the student under an agreement that includes financial
200 terms for reimbursement by the host school district for the
201 necessary costs of the resident school district providing
202 such services. An enrollment policy specified under this
203 subsection shall:

204 a. Require a student's parent or guardian, if the
205 student is not considered homeless, to apply for enrollment
206 in a full-time virtual program directly with the virtual
207 program;

208 [(b)] b. Specify timelines for timely participation by
209 the virtual program, the host district, and resident
210 district; provided that the resident district shall provide
211 any relevant information and input on the enrollment within
212 ten business days of notice from the virtual program of the
213 enrollment application;

214 [(c)] c. Include a survey of the reasons for the
215 student's and parent's interests in participating in the
216 virtual program;

217 [(d)] d. Include consideration of available
218 opportunities for in-person instruction prior to enrolling a
219 student in a virtual program;

220 [(e)] e. Evaluate requests for enrollment based on
221 meeting the needs for a student to be successful considering
222 all relevant factors;

223 [(f)] f. Ensure that, for any enrolling student with a
224 covered disability, an individualized education [services
225 plan and collaborative agreement is] program and a related
226 services agreement, in cases where such agreement is needed,
227 are created to provide all services required to ensure a
228 free and appropriate public education, including financial
229 terms for reimbursement by the host district for the
230 necessary costs of any virtual program, school district, or
231 public or private entity providing all or a portion of such
232 services;

233 [(g)] g. Require the virtual program to determine
234 whether an enrolling student will be admitted, based on the
235 enrollment policy, in consideration of all relevant factors
236 and provide the basis for its determination and any service
237 plan for the student, in writing, to the student, the
238 student's parent or guardian, the host district, and the
239 resident district; and

240 [(h)] h. Provide a process for reviewing appeals of
241 decisions made under this subdivision[; and].

242 [(i) Require] (b) The department [to] shall publish
243 an annual report based on the enrollments and enrollment
244 surveys conducted under this subdivision that provides data
245 at the statewide and district levels of sufficient detail to
246 allow analysis of trends regarding the reasons for
247 participation in the virtual program at the statewide and
248 district levels; provided that no such survey results will
249 be published in a manner that reveals individual student
250 information. The department shall also include, in the
251 annual report, data at the statewide and district levels of
252 sufficient detail to allow detection and analysis of the

253 racial, ethnic, and socio-economic balance of virtual
254 program participation among schools and districts at the
255 statewide and district levels, provided that no such survey
256 results will be published in a manner that reveals
257 individual student information.

258 (5) In the case of a student who is a candidate for A+
259 tuition reimbursement and taking a virtual course under this
260 section, the school shall attribute no less than ninety-five
261 percent attendance to any such student who has completed
262 such virtual course.

263 (6) The Missouri course access and virtual school
264 program shall ensure that individual learning plans designed
265 by certified teachers and professional staff are developed
266 for all students enrolled in more than two full-time course
267 access program courses or a full-time virtual school.

268 (7) Virtual school programs shall monitor individual
269 student success and engagement of students enrolled in their
270 program[,] and, for students enrolled in virtual courses on
271 a part-time basis, the virtual school program shall provide
272 regular student progress reports for each student at least
273 four times per school year to the school district or charter
274 school, provide the host school district and the resident
275 school district ongoing access to academic and other
276 relevant information on student success and engagement, and
277 shall terminate or alter the course offering if it is found
278 the course [or full-time virtual school] is not meeting the
279 educational needs of the students enrolled in the course.

280 (8) The department of elementary and secondary
281 education shall monitor the aggregate performance of
282 providers and make such information available to the public
283 under subsection 11 of this section.

284 (9) Pursuant to rules to be promulgated by the
285 department of elementary and secondary education, when a

286 student transfers into a school district or charter school,
287 credits previously gained through successful passage of
288 approved courses under the Missouri course access and
289 virtual school program shall be accepted by the school
290 district or charter school.

291 (10) Pursuant to rules to be promulgated by the
292 department of elementary and secondary education, if a
293 student transfers into a school district or charter school
294 while enrolled in a Missouri course access and virtual
295 school program course or full-time virtual school, the
296 student shall continue to be enrolled in such course or
297 school.

298 (11) Nothing in this section shall prohibit home
299 school students, private school students, or students
300 wishing to take additional courses beyond their regular
301 course load from enrolling in Missouri course access and
302 virtual school program courses under an agreement that
303 includes terms for paying tuition or course fees.

304 (12) Nothing in this subsection shall require any
305 school district, charter school, virtual program, or the
306 state to provide computers, equipment, or internet access to
307 any student unless required under the education services
308 plan created for an eligible student under subdivision (4)
309 of this subsection or for an eligible student with a
310 disability to comply with federal law. An education
311 services plan may require an eligible student to have access
312 to school facilities of the resident school district during
313 regular school hours for participation and instructional
314 activities of a virtual program under this section, and the
315 education services plan shall provide for reimbursement of
316 the resident school district for such access pursuant to
317 rules adopted by the department under this section.

