

April 21, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: District School Superintendents
FROM: Joy Frank
RE: Legislative Update – Week of April 17th

General Information

The Legislature is entering the last two weeks of the regular legislative session. Hopefully, budget conferees will be named early next week and the budget conference can begin in earnest. The Committee process is winding down. However, significant committee action occurred this week along with some floor action. The major bills that changed significantly are summarized below.

Title I

HB 7101 was amended to include language that would reallocate Title I dollars directly to schools that fall below a certain threshold. It will have a serious impact on services provided to students. Attached is the language as well as a summary document of the impact of this language on school districts. So far this is not in the Senate. I recommend that you send to your Senator information about the impact this will have on students in your districts. You should also make your House members aware of the impact. This will be a conference issue so the sooner the better. I know that your Title I folks are aware of this and have been documenting the impact. Please forward me any letters/communication that you send.

Bills of Special Interest

SB 926 by Flores relating to Education. This is the Senate’s assessment bill that was heard in the Senate Rules Committee. The assessment language was not amended in committee. An amendment that would have replaced the achievement levels’ study language was withdrawn. It would have equated grade level with level 3. In addition, several amendments were added that contained, for the most part, language from other bills. Below is a summary of the bill.

The bill includes the following provisions related to K-12 student assessments:

- Shortening of the testing window: Requires, beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, the English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments for the specified grades to be administered no earlier than the last 3 weeks of the school year, as determined by district school board policy.
- Reporting of assessment results: Requires assessment results for the statewide, standardized ELA and mathematics assessments and Algebra I and Biology I end-of-course (EOC) assessments to be made available to the school districts as soon as practicable. Additionally, requires a school district to provide student performance results on statewide, standardized assessments to students’ parents and specified teachers in an easy-to-read and understandable format, and the report must include specified information. A school district must also provide student performance

results on district-required local assessments to students' teachers within one week after administering such assessments.

- Determination of alternative assessments: Requires the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) to contract for an independent study to determine nationally recognized high school assessment alternatives for Florida Standards Assessment (i.e., grade 9 and grade 10 ELA) and Algebra I EOC assessments for high school students; and to submit a report on the findings of the study to the Governor and the Legislature by January 1, 2018.
- Determination of concordant and comparative scores: Requires the commissioner to identify, by the first day of the 2017-2018 school year, concordant or comparative scores on specified articulated acceleration mechanisms, which satisfy high school graduation requirements; and requires the scores of students who pass such assessment to be incorporated into the school grade calculations.
- Elimination of certain EOC assessments: Eliminates Geometry, Algebra II, and United States History EOC assessments for purposes of meeting high school graduation requirements and earning scholar designation on the standard high school diploma except that a student must take one statewide, standardized mathematics assessment in high school, which must be Algebra I, Geometry, or Algebra II. Additionally, the bill eliminates the Civics EOC assessment for purposes of middle grades promotion.
- Provision of nonelectronic assessment option: Requires the commissioner to make available a nonelectronic option for all statewide assessments to reduce the time spent on testing, increase instructional time for students, and ensure students demonstrate a mastery of standards assessed. Additionally, a district school superintendent must notify the commissioner that the district will use a nonelectronic option for the entire district or for specific grade levels throughout the district by the beginning of the school year in which the nonelectronic option is used.
- Student achievement levels: Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to study each of the achievement levels used for statewide, standardized assessments to better communicate the meaning of such levels to students, parents, and teachers.
- Criteria for personnel evaluation: For purposes of personnel evaluations, authorizes each school district to measure student learning growth using formulas developed by the commissioner.

The bill also:

- Eliminates the cap on bonuses awarded to teachers of International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education, Advanced Placement, and Career and Professional Education courses, whose students earn specified score on the applicable examination.
- Expands the minority teacher education scholars program (program) to authorize a student to use the program scholarship toward a graduate degree with a major in education, leading to an initial certification.
- Creates the Committee on Early Childhood Development (committee), within the DOE, to develop a proposal for establishing and implementing a coordinated system focused on developmental milestones and outcomes for the school readiness program, the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and the Kindergarten Readiness Screener. The committee must submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1, 2017.
- Defines a public school prekindergarten provider to include a charter school that is eligible to deliver the school year prekindergarten program or summer prekindergarten program pursuant to law.

