

9th Week of the Legislative Session – Report for April 29 – May 3, 2019

General Information

The Regular Legislative Session concluded after the Florida Legislature passed a \$91.1 billion budget. This report contains pertinent information presented and discussed during the 9th week of the 2019 legislative session.

The Florida Legislature passed the General Appropriations Act on Saturday, May 4, 2019.

Attached is a general report that includes a summary and analysis of the following:

- SB 2500, the General Appropriations Act;
- SB 2502 the Implementing Bill;
- Analysis of the statewide impact of the FEFP, and an analysis of SB 7016 the Florida Retirement System rate bill.

Also attached is a spreadsheet that compares the FY 2019-2020 FEFP to the 2018-2019 Fourth calculation and the 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 First Calculations at the statewide level.

A second report that analyzes the district impact of the FEFP is provided, and it is accompanied by a comparison spreadsheet of the FY 2019-2020 FEFP to the 2018-2019 Fourth calculation and the 2007-2008 and 2011-2012 First Calculations at the district level.

House Floor

SB 7070 by Senate Education Committee related to Education

The bill:

- Provides additional educational options and support for families by:
 - Creating the Family Empowerment Scholarship to help a specified number of students from low-income families attend an eligible private school.
 - Authorizing unallocated funds under the Hope Scholarship Program to be used to fund the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship.
 - Expanding the definition of a persistently low-performing school
 - The bill amends the definition of persistently low-performing schools to include Florida Opportunity Zones designated by the Treasury that would allow Schools of Hope to open in the identified Florida Opportunity Zones. **(Amended Language Lines 511 - 514)**
 - revises the definition of “persistently low-performing schools” to include schools that have a grade below a “C” for 3 out of 5 years and has not earned grade of a “B” or higher in the most recent 2 school years. **(Amended Language Lines 519 - 521).**
- Provides support for public schools, teachers, and principals by:

- Modifying the Best and Brightest Teachers and Principals Scholarship Programs to provide recruitment and retention bonus funds to classroom teachers, awards to principals based on the academic improvement of schools, and recognition bonus funds to all instructional personnel
 - Recruitment awards for newly hired teachers who are a content expert, based on criteria established by the department, in mathematics, science, computer science, reading, or civics. **(Added Language Lines 2124 - 2128)**
 - Retention awards for teachers rated as “highly effective” or “effective” the preceding year, and currently teaching in a school that has demonstrated academic improvement, as evidenced by the school improving an average of three percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior 3 years.
 - Recognition awards for teachers and instructional personnel rated as “highly effective” or “effective” and selected by the school principal based on performance criteria and policies adopted by the district school board. **(Added Language Lines 2151- 2128)**
- The bill removes a teacher’s performance on the SAT or ACT as a factor in determining eligibility for the award**(Removed Language in Lines 2130 - 2150).**
- Modifying teacher certification requirements relating to the general knowledge examination, requiring changes to specified certification examination fees, and specifying that classroom teachers only are required to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge.
 - the bill removes the provision that examination fees must be sufficient to cover the actual cost of developing and administering the examination and requires that the rule specify the following fees: **(Added Language Lines 2090 – 2098)**
 - Initial registration for first-time test takers.
 - Retake of the full battery of subtests of an examination, if applicable. The retake fee for the full battery of subtests may not exceed the fee for the initial registration.
 - Retake for each subtest of an examination. The retake fee for each subtest must be prorated based on the number of subtests within the examination
 - The bill specifies that only a classroom teacher must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge to earn the applicable educator certificate. **(Added Language Lines 1954 – 1955)**
 - The bill requires a school district who employs a classroom teacher who does not achieve passing scores on any subtest of the general knowledge examination to provide information regarding the availability of state-level and district-level supports and instruction to assist that teacher in achieving a passing score. Such information must include, but is not limited to: **(Added Language Lines 1986– 1994)**
 - State-level test information guides;

