

# MEMORANDUM

March 9, 2012

**TO:** The Honorable Chair and Members of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

**FROM:** Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

**SUBJECT: 2012 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

As the 2012 Legislative Session winds down to the last hours, two major education legislative issues remained to be resolved today: the Parent Empowerment or Parent Trigger bill and Differentiated Accountability.

The Senate debated the "Parent Empowerment" legislation, **SB 1718**, yesterday late into the evening, and the legislation was amended. The Senate voted the bill down by a vote of 20-20. As you may recall, this bill allows parents in a school designated as low-performing, through a petition signed by at least fifty-one percent of the parents, to identify the turnaround model implemented in the school. The proposed turnaround model needs to be presented to and discussed by the district school board.

The district school boards may adopt the turnaround option selected by parents or a different option selected by the district school board. If the district school board does not adopt the parent-selected option, it must include that option with the implementation plan submitted to the State Board of Education. The State Board may approve the district school board plan or, if it determines that the parent-selected option is more likely to improve student performance at the school, require the school board to submit a plan for implementing the parent-selected option.

**HB 7127** revising Florida's Differentiated Accountability system to align state law with the federal waiver passed. The bill eliminates existing criteria for identifying public schools for intervention and classification of schools into six categories, five of which require intervention.

Both chambers still need to debate and pass the conference report on the budget, implementing bills and conforming bills. The Higher Education Conforming Bill does include the extension of the current co-enrollment policy for another fiscal year.

Substantive legislation that has passed both chambers also includes:

## **HB 285 - Sick Leave for School District Employees**

This bill authorizes school districts to establish a sick leave bank where district employees may authorize any district employee to use sick leave that has been accrued to the authorizing employee.

## **HB 291 - Relating to Youth Athletes**

The bill requires that Florida High School Athletics Association (FHSAA) adopt guidelines to educate athletic coaches, officials, administrators, and student athletes and their parents of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury. FHSAA must adopt by laws or policies that require the parent of a student who is participating in interscholastic athletic competition or who is a candidate for an interscholastic athletic team to sign and return an informed consent that explains the nature and risk of concussion and head injury. FHSAA must also adopt bylaws for the establishment and duties of a sports medicine advisory committee.

### **SB 368 – Financial Emergencies**

This bill allows entities in a state of financial emergency to consult with other governmental bodies regarding the consolidation of administrative and support services. In addition, this bill provides that governing board members who fail to resolve a financial emergency may be suspended from office by executive order.

### **HB 7059 - Relating to Acceleration Options in Public Education**

The bill amends various provisions of the law related to acceleration options in public education, establishes Academically Challenging Curriculum to Enhance Learning (ACCEL) options, and provides an opportunity for students to graduate early from high school.

Unfortunately, the Board's priority **SB 980**, sponsored by Senator Margolis, and **HB 1343**, sponsored by Representative Fresen, providing flexibility in the allowable use of the current sales surtax remains in the Senate Budget Committee and therefore will not pass, although the House Bill did pass the Florida House of Representatives.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Assistant Superintendent, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement, at 305 995-1497.

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cc: School Board Attorney  
Superintendent's Cabinet  
Ms. Carolyn Nelson-Goedert