- Authorizes a school district to provide the required intensive reading instruction for a minimum of 90 minutes daily over the course of the school day to students who are retained in grade 3, and eliminates the requirement to provide such instruction for 90 continuous minutes daily.
- Authorizes an individual member of a district school board to visit any district or charter school in his or her school district on any day and at any time, at his or her pleasure.
- Requires each district school board to provide at least 100 minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week for students in kindergarten through grade 5.
- Deletes the requirement for students who participate in two full seasons of an interscholastic sport to pass a competency test on personal fitness in order to satisfy the physical education credit required for graduation with a standard high school diploma.
- Removes the option for the school district receiving an exceptional student with a disability, who resides in a residential facility, to decline to provide or contract for educational instruction.
- Authorizes a parent to request and be granted permission student's absence from school for treatment of autism spectrum disorder by a licensed healthcare practitioner; and:
 - Requires each district school board to adopt an attendance policy authorizing a student's absence for treatment of autism spectrum disorder.
 - Revises an exemption relating to parental responsibility for nonattendance of a student to include treatment for autism spectrum disorder.

The bill passed the Senate Rules Committee favorably as a committee substitute.

SB 1552 by Simmons relating to Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Scholar Awards. The bill was substantially amended in the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee. An amendment was added that revised the "turnaround" provisions as a response to the House legislation relating to the Schools of Hope.

The bill establishes the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Scholar Award Program (Award Program) to recognize the contributions of teachers and principals to student success and performance outcomes. These provisions have not changed since my original report a few weeks ago.

The bill expands the schools that must implement an early warning system (EWS) to schools that serve any students in grades 1 through 8 and clarifies that the EWS indicators include:

- A course failure in English Language Arts or math during any grading period; and
- A substantial reading deficiency for a student in grades 1 through 3.

The bill requires the school's child study team to consult with the student's parent to determine appropriate intervention strategies for the student when a student exhibits two or more EWS indicators. The data and information relating to the student's EWS indicators must be used by the team to inform any intervention strategies provided to the student. Beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year, each school's EWS to include data on:

- The number of students identified by the EWS as exhibiting two or more EWS indicators,
- The number of students by grade level who exhibit each EWS indicator, and
- A description of all intervention strategies employed by the school to improve the academic performance of students identified by the EWS.

The bill requires school districts to develop a school improvement plan for each school in the district with a school grade of "D" or "F."

The bill clarifies conditions and establishes definitions that apply to schools subject to differentiated accountability. The bill requires the SBE rule regarding a differentiated matrix of intervention and support strategies for assisting public schools to define and clearly differentiate among:

- A “school-in-need”, which means a school with a grade of “D,” or which is in danger of earning a grade of “F,” and which is in need of intervention and support.
- A “turnaround school”, which means a school with a grade of “F” or two consecutive grades below a “C,” and which is in need of intensive intervention and support, and which is implementing a district-managed turnaround or a different turnaround option.
- A “persistently low-performing school”, which means a turnaround school that has been subject to a differentiated matrix of intensive intervention and support strategies for more than 3 consecutive years or a turnaround school that was closed within 2 years after submitting a notice of intent. The bill specifies that the SBE rule must define low-performing school to include, at a minimum, any school meeting the requirements of differentiated accountability.

The bill modifies turnaround options available to school districts by adding new options and revising existing options, giving priority to the first three new options. Section 4 adds the following first three options:

- Implement an extended school day with at least 1 hour of additional learning time.
- Enter into a formal agreement with a nonprofit organization with tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code to implement an integrated student support service model that provides students and families with access to specified wrap-around services. Districts implementing this option may be eligible for additional funding as provided in the General Appropriations Act. The wrap-around services must include, but are not limited to:
 - Health services;
 - After-school programs;
 - Drug prevention programs;
 - College and career readiness; and
 - Food and clothing banks.
- Implement a principal autonomy program school under a performance based contract and in accordance with proposal elements, criteria, and timelines established by the SBE and specifically tailored for a turnaround school. A school district using this option for its turnaround school is eligible to participate in, and receive the benefits of, the principal autonomy program for only the turnaround school.