318 (13) The authorization process shall provide for
319 continuous monitoring of approved providers and courses.
320 The department shall revoke or suspend or take other
321 corrective action regarding the authorization of any course
322 or provider no longer meeting the requirements of the
323 program. Unless immediate action is necessary, prior to
324 revocation or suspension, the department shall notify the
325 provider and give the provider a reasonable time period to
326 take corrective action to avoid revocation or suspension.
327 The process shall provide for periodic renewal of
328 authorization no less frequently than once every three years.

329 (14) Courses approved as of August 28, 2018, by the
330 department to participate in the Missouri virtual
331 instruction program shall be automatically approved to
332 participate in the Missouri course access and virtual school
333 program, but shall be subject to periodic renewal.

334 (15) Any online course or virtual program offered by a
335 school district or charter school, including those offered
336 prior to August 28, 2018, which meets the requirements of
337 section 162.1250 shall be automatically approved to
338 participate in the Missouri course access and virtual school
339 program. Such course or program shall be subject to
340 periodic renewal. A school district or charter school
341 offering such a course or virtual school program shall be
342 deemed an approved provider.

343 (16) A host district may contract with a provider to
344 perform any required services involved with delivering a
345 full-time virtual education.

346 4. (1) As used in this subsection, the term
347 "instructional activities" means classroom-based or
348 nonclassroom-based activities that a student shall be
349 expected to complete, participate in, or attend during any
350 given school day, such as:

- 351 (a) Online logins to curricula or programs;
352 (b) Offline activities;
353 (c) Completed assignments within a particular program,
354 curriculum, or class;
355 (d) Testing;
356 (e) Face-to-face communications or meetings with
357 school staff;
358 (f) Telephone or video conferences with school staff;
359 (g) School-sanctioned field trips; or
360 (h) Orientation.

361 (2) A full-time virtual school shall submit a
362 notification to the parent or guardian of any student who is
363 not consistently engaged in instructional activities and
364 shall provide regular student progress reports for each
365 student at least four times per school year.

366 (3) Each full-time virtual school shall develop,
367 adopt, and post on the school's website a policy setting
368 forth the consequences for a student who fails to complete
369 the required instructional activities. Such policy shall
370 state, at a minimum, that if a student fails to complete the
371 instructional activities after receiving a notification
372 under subdivision (2) of this subsection, and after
373 reasonable intervention strategies have been implemented,
374 that the student shall be subject to certain consequences
375 which may include disenrollment from the school. Prior to
376 any disenrollment, the parent or guardian shall have the
377 opportunity to present any information that the parent deems
378 relevant, and such information shall be considered prior to
379 any final decision.

380 (4) If a full-time virtual school disenrolls a student
381 under subdivision (3) of this subsection, the school shall
382 immediately provide written notification to such student's
383 school district of residence. The student's school district

384 of residence shall then provide to the parents or guardian
385 of the student a written list of available educational
386 options and promptly enroll the student in the selected
387 option. Any student disenrolled from a full-time virtual
388 school shall be prohibited from reenrolling in the same
389 virtual school for the remainder of the school year.

390 5. School districts or charter schools shall inform
391 parents of their child's right to participate in the
392 program. Availability of the program shall be made clear in
393 the parent handbook, registration documents, and featured on
394 the home page of the school district or charter school's
395 website.

396 6. The department shall:

397 (1) Establish an authorization process for course or
398 full-time virtual school providers that includes multiple
399 opportunities for submission each year;

400 (2) Pursuant to the time line established by the
401 department, authorize course or full-time virtual school
402 providers that:

403 (a) Submit all necessary information pursuant to the
404 requirements of the process; and

405 (b) Meet the criteria described in subdivision (3) of
406 this subsection;

407 (3) Review, pursuant to the authorization process,
408 proposals from providers to provide a comprehensive, full-
409 time equivalent course of study for students through the
410 Missouri course access and virtual school program. The
411 department shall ensure that these comprehensive courses of
412 study align to state academic standards and that there is
413 consistency and compatibility in the curriculum used by all
414 providers from one grade level to the next grade level;

415 (4) Within thirty days of any denial, provide a
416 written explanation to any course or full-time virtual
417 school providers that are denied authorization;

418 (5) Allow a course or full-time virtual school
419 provider denied authorization to reapply at any point in the
420 future.

421 7. The department shall publish the process
422 established under this section, including any deadlines and
423 any guidelines applicable to the submission and
424 authorization process for course or full-time virtual school
425 providers on its website.

