


MEMORANDUM

November 6, 2015

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

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

SUBJECT: 2016 LEGISLATIVE SESSION – COMMITTEE WEEK OF OCTOBER 19-23, 2015

The Florida Legislature met for its third week of interim committees which included a Special Legislative Session to redraw Senate districts. Special Session C stems from a long-running legal battle about whether the 2012 Legislature violated the "Fair Districts" standards when re-drawing Senate districts. Special Session C is scheduled to conclude on Friday, November 6, 2015. The final outcome of Special Session C could result in some senators losing their current seat and all forty senators having to run for office in November 2016. Further, House members planning future Senate runs also have a personal interest in the outcome.

Most of the committees in the House and Senate related to K-12 education did not meet during the week and those that did continued to hear presentations on various topics such as McKay Scholarships, laboratory schools, and struggling readers.

GUNS ON CAMPUS

SB 300, sponsored by Senator Don Gaetz, and HB 163, sponsored by Representative Matt Gaetz, creates s. 776.00111, F.S., which states that an individual with a concealed weapon license has the right to carry a weapon in any place that a person has the right to be present. Groups representing Florida sheriffs and police officers have come out in opposition to this legislative proposal. Law enforcement representatives say the proposals would restrict the ability of officers to ensure public safety, and the bills fail to include enhanced training and requirements for the holstering and handling of openly carried weapons.

SB 68, sponsored by Senator Evers, and HB 4001, sponsored by Representative Steube, deletes the prohibition for someone with a concealed weapon license from openly carrying a handgun or carrying a concealed weapon or firearm into a college or university facility. SB 72, sponsored by Senator Evers, would authorize a school superintendent, with approval of the school board, to authorize a school-safety designee to carry a concealed weapon or firearm on school property. Currently, this bill does not have a House companion. Furthermore, based on conversations with members in the House and Senate, there is not wide support for guns on K-12 campuses.

BUDGET

In anticipation of the release of the Governor's recommended budget, Governor Scott has released components of his recommended budget early. Recently he announced \$20 million to help technical schools respond quickly to employer needs. Technical colleges and centers would be eligible for competitive grants, which would be geared toward programs that could be completed in less than 52 weeks. The "Career in a Year" initiative would include such programs as licensed practical nursing, a 45-week program; and welding, a 39-week program.

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya, Associate 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