The bill also creates an option to contract as a conversion charter school and deletes the existing hybrid turnaround option. However, school districts are authorized to implement a combination of the specified turnaround options. The bill modifies an existing requirement for the Commissioner of Education to assign a community assessment team to a low-performing school by specifying that such team must be assigned to each school district or governing board with a turnaround school. The team must include intervention and support strategies in the recommendations that the team makes to the school board or the governing board, as applicable, and to the SBE.

Accordingly, the bill provides turnaround schools with additional options to implement turnaround strategies.

The bill accelerates, by at least one school year, the timing and implementation of specific turnaround options. Specifically, the bill requires a turnaround school to immediately, during its first full year after receiving the designation:

- Implement required intensive intervention and support strategies.
- Provide to DOE the negotiated memorandum of understanding with the bargaining agent in educational emergency circumstances, described below.
- Provide to DOE, by September 1, a district-managed turnaround plan that has been submitted to the SBE for approval and must be implemented for the remainder of the current school year and continue for one additional school year.

The bill specifies educational emergency conditions under which a district school board may negotiate provisions of its contract with appropriate bargaining units that must result in a memorandum of understanding regarding personnel decisions. The district school board is authorized to negotiate in cases in which one or more schools in the district have a grade of “D” or “F.” The bill also permits a district school board, beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year, to negotiate in cases in which one or more schools in the district are currently subject to, or in danger of being subject to, a differentiated matrix of intervention and support strategies as a turnaround school consistent with Florida law.

The bill aligns charter school corrective action provisions with actions applied to traditional public schools. Specifically, this section:

- Defines a turnaround charter school as a charter school earning a grade of “F” or two consecutive grades below a “C.”
- Requires each turnaround charter school to take corrective action.
- Requires a turnaround charter school to immediately implement its approved school improvement plan for the remainder of the current school year and continue implementing the plan for at least 1 full school year and select a corrective action specified in law, unless the sponsor waives the corrective action subject to condition as specified in law.

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably as a committee substitute. The bill is on the Senate Appropriations agenda for April 25th.

HB 549 by Fine relating to Education. The bill revises requirements related to the statewide assessment program by:

- deleting provisions requiring the administration of the Algebra II end-of-course (EOC) assessment;
- revising assessment windows for statewide, standardized assessments to move administration later in the year and, for certain assessments, during the last 4 weeks of a district’s school calendar;
- requiring results from the statewide, standardized English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics assessments to be provided in an easy-to-read report and delivered in time to provide useful, actionable information to students, parents, and to each student’s teacher, including each student’s teacher of record for the next school year; and
- moving the date by which the Commissioner of Education must publish the uniform assessment calendar on the Department of Education (DOE) website from August to January of each year.

The bill requires the commissioner, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year and every 3 years thereafter, to publish on the DOE’s website each statewide, standardized assessment and statewide EOC assessment, as well as materials to help the public interpret the published assessment information. The

commissioner may determine the schedule for publishing assessments during the 3-year period; however, the initial publication must include the grade 3 ELA and mathematics assessments, the grade 10 ELA assessment, and the Algebra I EOC assessment.

The bill also revises provisions relating to the student learning growth formula by requiring that an independent third party develop the formula and verify the suitability of statewide assessment results for annual learning growth measures. The bill requires the commissioner to provide schools access to individual student learning growth data in a user-friendly format that enables teachers to understand and evaluate the data and school administrators to improve instruction, evaluate programs, allocate resources, plan professional development, and communicate with stakeholders.

The commissioner must contract an independent study to determine whether the SAT and ACT may be used in lieu of the grade 10 ELA assessment and the Algebra I EOC assessment as allowed by federal law.