426 8. If the department determines that there are
427 insufficient funds available for evaluating and authorizing
428 course or full-time virtual school providers, the department
429 may charge applicant course or full-time virtual school
430 providers a fee up to, but no greater than, the amount of
431 the costs in order to ensure that evaluation occurs. The
432 department shall establish and publish a fee schedule for
433 purposes of this subsection.

434 9. Except as specified in this section and as may be
435 specified by rule of the state board of education, the
436 Missouri course access and virtual school program shall
437 comply with all state laws and regulations applicable to
438 school districts, including but not limited to the Missouri
439 school improvement program (MSIP), annual performance report
440 (APR), teacher certification, curriculum standards, audit
441 requirements under chapter 165, access to public records
442 under chapter 610, and school accountability report cards
443 under section 160.522. Teachers and administrators employed
444 by a virtual provider shall be considered to be employed in
445 a public school for all certification purposes under chapter
446 168.

447 10. The department shall submit and publicly publish
448 an annual report on the Missouri course access and virtual
449 school program and the participation of entities to the
450 governor, the chair and ranking member of the senate
451 education committee, and the chair and ranking member of the
452 house of representatives elementary and secondary education
453 committee. The report shall at a minimum include the
454 following information:

455 (1) The annual number of unique students participating
456 in courses authorized under this section and the total
457 number of courses in which students are enrolled in;

458 (2) The number of authorized providers;

459 (3) The number of authorized courses and the number of
460 students enrolled in each course;

461 (4) The number of courses available by subject and
462 grade level;

463 (5) The number of students enrolled in courses broken
464 down by subject and grade level;

465 (6) Student outcome data, including completion rates,
466 student learning gains, student performance on state or
467 nationally accepted assessments, by subject and grade level
468 per provider. This outcome data shall be published in a
469 manner that protects student privacy;

470 (7) The costs per course;

471 (8) Evaluation of in-school course availability
472 compared to course access availability to ensure gaps in
473 course access are being addressed statewide.

474 11. (1) The department shall be responsible for
475 creating the Missouri course access and virtual school
476 program catalog providing a listing of all courses
477 authorized and available to students in the state, detailed
478 information, including costs per course, about the courses

479 to inform student enrollment decisions, and the ability for
480 students to submit their course enrollments.

481 (2) On or before January 1, 2023, the department shall
482 publish on its website, and distribute to all school
483 districts and charter schools in this state, a guidance
484 document that details the options for virtual course access
485 and full-time virtual course access for all students in the
486 state. The guidance document shall include a complete and
487 readily understood description of the applicable enrollment
488 processes including the opportunity for students to enroll
489 and the roles and responsibilities of the student, parent,
490 virtual provider, school district or districts, and charter
491 schools, as appropriate. The guidance document shall be
492 distributed in written and electronic form to all school
493 districts, charter schools, and virtual providers. School
494 districts and charter schools shall provide a copy of the
495 guidance document to every pupil and parent or legal
496 guardian of every pupil enrolled in the district or charter
497 school at the beginning of each school year and upon
498 enrollment for every pupil enrolling at a different time of
499 the school year. School districts and charter schools shall
500 provide a readily viewable link to the electronic version of
501 the guidance document on the main page of the district's or
502 charter school's website.

503 12. The state board of education through the
504 rulemaking process and the department of elementary and
505 secondary education in its policies and procedures shall
506 ensure that multiple content providers and learning
507 management systems are allowed, ensure digital content
508 conforms to accessibility requirements, provide an easily
509 accessible link for providers to submit courses or full-time
510 virtual schools on the Missouri course access and virtual
511 school program website, and allow any person, organization,

512 or entity to submit courses or full-time virtual schools for
513 approval. No content provider shall be allowed that is
514 unwilling to accept payments in the amount and manner as
515 described under subdivision (3) of subsection 3 of this
516 section or does not meet performance or quality standards
517 adopted by the state board of education.

518 13. Any rule or portion of a rule, as that term is
519 defined in section 536.010, that is created under the
520 authority delegated in this section shall become effective
521 only if it complies with and is subject to all of the
522 provisions of chapter 536 and, if applicable, section
523 536.028. This section and chapter 536 are nonseverable and
524 if any of the powers vested with the general assembly
525 pursuant to chapter 536 to review, to delay the effective
526 date, or to disapprove and annul a rule are subsequently
527 held unconstitutional, then the grant of rulemaking
528 authority and any rule proposed or adopted after August 28,
529 2006, shall be invalid and void.

167.012. 1. For purposes of state law regarding this
2 section and sections 161.670, 162.996, 167.013, 167.031,
3 167.042, 167.061, 167.600, 167.619, 210.167, 210.211,
4 211.031, and 452.375, a "home school" is a school, whether
5 incorporated or unincorporated, that:

6 (1) Has as its primary purpose the provision of
7 private or religious-based instruction;
8 (2) Enrolls children between the ages of seven years
9 and the compulsory attendance age for the school district in
10 which the home school is located, of which no more than four
11 are unrelated by affinity or consanguinity in the third
12 degree;

13 (3) Does not charge or receive consideration in the
14 form of tuition, fees, or other remuneration in a genuine
15 and fair exchange for provision of instruction;

16 (4) Does not enroll children who participate in the
17 program established in sections 135.712 to 135.719 and
18 sections 166.700 to 166.720; and

19 (5) Is not an FPE school.