- School district test preparation resources; and
 - Preparation courses offered by state universities and FCS institutions.
- The bill amends s. 1012.56, F.S., to remove the requirement that a teacher issued a temporary certificate must demonstrate mastery of general knowledge by achieving passing scores on all subtests within one calendar year of the date of employment. **(Removed Language Lines 2041 – 2050)**
- The bill also removes the prohibition on a school district from continuing employment beyond one year for a teacher with a temporary certificate who has not demonstrated mastery of general knowledge.
- The bill provides a teacher an additional two years to earn a professional certificate if the certificate holder is rated highly effective in the immediate prior year's performance evaluation pursuant to s. 1012.34 or has completed a 2-year mentorship program pursuant to s. 1012.56(8), F.S. **(Add Language Lines 2065 – 2062)**
- The bill retains the requirement for a teacher to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge as a condition for issuance of a professional certificate, but extends the time to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge for the validity period of the temporary certificate **(Removed Language Lines 2041 – 2050 and keeping lines 2040 - 2041)**
- Removing school district requirements for an educational plant survey and cost per student station restrictions when local funds are used for facility construction **(View lines 1886 – 1899 and 2296 – 2301)**
- Modifying funding for wraparound services by establishing a categorical program to help district-managed turnaround schools and offer services to improve the academic and community welfare of students and families. **(Add Language Lines 1797 – 1814)**
- Promoting the expansion of community schools to engage and support parents and community organizations to improve student learning and well-being.
 - The bill creates s. 1003.64, F.S., establishing the Community School Grant Program (program) to fund and support the planning and implementation of community school programs. The program is intended to improve student success and well-being by engaging and supporting parents and community organizations in their effort to positively impact student learning and development. **(Add Language Lines 1343 – 1347 and 1377 -1396)**
 - The bill specifies that a community school model is a school service model developed by the Center for Community Schools at the University of Central Florida (center) which utilizes long-term partnerships among a school district, community organization, a university or college, and a health care provider to implement programs, beyond the standard hours of instruction, which must include but are not limited to: **(Add Language Lines 1353 – 1376)**
 - Expanded learning opportunities
 - Support for students; and

- Family engagement.
- Modifying the funding compression allocation within the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) to make it permanent.

Adopted Amendments (Language Added to SB 7070)

- Senator Bracy's
Amendment: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/785318/PDF>
- Senator Montford's
Amendment: <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/208314/PDF>
- Senator Diaz's Amendments
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/581122/PDF>
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/881674/PDF>
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/726188/PDF>
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/581332/PDF>
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/216008/PDF>
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/106322/PDF>
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/766430/PDF>
- Senator Lee's Amendment:
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2019/7070/Amendment/540300/PDF>

The bill House passed favorably (76 - 39) with the Senate's amendments above. The bill is now enrolled and will be placed on the Governor's desk to be signed into law (**See attachment for a complete legislative bill breakdown of SB 7070**)

SB 7030 by Senate Education Committee related to Implementation of Legislative Recommendations of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission

- Improves school security measures by:
 - Establishing a workgroup to review campus hardening policies and recommend a prioritized list of strategies for implementation and related policy and funding enhancements (**Added Language Lines 499 – 520**)
 - Prioritizing the use of the school security risk assessment tool to be conducted in collaboration with appropriate public safety agencies (**Added Language Lines 756 – 762**)
 - Expanding the personnel who may serve as a school district's school safety specialist to include certain law enforcement officers employed by the sheriff's office (**Added Language Lines 725 – 738**)
 - Expanding school district options and eligibility for participation in the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program. (**Added Language Lines 950 – 1015**)
 - Expanding options for school guardian training by sheriffs, and requiring consultation with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement; and (**Added Language Lines 950 – 1015**)
 - Revising the content of student records related to student behavior and services and establishing timely transfer of student records. (**Added Language Lines 650 – 659**)
- Enhances student safety by:

- Requiring improved school safety incident reporting; **(Added Language Lines 872 – 882)**
- Promoting the FortifyFL mobile suspicious activity reporting tool; **(Added Language Line 482)**
- Expediting services for students with mental or behavioral disorders;
- Requiring active assailant response plans; **(Added Language Lines 784 - 790)**
- Establishing a standardizing behavioral threat assessment instrument for school districts and charter schools; **(Added Language Lines 529 - 533)**
- Establishing a workgroup to make recommendations regarding the development of a statewide threat assessment database. **(Added Language Lines 574 – 578)**
- Providing for the continuation of intervention services for students who transfer to a different school; and **(Added Language Lines 860 - 865)**
- Expanding the data sources included in the centralized integrated data repository. **(Added Language Lines 420 - 434)**
- Provides school districts with greater flexibility to improve school safety by authorizing the transfer of additional categorical funds within the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) towards school safety expenditures, and expands authorized uses of the safe schools allocation
- Expands the authorized uses of the mental health assistance allocation, provides school district flexibility for expenditures, and requires a program and expenditure plan for school districts and charter schools.
- Criminalizes the false personation of a school guardian.