The bill has a fiscal impact of \$339,611 in nonrecurring General Revenue funds for the assessment study and appropriates recurring General Revenue as follows: \$1,247,251 to implement assessment reporting requirements; \$11.2 million to implement paper-based state assessments for grades 3 through 6; \$3.4 million to implement provisions relating to student learning growth data; and \$3,085,978 for the release of assessments.

The bill passed the House Education Committee favorably.

Senate Committee Action

SB 796 by Bean relates to Charter Schools. The bill creates the High-Impact Charter Management Organization (HICMO) designation, authorizes certain entities to apply for the designation, and defines related terms. Specifically, the bill:

- Establishes the process and criteria for the initial designation and renewal of the designation.
- Provides incentives for HICMO entities to operate in Florida.
- Requires the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to provide school districts with technical assistance to ensure that federal funds are allocated to charter schools using an appropriate methodology.
- Removes the requirement that a charter school must have satisfactory student achievement based on state accountability standards to receive charter school capital outlay funding.
- Directs the State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer the HICMO provisions.

The bill establishes a High-Impact Charter Management Organization (HICMO) designation, authorizes certain entities to apply for the designation, and defines related terms. The bill defines critical need area as an area designated as such by the Legislature or an area served by one or more public schools that are subject to turnaround options. Entity, for purposes of HICMO, is defined as a nonprofit organization with tax exempt status under the federal Internal Revenue Code, which is authorized by law to operate a public charter school.

Under the bill, an entity that successfully operates a system of charter schools which primarily serves educationally disadvantaged students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, may apply to the State Board of Education (SBE) for HICMO status.

The bill authorizes the SBE to adopt rules prescribing the process and criteria for initial designation of an HICMO and renewal of the designation. The bill states that the initial designation criteria must include a review of the data from all schools currently and previously operated by the entity during the past 3 years and the comparison of student-level data to the data of similar students in other schools. The bill provides that the initial designation period may not exceed 5 years and the criteria for initial and renewal designation must include, but need not be limited to, the following:

- Student demographic and achievement data, including performance on statewide assessments and nationally norm-referenced assessments.
- Student attendance, promotion, retention, and graduation rates.
- Other student outcome data, such as college attendance rates and completion rates.
- Annual finance statements and audits. The bill provides that if an entity seeks renewal of its HICMO status, the SBE must review the academic and financial performance for the charter schools established in critical need areas consistent with the initial designation criteria. Incentives
The bill grants the following incentives to HICMO entities:
- Authorizes an HICMO to apply to a district school board to establish and operate charter schools in critical need areas.
- Allows the HICMO to be designated as a local educational agency for the purposes of receiving federal funds.
- Provides that an HICMO-operated charter school is eligible to receive charter school capital outlay immediately, rather than after 2 years of operation.
- Waives the administrative fee provided in law for HICMO charter schools if the entity maintains its HICMO status.
- Requires the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to give priority to new charter schools operated by HICMO in a critical need area in the Florida Public Charter School Grant Program competitions.
- Adds HICMO-operated charter schools to an exception authorized in current law that allows a charter school that earns two consecutive grades of “F” to continue to operate in Florida if the school serves a specified student population and the school earns at least a grade of “D” in its third year of operation.

Charter School Capital Outlay - The bill removes the requirement that a charter school must have satisfactory student achievement based on state accountability standards to receive charter school capital outlay funding.

The bill passed the Senate Education Committee favorably.

SB 902 by Simmons relates to Gardiner Scholarships. The bill modifies the Gardiner Scholarship Program (GSP) to:

- Expand the definition of disability, for purposes of the GSP, to include a child:
 - Diagnosed with a rare disease or condition, which affects patient populations of fewer than 200,000 individuals in the United States;
 - Diagnosed as Anaphylaxis; or
 - Identified as deaf, visually impaired, hospital or homebound, dual sensory impaired, traumatic brain injured, as defined by rules of the State Board of Education and evidenced by reports from local school districts. The bill describes hospital or homebound to mean a student who has a medically diagnosed physical or psychiatric

condition or illness, as defined by the State Board in rule, and who is confined to the home or hospital for more than 6 months.