20 2. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, as
21 evidence that a child is receiving regular instruction, the
22 child's parent, guardian, or other person having control or
23 custody of the child shall:

24 (1) Maintain the following records:

25 (a) a. A plan book, diary, or other written record
26 indicating subjects taught and activities engaged in;

27 b. A portfolio of samples of the child's academic
28 work; and

29 c. A record of evaluations of the child's academic
30 progress; or

31 (b) Other written or credible evidence equivalent to
32 subparagraphs a. to c. of paragraph (a) of this subdivision;
33 and

34 (2) Offer at least one thousand hours of instruction,
35 at least six hundred hours of which shall be in reading,
36 language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, or
37 academic courses that are related to such subject areas and
38 consonant with the child's age and ability. At least four
39 hundred of the six hundred hours shall occur at the regular
40 home school location;

41 (3) The requirements of this subsection shall not
42 apply to any pupil sixteen years of age or older.

43 3. The production of a daily log by a parent,
44 guardian, or other person having control or custody of a
45 child showing that a home school has a course of instruction
46 that satisfies the requirements of this section and section
47 167.031 or, in the case of a pupil sixteen years of age or
48 older who attended a metropolitan school district the

49 previous year, a written statement that the pupil is
50 attending home school in compliance with section 167.031
51 shall be a defense to any prosecution under section 167.031
52 and to any charge or action for educational neglect brought
53 under chapter 210. Home school education enforcement and
54 records pursuant to this section, and sections 210.167 and
55 211.031, shall be subject to review only by the local
56 prosecuting attorney.

167.013. 1. For purposes of state law regarding this
2 section and sections 161.670, 162.996, 166.700, 167.012,
3 167.031, 167.061, 167.600, 167.619, 210.167, 210.211,
4 211.031, and 452.375, a "Family Paced Education (FPE)
5 school" or "FPE school" is a school, whether incorporated or
6 unincorporated, that:

7 (1) Has as its primary purpose the provision of
8 private or religious-based instruction;

9 (2) Enrolls children between the ages of seven years
10 and the compulsory attendance age for the school district in
11 which the FPE school is located, of which no more than four
12 are unrelated by affinity or consanguinity in the third
13 degree;

14 (3) Does not charge or receive consideration in the
15 form of tuition, fees, or other remuneration in a genuine
16 and fair exchange for provision of instruction; and

17 (4) May enroll children who participate in the program
18 established in sections 135.712 to 135.719 and sections
19 166.700 to 166.720.

20 2. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, as
21 evidence that a child is receiving regular instruction, the
22 child's parent, guardian, or other person having control or
23 custody of the child shall:

24 (1) Maintain the following records:

25 (a) a. A plan book, diary, or other written record
26 indicating subjects taught and activities engaged in;
27 b. A portfolio of samples of the child's academic
28 work; and
29 c. A record of evaluations of the child's academic
30 progress; or
31 (b) Other written or credible evidence equivalent to
32 subparagraphs a. to c. of paragraph (a) of this subdivision;
33 and
34 (2) Offer at least one thousand hours of instruction,
35 at least six hundred hours of which shall be in reading,
36 language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, or
37 academic courses that are related to such subject areas and
38 consonant with the child's age and ability. At least four
39 hundred of the six hundred hours shall occur at the regular
40 FPE school location;
41 (3) The requirements of this subsection shall not
42 apply to any pupil sixteen years of age or older.
43 3. The production of a daily log by a parent,
44 guardian, or other person having control or custody of a
45 child showing that a FPE school has a course of instruction
46 that satisfies the requirements of this section and section
47 167.031 or, in the case of a pupil sixteen years of age or
48 older who attended a metropolitan school district the
49 previous year, a written statement that the pupil is
50 attending a FPE school in compliance with section 167.031
51 shall be a defense to any prosecution under section 167.031
52 and to any charge or action for educational neglect brought
53 under chapter 210. FPE school education enforcement and
54 records pursuant to this section, and sections 210.167 and
55 211.031, shall be subject to review only by the local
56 prosecuting attorney.

