

# The changing face of Florida public education

In little more than a generation, the face of public education in Florida has changed dramatically. Students who once were simply assigned to a school based on where they lived are now treated to an expanding array of options as public schools customize education to meet the needs of different types of students. In this environment, the lines between public, private, district, charter, traditional and choice are forever blurred. Consider these enrollment numbers, gathered from 2008-09 state Department of Education data (unless otherwise noted):

### **343,004 – Open Enrollment**

Students in 55 of the state's 67 districts can choose school through "open enrollment" plans.

### **223,023 – Choice Programs**

Students choose from fundamental schools, career options, academic and special programs.

### **146,227 – PreKindergarten Scholarships**

Most of these four-year-olds attended VPK in private schools at a cost of \$337-million.

### **144,409 – Advanced Placement**

This is the number of students taking at least one AP class.

### **118,169 – Charter Schools**

Students attended 389 private charter schools at an estimated cost of \$768-million.

### **71,750 – Florida Virtual School**

Students completed 154,125 online semester courses at a cost of \$87-million.

### **66,259 – Tutoring**

Low-income, struggling students are eligible for federally funded private tutoring.

### **60,913 – Home Schools**

These students are reported to the state as receiving education at home.

### **35,323 – Dual Enrollment**

Students in 2007-08 took college-credit classes at all 28 community colleges and some state universities.

### **32,848 – Career and Professional Academies**

Students pursue career and professional interests in schools and programs throughout the state.

### **24,871 – Tax Credit Scholarships**

Low-income students attended 1,002 different private schools on scholarships at a cost of \$89-million.

### **20,530 – McKay Scholarships**

Students with disabilities attended 897 different private schools on scholarships at a cost of \$134-million.

### **18,111 – Guaranteed School Transfers**

Students can choose a different school if they are assigned to one that fails state or federal standards.

### **10,207 – International Baccalaureate**

Students in 2007-08 were enrolled in IB programs at 46 high, 16 middle and 10 elementary schools.

### **2,525 – Advanced International Certificate of Education**

Students enroll in AICE programs in 11th and 12th grades.

### **1,072 – K-8 Virtual School**

Elementary students received online instruction from a private company at a cost of \$5-million.