- Specify that a student's individual education plan (IEP) is not required to be reviewed or revised within the last 12 months in order for the student to be eligible for the GSP.
- Allow a student with an IEP from another state or physician licensed in another state to qualify for the GSP, if the student meets the other eligibility requirements.
- Authorize the use of GSP funds to procure services provided by a hospital in Florida which is selected by a parent, a certified music therapist, art therapist, or services provided at a center that is a member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International.
- Specify that a parent, student, or provider of any services may not bill an insurance company, Medicaid, or any other agency for the same services paid through Gardiner Scholarship funds.
- Provide that if a private school is unable to meet the requirements in law or has consecutive years of material exceptions listed in its agreed-upon procedures reports, the Commissioner of the Department of Education (DOE) may determine that the school is ineligible to participate in the GSP.
- Require a student's scholarship account to be closed and remaining funds reverted to the state if an account has been inactive for three consecutive fiscal years. The bill defines inactive to mean that eligible expenditures have not been made from a student's scholarship account.
- Specify that if a parent does not procure the necessary educational services for the student and the student's account has been inactive for 2 consecutive fiscal years, the student is ineligible for additional scholarship payments until the scholarship-funding organization verifies that expenditures have occurred from the account.

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Committee favorably.

SB 1362 by Broxson relating to K-12 Education. The bill creates the designation of High-Impact Charter Network (HICN), defines related terms, provides incentives for HICN entities to operate in Florida, and establishes application and review processes for the designation. Additionally, the bill:

- Eliminates the requirement for the Department of Education to compare student performance data of charter schools within a school district with public schools within that district, and with the other charter schools in Florida as well as the posting of such information on each charter school's Internet website.
- Allows a collocated school to receive a school improvement rating if all the schools at the site are eligible for a school improvement rating and do not elect to be graded.
- Replaces statutory reference to the ACT Aspire test with the PreACT.

The bill passed the Senate Education Committee favorably.

SB 1474 by Perry relating to Teacher Certification. The bill modifies the process for earning temporary educator certificates and renewing professional certificates.

The bill passed the Senate Education Committee favorably.

SB 1586 by Garcia relating to Student Eligibility for Interscholastic Athletic Competition. The bill requires the preparticipation physical evaluation form to contain information that advises a student to complete cardiovascular assessment including an electrocardiogram. Additionally, the bill clarifies that licensed practitioners must administer the medical evaluation that a student must satisfactorily pass before

participating in interscholastic competition or engaging in any practice, tryout, or other physical activity associated with the student's candidacy for an interscholastic athletic team.

The bill passed the Senate Education Committee favorably.

SB 278 by Steube relating to Local Tax Referenda. The bill provides that a referendum to adopt or amend a local option discretionary sales surtax under s. 212.055, F.S., must be held only at a general election and must be approved by a majority vote unless the surtax will be revenue-neutral to the county or special taxing district. If the discretionary sales surtax is revenue-neutral to the county or special taxing district, the referendum may be held at a special election or conducted by mail ballot.

The bill passed the Senate Community Affairs Committee favorably.

SB 856 by Broxson relating to Education. The bill relates to annual contracts and specifies that the school board may not award an annual contract based on a contingency or condition that is not expressed in statute or alter or limits its authority to award or not award an annual contract.

The bill was amended to exclude home rule charter counties.

The bill was temporarily postponed by the Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee and is agendaed for April, 24th.

SB 468 by Stargel relating to VPK. The bill revises provisions related to the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education (VPK) program and duties of the Just Read! Florida Office (Just Read! Florida).

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably.

SB 808 by Mayfield relating to Maximum Class Size. The bill modifies the penalty for exceeding maximum class size to be calculated at the school-wide average for all public schools.

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably.