168.021. 1. Certificates of license to teach in the
2 public schools of the state shall be granted as follows:

3 (1) By the state board, under rules and regulations
4 prescribed by it:

5 (a) Upon the basis of college credit;

6 (b) Upon the basis of examination;

7 (2) By the state board, under rules and regulations
8 prescribed by the state board with advice from the advisory
9 council established by section 168.015 to any individual who
10 presents to the state board a valid doctoral degree from an
11 accredited institution of higher education accredited by a
12 regional accrediting association such as North Central
13 Association. Such certificate shall be limited to the major
14 area of postgraduate study of the holder, shall be issued
15 only after successful completion of the examination required
16 for graduation pursuant to rules adopted by the state board
17 of education, and shall be restricted to those certificates
18 established pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection 3 of
19 this section;

20 (3) By the state board, which shall issue the
21 professional certificate classification in both the general
22 and specialized areas most closely aligned with the current
23 areas of certification approved by the state board,
24 commensurate with the years of teaching experience of the
25 applicant, and based upon the following criteria:

26 (a) a. Recommendation of a state-approved
27 baccalaureate-level teacher preparation program;

28 b. The department of elementary and secondary
29 education shall develop and maintain an eighteen hour (one
30 thousand eighty minutes) online teacher preparation program
31 related to subjects appropriate for elementary and secondary
32 education settings. Any charitable organization registered
33 in Missouri that is exempt from federal taxation under the

34 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, may submit a
35 teacher preparation program to the department of elementary
36 and secondary education for approval. Once approved, the
37 charitable organization shall be certified to develop and
38 maintain a teacher preparedness program. Approved teacher
39 preparedness programs created by a charitable organization
40 shall be made available by the department of elementary and
41 secondary education. An individual with a bachelor's degree
42 may complete an eighteen hour online training program,
43 either created by the department or by a charitable
44 organization, and receive a teacher certificate. Such
45 certificate shall not be accepted by Missouri public
46 schools, and non-public schools shall not be required to
47 accept the certificate;

48 (b) a. Successful attainment of the Missouri
49 qualifying score on the exit assessment for teachers or
50 administrators designated by the state board of education;

51 b. (i) Applicants who have not successfully achieved
52 a qualifying score on the designated examinations will be
53 issued a two-year nonrenewable provisional certificate;

54 (ii) During the two-year nonrenewable provisional
55 certification, an individual teacher may gain full
56 professional certification by:

57 i. Achieving a qualifying score on the designated
58 exam; or

59 ii. Successfully achieving an acceptable score on the
60 state-approved teacher evaluation system from seven walk-
61 through evaluations, two formative evaluations, and one
62 summative evaluation for each of the two probationary years
63 and being offered a third contract by the employing
64 district. For any applicant who has a change in job status
65 because of a reduction in the workforce or a change in life
66 circumstances, the scores required under this item may be

67 scores achieved in any school district during the two-year
68 nonrenewable provisional certification period; and

69 (iii) The employing school district shall recommend to
70 the department of elementary and secondary education that
71 the individual teacher be awarded a full professional
72 certification by the state board under rules prescribed by
73 the state board; and

74 (c) Upon completion of a background check as
75 prescribed in section 168.133 and possession of a valid
76 teaching certificate in the state from which the applicant's
77 teacher preparation program was completed;

78 (4) By the state board, under rules prescribed by it,
79 on the basis of a relevant bachelor's degree, or higher
80 degree, and a passing score for the designated exit
81 examination, for individuals whose academic degree and
82 professional experience are suitable to provide a basis for
83 instruction solely in the subject matter of banking or
84 financial responsibility, at the discretion of the state
85 board. Such certificate shall be limited to the major area
86 of study of the holder and shall be restricted to those
87 certificates established under subdivision (2) of subsection
88 3 of this section. Holders of certificates granted under
89 this subdivision shall be exempt from the teacher tenure act
90 under sections 168.102 to 168.130 and each school district
91 shall have the decision-making authority on whether to hire
92 the holders of such certificates;

93 (5) By the state board, under rules and regulations
94 prescribed by it, on the basis of certification by the
95 American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence
96 (ABCTE) and verification of ability to work with children as
97 demonstrated by sixty contact hours in any one of the
98 following areas as validated by the school principal: sixty
99 contact hours in the classroom, of which at least forty-five

100 must be teaching; sixty contact hours as a substitute
101 teacher, with at least thirty consecutive hours in the same
102 classroom; sixty contact hours of teaching in a private
103 school; or sixty contact hours of teaching as a
104 paraprofessional, for an initial four-year ABCTE certificate
105 of license to teach, except that such certificate shall not
106 be granted for the areas of early childhood education, or
107 special education. For certification in the area of
108 elementary education, ninety contact hours in the classroom
109 shall be required, of which at least thirty shall be in an
110 elementary classroom. Upon the completion of the following
111 requirements, an applicant shall be eligible to apply for a
112 career continuous professional certificate under subdivision
113 (3) of subsection 3 of this section:

114 (a) Completion of thirty contact hours of professional
115 development within four years, which may include hours spent
116 in class in an appropriate college curriculum;