The bill passed the House floor (65 – 47) and is now waiting to be placed on the Governor’s desk to be signed into law. **(See attachment for a complete legislative bill breakdown of SB 7030)**

HB 7071 by Higher Education & Career Readiness Subcommittee related to Education

The bill promotes apprenticeships, enhances talent development, and increases career opportunities for Floridians by:

- Creating the “Strengthening Alignment between Industry and Learning to 60” Initiative and establishing a statewide attainment goal to increase the percentage of working-age adults who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate, degree, or training experience to 60 percent by the year 2030. **(Added Language Lines 852 - 856)**
- Revising the school grades formula to recognize career certificate clock hour dual enrollment and establishing formal career dual enrollment agreements between high schools and career centers. **(Added Language Lines 1392 - 1397)**
- Allowing students with an industry certification to earn two mathematics credits for Algebra I **(Added Language Lines 561 - 566)**
- Allowing a computer science credit to substitute for a mathematics or science (biology) credit and requiring a biennial review of career education courses for alignment with high school graduation requirements. **(Added Language Lines 567 - 578) and (Added Languages Lines 589 – 595)**
- Requiring the Department of Education (DOE) to provide assistance in increasing public awareness of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities. **(Added Language Lines 253 – 259)**

- Requiring the Commissioner of Education to annually review career and technical education course offerings **(Added Language Lines 829 – 848)**
- Establishing a “College and Career Decision Day” to recognize high school seniors for their postsecondary education and career plans. **(Added Language Lines 407 – 412)**
- Doubling the cap on career and professional education Digital Tool certificates. **(Added Language Line 1441)**
- Establishing a middle grades career planning course requirement **(Added Language Lines 509 – 511)**
- Revising requirements relating to adjunct teaching certificates **(Added Language Lines 1604 – 1617)**
- Reconstituting the Higher Education Coordinating Council as the Florida Talent Development Council, revising its membership, and requiring the council to develop a strategic plan. **(Added Language Lines 911 – 916) and (Lines 922 – 950) and (lines 992 – 996)**
- Creating the Florida Apprenticeship Grant Program to provide competitive grants to expand and enhance apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs **(Added Language Lines 1550 – 1569)**
- Requiring the statewide articulation agreement to provide for a reverse transfer agreement. **(Added Language Lines 1113 – 1127)**
- Requiring career centers and Florida College System (FCS) institutions with overlapping service areas to execute regional career pathways agreements. **(Added Language Lines 1130 – 1149)**
- Requiring each school district and FCS institution receiving state workforce education funds to maintain adequate and accurate records and revising the calculation methodology for determining state funding for workforce education programs. **(Added Language Lines 1367 – 1375) and (Lines 1378 – 1387)**
- Revising Next Generation Sunshine State Standards for financial literacy by removing financial literacy standards as a component of economics. . **(Added Language Lines 612 – 614) and (Lines 696 – 699)**

The bill passed the House floor (113 – 0) and is now waiting to be placed on the Governor’s desk to be signed into law.

Senate Floor Action

HB 807 by Rep. Aloupis related to Civics Education

The bill requires all instructional materials for the civics education course required for middle school students be reviewed and approved by Florida’s Commissioner of Education in consultation with civics organizations and stakeholders. Any errors or inaccuracies in state-adopted civics materials identified by the Commissioner, must be corrected pursuant to current statutory procedures. **(Added Language Lines 39 – 50)**

The bill requires the Commissioner to review and make recommendations for improvements to current state-adopted civics material and the statewide civics end-of-course assessment by December 31, 2019. The Department of Education is required to review civics education course standards by December 31, 2020. **(Added Language Lines 51 – 58)**

The bill passed the Senate floor (37 – 0) and is now waiting to be placed on the Governor’s desk to be signed into law.

HB 7123 by House Ways & Means Committee related to Taxation

The bill includes the following provisions related to sales tax:

- A reduction in the tax rate for commercial property rentals from 5.7% to 5.35%, **(Added Language Line 129)**
- A three-day “back-to-school” holiday for certain clothing, school supplies, and personal computers, and **(Added Language Lines 330 - 375)**
- A seven-day “disaster preparedness” holiday for specified disaster preparedness items. **(Added Language Lines 301 - 329)**

Regarding property taxes, the bill includes the following:

- Requires that funds generated by voted discretionary millages must be shared proportionately with charter schools based on student enrollment. It also requires the referendum must contain an explanation of the distribution methodology. (Adopted Amendment Language pertaining Rep. Avila discretionary millages – [click here](#))
- Flexibility changes to the tax credits by insurance premium tax payers under the Florida Scholarship Tax Credit Program and the creation of a temporary tax credit for health insurers and health maintenance organizations that cover services provided by telehealth.
- The timing of payments to local governments in fiscally constrained counties and Monroe County to offset property tax refunds granted to homeowners due to hurricanes in 2016 and 2017 would be slightly delayed in fiscal year 2019-20 to allow for the related state appropriation to be based on actual data, instead of an estimate.

The bill passed the Senate floor (23 – 17) and is now waiting to be placed on the Governor’s desk to be signed into law.