SB 868 by Baxley relating to Educational Options and Services. The bill amends various provisions relating to virtual instruction and other educational options and services. The bill:

- Repeals the eligibility criteria for students to participate in virtual instruction programs.
- Removes the requirement that student enrollment in a virtual instruction program be limited to a program provided by a school district or virtual charter school operated by the district in which the student resides.
- Clarifies that students with disabilities must be offered the option to pursue a scholar or merit designation, removes the option for a certificate of completion, and modifies the criteria to document mastery of academic and employment competencies.
- Requires an individualized progress monitoring plan be developed for all students in a juvenile justice education program, including those with disabilities.
- Adds the Chancellor of Career and Adult Education to the Higher Education Coordinating Council.
- Requires that any institution seeking initial or continued approval of a graduate-level teacher education program in a certification area that does not require a graduate degree must provide students the option to complete the initial preparation program at the bachelor's level.

- Revises the dual enrollment program to clarify the description of career dual enrollment, authorize the Commissioner of Education to establish a statewide articulation agreement for the Florida Virtual School, and expand the rulemaking authority of the State Board of Education to specify rulemaking relating to student eligibility and participation, courses and programs, funding, and articulation agreements.
- Deems participants in on-the-job training activities administered by the Division of Blind Services (DBS) and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) as employees of the state for purposes of workers' compensation coverage.

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably.

SB 1302 by Gibson relating to Private School Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities. The bill revises eligibility requirements for certain private school students to participate in interscholastic or intrascholastic sports. Specifically, the bill requires the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA), in cooperation with each district school board, to allow a student attending a private school that is not a member of the FHSAA to participate in interscholastic or intrascholastic sports at a public school that a student could choose to attend pursuant to controlled open enrollment.

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably.

SB 1598 b Brandes relating to Education. The bill establishes the Schools of Excellence Program to provide administrative flexibility to the state's top schools and requires the State Board of Education to designate a school as a School of Excellence if the school's percentage of possible points earned in its school grades calculation is in the 80th percentile or higher for schools within the same grade group (elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, or combination schools) for 2 of the last 3 school years. In order to qualify, the school must have data for each applicable school grade component.

A school retains its designation as a School of Excellence for up to 3 years so long as it does not receive a school grade lower than a "B" during that span. The school may renew its designation for another 3 years if it remains in the 80th percentile or higher for 2 of the 3 years and does not receive a grade lower than a "B" in any of the years. A School of Excellence that receives a grade lower than "B" may not continue to be designated as a School of Excellence and loses its administrative flexibility during the remainder of the 3-year period.

The bill provides the following administrative flexibilities to a School of Excellence:

- Exemption from any provision in law or rule that expressly requires a minimum period of daily or weekly instruction in a specified subject area.
- Principal autonomy under the Principal Autonomy Pilot Project Initiative (PAPPI).
- For instructional personnel, the substitution of 1 school year of employment at a School of Excellence for 20 inservice points toward the renewal of a professional certificate, up to 60 inservice points in a 5-year cycle.
- Exemption from district-set starting and stopping times for the school day.

The bill grants to a principal newly assigned to a school with a school grade of "D" or "F" additional authority and responsibilities similar to those granted to principals at Schools of Excellence and at schools participating in the PAPPI. This section authorizes a school district to revoke the principal's additional authority after the school year following the first school year the school achieves a school grade of "C" or

higher. As such, the bill may provide principals with greater autonomy to determine the best approach to improve student performance at that school.

The bill changes the name of the professional development certification and education competency program to the comprehensive teacher mentorship certification program. The bill requires the Florida Department of Education (DOE) to issue a professional certificate to a temporary certificate holder who meets the requirements for a professional certificate enumerated above, is rated highly effective under the district's teacher evaluation system, and

- Completes a comprehensive teacher mentorship certification, or
- Enrolls in a state-approved teacher preparation program or a comprehensive teacher mentorship certification program within 90 days after the issuance of a temporary certificate as an acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of professional preparation and education competence to satisfy educator certification requirements.

The bill provides that an individual with a temporary certificate is not required to take or achieve a passing score on the professional education competency examination to be awarded a professional certificate.