117 (b) Validated completion of two years of the mentoring
118 program of the American Board for Certification of Teacher
119 Excellence or a district mentoring program approved by the
120 state board of education;

121 (c) Attainment of a successful performance-based
122 teacher evaluation; and

123 (d) Participation in a beginning teacher assistance
124 program; or

125 (6) (a) By the state board, under rules and
126 regulations prescribed by the board, which shall issue an
127 initial visiting scholars certificate at the discretion of
128 the board, based on the following criteria:

129 a. Verification from the hiring school district that
130 the applicant will be employed as part of a business-
131 education partnership initiative designed to build career
132 pathways systems or employed as part of an initiative

133 designed to fill vacant positions in hard-to-staff public
134 schools or hard-to-fill subject areas for students in a
135 grade or grades not lower than the ninth grade for which the
136 applicant's academic degree or professional experience
137 qualifies the applicant;

138 b. Appropriate and relevant bachelor's degree or
139 higher, occupational license, or industry-recognized
140 credential;

141 c. Completion of the application for a one-year
142 visiting scholars certificate; and

143 d. Completion of a background check as prescribed
144 under section 168.133.

145 (b) The initial visiting scholars certificate shall
146 certify the holder of such certificate to teach for one
147 year. An applicant shall be eligible to renew an initial
148 visiting scholars certificate a maximum of two times, based
149 upon the completion of the requirements listed under
150 subparagraphs a., b., and d. of paragraph (a) of this
151 subdivision; completion of professional development required
152 by the school district and school; and attainment of a
153 satisfactory performance-based teacher evaluation.

154 2. All valid teaching certificates issued pursuant to
155 law or state board policies and regulations prior to
156 September 1, 1988, shall be exempt from the professional
157 development requirements of this section and shall continue
158 in effect until they expire, are revoked or suspended, as
159 provided by law. When such certificates are required to be
160 renewed, the state board or its designee shall grant to each
161 holder of such a certificate the certificate most nearly
162 equivalent to the one so held. Anyone who holds, as of
163 August 28, 2003, a valid PC-I, PC-II, or continuous
164 professional certificate shall, upon expiration of such
165 person's current certificate, be issued the appropriate

166 level of certificate based upon the classification system
167 established pursuant to subsection 3 of this section.

168 3. (1) Certificates of license to teach in the public
169 schools of the state shall be based upon minimum
170 requirements prescribed by the state board of education
171 which shall include completion of a background check as
172 prescribed in section 168.133. The state board shall
173 provide for the following levels of professional
174 certification: an initial professional certificate and a
175 career continuous professional certificate.

176 (2) The initial professional certificate shall be
177 issued upon completion of requirements established by the
178 state board of education and shall be valid based upon
179 verification of actual teaching within a specified time
180 period established by the state board of education. The
181 state board shall require holders of the four-year initial
182 professional certificate to:

183 (a) Participate in a mentoring program approved and
184 provided by the district for a minimum of two years;

185 (b) Complete thirty contact hours of professional
186 development, which may include hours spent in class in an
187 appropriate college curriculum, or for holders of a
188 certificate under subdivision (4) of subsection 1 of this
189 section, an amount of professional development in proportion
190 to the certificate holder's hours in the classroom, if the
191 certificate holder is employed less than full time; and

192 (c) Participate in a beginning teacher assistance
193 program.

194 (3) (a) The career continuous professional
195 certificate shall be issued upon verification of completion
196 of four years of teaching under the initial professional
197 certificate and upon verification of the completion of the
198 requirements articulated in paragraphs (a) to (c) of

199 subdivision (2) of this subsection or paragraphs (a) to (d)
200 of subdivision (5) of subsection 1 of this section.

201 (b) The career continuous professional certificate
202 shall be continuous based upon verification of actual
203 employment in an educational position as provided for in
204 state board guidelines and completion of fifteen contact
205 hours of professional development per year which may include
206 hours spent in class in an appropriate college curriculum.
207 Should the possessor of a valid career continuous
208 professional certificate fail, in any given year, to meet
209 the fifteen-hour professional development requirement, the
210 possessor may, within two years, make up the missing hours.
211 In order to make up for missing hours, the possessor shall
212 first complete the fifteen-hour requirement for the current
213 year and then may count hours in excess of the current year
214 requirement as make-up hours. Should the possessor fail to
215 make up the missing hours within two years, the certificate
216 shall become inactive. In order to reactivate the
217 certificate, the possessor shall complete twenty-four
218 contact hours of professional development which may include
219 hours spent in the classroom in an appropriate college
220 curriculum within the six months prior to or after
221 reactivating the possessor's certificate. The requirements
222 of this paragraph shall be monitored and verified by the
223 local school district which employs the holder of the career
224 continuous professional certificate.

225 (c) A holder of a career continuous professional
226 certificate shall be exempt from the professional
227 development contact hour requirements of paragraph (b) of
228 this subdivision if such teacher has a local professional
229 development plan in place within such teacher's school
230 district and meets two of the three following criteria:

231 a. Has ten years of teaching experience as defined by
232 the state board of education;

233 b. Possesses a master's degree; or

234 c. Obtains a rigorous national certification as
235 approved by the state board of education.

236 4. Policies and procedures shall be established by
237 which a teacher who was not retained due to a reduction in
238 force may retain the current level of certification. There
239 shall also be established policies and procedures allowing a
240 teacher who has not been employed in an educational position
241 for three years or more to reactivate the teacher's last
242 level of certification by completing twenty-four contact
243 hours of professional development which may include hours
244 spent in the classroom in an appropriate college curriculum
245 within the six months prior to or after reactivating the
246 teacher's certificate.

247 5. The state board shall, upon completion of a
248 background check as prescribed in section 168.133, issue a
249 professional certificate classification in the areas most
250 closely aligned with an applicant's current areas of
251 certification, commensurate with the years of teaching
252 experience of the applicant, to any person who is hired to
253 teach in a public school in this state and who possesses a
254 valid teaching certificate from another state or
255 certification under subdivision (4) of subsection 1 of this
256 section, provided that the certificate holder shall annually
257 complete the state board's requirements for such level of
258 certification, and shall establish policies by which
259 residents of states other than the state of Missouri may be
260 assessed a fee for a certificate of license to teach in the
261 public schools of Missouri. Such fee shall be in an amount
262 sufficient to recover any or all costs associated with the
263 issuing of a certificate of license to teach. The board

264 shall promulgate rules to authorize the issuance of a
265 provisional certificate of license, which shall be valid for
266 three years and shall allow the holder to assume classroom
267 duties pending the completion of a criminal background check
268 under section 168.133, for any applicant who:

269 (1) Is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces
270 stationed in Missouri;

271 (2) Relocated from another state within one year of
272 the date of application;

273 (3) Underwent a criminal background check in order to
274 be issued a teaching certificate of license from another
275 state; and

276 (4) Otherwise qualifies under this section.

277 6. The state board may assess to holders of an initial
278 professional certificate a fee, to be deposited into the
279 excellence in education fund established pursuant to section
280 160.268, for the issuance of the career continuous
281 professional certificate. However, such fee shall not
282 exceed the combined costs of issuance and any criminal
283 background check required as a condition of issuance.
284 Applicants for the initial ABCTE certificate shall be
285 responsible for any fees associated with the program leading
286 to the issuance of the certificate, but nothing in this
287 section shall prohibit a district from developing a policy
288 that permits fee reimbursement.

289 7. Any member of the public school retirement system
290 of Missouri who entered covered employment with ten or more
291 years of educational experience in another state or states
292 and held a certificate issued by another state and
293 subsequently worked in a school district covered by the
294 public school retirement system of Missouri for ten or more
295 years who later became certificated in Missouri shall have

296 that certificate dated back to the member's original date of
297 employment in a Missouri public school.

298 8. Within thirty days of receiving an application from
299 a spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the
300 United States who has been transferred or is scheduled to be
301 transferred to the state of Missouri, or who has been
302 transferred or is scheduled to be transferred to an adjacent
303 state and is or will be domiciled in the state of Missouri,
304 or has moved to the state of Missouri on a permanent change-
305 of-station basis and has successfully completed the
306 background check described under subsection 5 of this
307 section and section 168.133, the state board shall issue to
308 such applicant a full certificate of license to teach,
309 provided that the applicant has paid all necessary fees and
310 has otherwise met all requirements to be issued such a
311 certificate.

571.010. As used in this chapter, the following terms
2 shall mean:

3 (1) "Antique, curio or relic firearm", any firearm so
4 defined by the National Gun Control Act, 18 U.S.C. Title 26,
5 Section 5845, and the United States Treasury/Bureau of
6 Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, 27 CFR Section 178.11:

7 (a) "Antique firearm" is any firearm not designed or
8 redesigned for using rim fire or conventional center fire
9 ignition with fixed ammunition and manufactured in or before
10 1898, said ammunition not being manufactured any longer;
11 this includes any matchlock, wheel lock, flintlock,
12 percussion cap or similar type ignition system, or replica
13 thereof;

14 (b) "Curio or relic firearm" is any firearm deriving
15 value as a collectible weapon due to its unique design,
16 ignition system, operation or at least fifty years old,

17 associated with a historical event, renown personage or
18 major war;

19 (2) "Blackjack", any instrument that is designed or
20 adapted for the purpose of stunning or inflicting physical
21 injury by striking a person, and which is readily capable of
22 lethal use;

23 (3) "Blasting agent", any material or mixture,
24 consisting of fuel and oxidizer that is intended for
25 blasting, but not otherwise defined as an explosive under
26 this section, provided that the finished product, as mixed
27 for use of shipment, cannot be detonated by means of a
28 numbered 8 test blasting cap when unconfined;