The bill requires a comprehensive teacher mentorship certification program to include a mentorship and induction component, which must include, at minimum, weekly opportunities for mentoring and induction activities. Mentoring and induction activities include, common planning time, ongoing professional development targeted to a teacher's needs, co-teaching experiences, and reflection and follow-up discussions. A teacher selected to serve as a peer mentor is required under the bill to complete specialized training in clinical supervision and participate in ongoing mentor training. The bill requires this training be provided under the School Community Professional Development Act.

The DOE is directed to adopt standards for the approval of district developed comprehensive teacher mentorship certification programs, including standards for the teacher mentorship and induction component, by December 31, 2017.

Finally, the bill amends s. 944.801, F.S. to authorize the Department of Corrections (DOC) to enter into a contract with a charter school, authorized to operate as part of the state's program of public education, to provide education services for the Correctional Education Program. Accordingly, such contracts may provide the DOC with another method to offer education services to state prisoners. The bill does not address funding for the delivery of education services by the charter schools. The bill also amends s. 1011.80, F.S., to remove the prohibition on expending state funds for postsecondary workforce programs for the education of state and federal inmates.

The bill passed the Senate PreK-12 Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably.

SB 1210 by Lee relating to Instructional Materials. The bill:

- Defines "legal resident" or "resident" to mean a person who has maintained his or her legal residence in the state for the preceding year, has purchased a home that is occupied by him or her as his or her residence, or has established a domicile in this state pursuant to Florida law.
- Requires a district school board to adopt a policy regarding the right of a parent or legal resident of the county to object to the use of an instructional material based on specified criteria or contest the district school boards' adoption of specific instructional materials.
- Revises the review process for district school boards that implement their own instructional materials review program.

- Requires district school board, upon a written request, to provide access to any instructional material or book specified in the written request, which is maintained in a district school system library and is available for review.

The bill passed the Senate Appropriations Committee favorably.

Senate Session

SB 148 b Garcia relating to Students Remaining on School Grounds During School Hours. - Passed Senate and is now in the House.

SB 392 by Hukill relating to High School Graduation Requirements. – Passed Senate.

House Committee Action

HB 139 by Ingoglia relating to Local Tax Referenda. The bill requires any referendum to levy a discretionary sales surtax to be held during a general election or a primary election. If the referendum is held during a general election, the referendum must be approved by a majority of electors voting on the ballot question. If the referendum is held during a primary election, the referendum must be approved by a majority of electors voting on the ballot question if the surtax is revenue neutral and by at least 60 percent of electors voting on the ballot question if the surtax is not revenue neutral.

The bill passed the House Government Accountability Committee favorably.

HB 7065 by Ways & Means relating to Local Government Fiscal Transparency. The bill requires easy public access to local government governing boards' voting records related to tax increases and issuance of tax-supported debt (phased in over 4 years). The bill also requires easy online access to property tax TRIM notices and a 4-year history of property tax rates and amounts at the parcel level. This requirement is phased in over 3 years. Further, a 4-year history of property tax rates and total revenue generated at the jurisdiction level must be provided on government websites.

The bill requires additional public meetings and expands public notice requirements for local option tax increases, other than property taxes, and new long-term, tax-supported debt issuances. Public notices for proposed tax increases must contain information regarding the rate and total annual amount of revenue expected from a tax increase, the annual additional revenue expressed as a percent of annual general fund revenue, detailed explanation of intended uses of the levy, and an indication of whether or not the tax proceeds will be used to secure debt. Public notices for proposed new, long-term debt issuance must disclose the total lifetime costs of the debt, annual debt service, and effects of the new debt on a government's debt affordability measures.

Local governments must conduct and consider a debt affordability analysis prior to approving the issuance of new, long term tax-supported debt. The analysis would consist, at a minimum, of calculating a debt affordability ratio for the most recent five years and at least two projected years to gauge the effects of the proposed new debt issuance on the government's debt service to revenue profile. The debt affordability ratio is the annual debt service for outstanding tax supported debt divided by total annual revenues available to pay debt service on outstanding debt.

Under current law, local governments are required to have a CPA conduct an annual financial audit, if the Auditor General has not already scheduled an audit of the local government. The bill requires the auditor to report whether or not the local government is in compliance with the provisions of the new “Local Government Fiscal Transparency Act” contained in Part VIII of ch. 218, F.S., created by the bill. The Auditor General must request evidence of corrective action from local governments found not to be in compliance with the Act. Local governments must provide evidence that corrective action has been initiated within 45 days and evidence of completion within 180 days of such request. The Auditor General must report to the Legislative Auditing Committee local governments that do not take corrective action.

The bill revises the local government reporting requirements for economic development incentives. It requires each county and municipality to report to the Office of Economic and Demographic Research whether the incentive was provided directly to an individual business or by another entity on behalf of the local government and the source of local dollars, and any state or federal dollars obligated for the incentive. The bill also revises the classes of economic development incentives.

This bill may be a county or municipality mandate requiring a two-thirds vote of the membership of the House.

The bill passed the House Government Accountability Committee favorably and has been placed on the Special Order Calendar for April 25th.

HB 233 by Edwards relating to Students with Disabilities in Public Schools. The bill rewrites the statutes relating to seclusion and restraint of students with disabilities in public schools. The bill provides definitions for, among others, “exclusionary time,” “imminent risk of serious injury or death,” “medical protective equipment,” “nonexclusionary time,” “restrain,” “medical restraint,” and “seclusion.” The bill sets forth conditions under which physical restraint may be used. Reporting requirements are expanded to include a report on school district training and what such training must include. School districts are required to develop policies and procedures that provide for the physical safety and security of all students and school personnel. School personnel are prohibited from placing a student in seclusion. Inservice training requirements are expanded to include emotional or behavioral disabilities.

The bill passed the House Education Committee favorably.

HB 525 by Silvers relating to High School Graduation Requirements by Silvers. The bill expands current law by permitting a student to use credit earned upon completion of a DOE-registered apprenticeship or preapprenticeship program to satisfy the credit requirements in s. 1003.4282(3)(e) or (g), F.S., relating to courses in fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or practical arts; or electives.

The bill passed the House Education Committee favorably.

HB 955 by Ahern relating to High School Graduation Requirements. The bill requires students entering grade 9 in the 2017-2018 school year and thereafter to complete a one-half course credit in personal financial literacy.

The bill passed the House Education Committee favorably.

HB 1229 by Grall relating to Committee on Early Grade Success. The bill creates the Committee on Early Grade Success, within the Department of Education to develop a proposal for establishing and

implementing a coordinated child assessment system for the School Readiness Program, the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.

The bill passed the House Education Committee favorably.

House Session

HB 7101 by PreK-12 Innovation relating to K-12 Education. The bill makes several changes to the charter school statute. Of particular interest is section 10 relating to the distribution of Title I funds.

The bill passed the House and is now in the Senate.

HB 15 by Sullivan relating to Educational Options. The bill makes several changes to the Gardiner Scholarship Program and the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program.

The bill passed the House and is now in the Senate.

HB 1331 by Grall relating to Education. The bill creates the Schools of Excellence Program.

The bill passed the House.

HB 655 by Porter relating to Exceptional Student Instruction. The bill prohibits school district from declining to provide or contract for educational services for certain students in residential programs.

The bill passed the House.

HB 989 by Donalds relating to Instructional Materials. The bill modifies the instructional materials process to process to provide more access to county residents, etc.

The bill passed the full House.

HB 293 by Burton relating to Middle Grades. The bill provides for a study and also deletes the requirement for a middle school course in career planning.

The bill passed the full House.

HB 1109 by Antone relating to Private School Student Participation in Extracurricular Activities.

The bill passed the full House.

SB 80 by Steube relating to Public Records. The bill reworks the awarding of attorneys' fees in public records litigation.

The bill has passed both the House and Senate.

HB 127 by Plasencia relating to Public School Attendance Policies. This bill relates to being granted permission for a student absence for treatment of autism spectrum disorder.

The bill passed the full House.

HB 1111 by Plasencia relating to Teacher Certification.

The bill passed the full House.