29 (4) "Concealable firearm", any firearm with a barrel
30 less than sixteen inches in length, measured from the face
31 of the bolt or standing breech;

32 (5) "Deface", to alter or destroy the manufacturer's
33 or importer's serial number or any other distinguishing
34 number or identification mark;

35 (6) "Detonator", any device containing a detonating
36 charge that is used for initiating detonation in an
37 explosive, including but not limited to, electric blasting
38 caps of instantaneous and delay types, nonelectric blasting
39 caps for use with safety fuse or shock tube and detonating
40 cord delay connectors;

41 (7) "Explosive weapon", any explosive, incendiary, or
42 poison gas bomb or similar device designed or adapted for
43 the purpose of inflicting death, serious physical injury, or
44 substantial property damage; or any device designed or
45 adapted for delivering or shooting such a weapon. For the
46 purposes of this subdivision, the term "explosive" shall
47 mean any chemical compound mixture or device, the primary or
48 common purpose of which is to function by explosion,
49 including but not limited to, dynamite and other high

50 explosives, pellet powder, initiating explosives,
51 detonators, safety fuses, squibs, detonating cords, igniter
52 cords, and igniters or blasting agents;

53 (8) "Firearm", any weapon that is designed or adapted
54 to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;

55 (9) "Firearm silencer", any instrument, attachment, or
56 appliance that is designed or adapted to muffle the noise
57 made by the firing of any firearm;

58 (10) "Gas gun", any gas ejection device, weapon,
59 cartridge, container or contrivance other than a gas bomb
60 that is designed or adapted for the purpose of ejecting any
61 poison gas that will cause death or serious physical injury,
62 but not any device that ejects a repellant or temporary
63 incapacitating substance;

64 (11) "Intoxicated", substantially impaired mental or
65 physical capacity resulting from introduction of any
66 substance into the body;

67 (12) "Knife", any dagger, dirk, stiletto, or bladed
68 hand instrument that is readily capable of inflicting
69 serious physical injury or death by cutting or stabbing a
70 person. For purposes of this chapter, "knife" does not
71 include any ordinary pocketknife with no blade more than
72 four inches in length;

73 (13) "Knuckles", any instrument that consists of
74 finger rings or guards made of a hard substance that is
75 designed or adapted for the purpose of inflicting serious
76 physical injury or death by striking a person with a fist
77 enclosed in the knuckles;

78 (14) "Machine gun", any firearm that is capable of
79 firing more than one shot automatically, without manual
80 reloading, by a single function of the trigger;

81 (15) "Projectile weapon", any bow, crossbow, pellet
82 gun, slingshot or other weapon that is not a firearm, which

83 is capable of expelling a projectile that could inflict
84 serious physical injury or death by striking or piercing a
85 person;

86 (16) "Rifle", any firearm designed or adapted to be
87 fired from the shoulder and to use the energy of the
88 explosive in a fixed metallic cartridge to fire a projectile
89 through a rifled bore by a single function of the trigger;

90 (17) "School", any charter school, as such term is
91 defined in section 160.400, any private school, as such term
92 is defined in section 166.700, or any public school, as such
93 term is defined in section 160.011;

94 (18) "Short barrel", a barrel length of less than
95 sixteen inches for a rifle and eighteen inches for a
96 shotgun, both measured from the face of the bolt or standing
97 breech, or an overall rifle or shotgun length of less than
98 twenty-six inches;

99 [(18)] (19) "Shotgun", any firearm designed or adapted
100 to be fired from the shoulder and to use the energy of the
101 explosive in a fixed shotgun shell to fire a number of shot
102 or a single projectile through a smooth bore barrel by a
103 single function of the trigger;

104 [(19)] (20) "Spring gun", any fused, timed or
105 nonmanually controlled trap or device designed or adapted to
106 set off an explosion for the purpose of inflicting serious
107 physical injury or death;

108 [(20)] (21) "Switchblade knife", any knife which has a
109 blade that folds or closes into the handle or sheath, and:

110 (a) That opens automatically by pressure applied to a
111 button or other device located on the handle; or

112 (b) That opens or releases from the handle or sheath
113 by the force of gravity or by the application of centrifugal
114 force.

2 Section 1. Any provision of state law that requires a
3 school district to conduct an election of the voters of the
4 school district in order to adopt a four-day school week
5 shall not apply to any school district that had a four-day
6 school week in the 2023-24 school year and that contains all
7 of a city with more than two thousand one hundred fifty but
8 fewer than two thousand four hundred inhabitants and is
9 located in a county with more than nineteen thousand but
10 fewer than twenty-two thousand inhabitants and with a county
11 seat with more than two thousand two hundred twenty but
fewer than two thousand five hundred inhabitants.