


MEMORANDUM

February 2, 2016

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 – WEEK #3 JANUARY 25-29, 2016

The Florida Legislature has completed its third week of the 60-day 2016 regular legislative session that began on Tuesday, January 12, 2016. Unlike last session, the process is flowing as scheduled despite the differences between the two chambers. There is chatter in the halls of the capital that the Legislature may conclude its work prior to the scheduled conclusion date of March 11, 2016.

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE

As anticipated, the House and the Senate Appropriations Committees have released their proposed 2016 General Appropriations Act and related implementing bills, and these bills will be considered on Wednesday, February 3, 2016. The House of Representatives and Senate have scheduled second and third readings of their respective budget proposals on February 10-11, 2016. After final passage, conferees will be appointed so that the differences can be resolved.

The House proposal would spend \$79.9 billion during the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2016, while the proposed Senate bill would spend \$80.9 billion. The difference between the two proposed budgets is roughly \$988.9 million. The Senate funding proposal for K-12 education would provide an increase of \$650 million, or 3.30 percent. Of this amount, \$507 million or 78 percent, comes from local property taxes. The remaining \$143 million is from state funds. Senator Gaetz, Chair of Senate Education PreK-12 Appropriations, expressed reservations on that breakdown and requested that it be analyzed further. The Senate proposal increases the ESE Guaranteed Allocation by \$96 million. The House K-12 education budget proposal would provide an increase of \$601 million, or 3.05 percent. Of this amount, \$505 million comes from local funds and \$95 million from state funds. The differences between the two budget proposals is only \$49.5 million, and the areas of differences include funding for Digital Classrooms Allocation (Senate, \$60 million and House, \$80 million); Supplemental Academic Instruction (Senate, \$656.8 million and House, \$709.8 million); ESE Guaranteed Allocation (Senate, \$972 million and House, \$1.05 billion); and Best and Brightest (Senate, 0 and House, \$45 million). Other differences are:

- New World School of the Arts is not funded in the Senate budget and level funding (\$650,000) is proposed in the House;

- The Senate budget provides \$1.1 million for Miami-Dade schools to restore the Adults with Disabilities program;
- The House budget provides \$1.1 million to Miami-Dade schools for the acquisition of devices to allow for the administration of the Florida Standards Assessments to an entire grade simultaneously; and
- The Senate budget provides no funding of Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) to charter schools and \$50 million for public schools while the House budget provides \$90 million for charter schools and \$50 million for public schools.

KIDCARE

The House Health Care Appropriations Subcommittee unanimously approved HB 89, sponsored by Representative Jose Felix Diaz, and would eliminate a five-year waiting period for the children of legal immigrants to be eligible for the state's KidCare health-insurance program. The bill is moving forward after four years of being held up in the House. The House stance changed after Speaker Steve Crisafulli called for the bill's passage during his 2016 legislative session opening remarks.

BOARD'S LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

SB 442, sponsored by Senator Flores, related to providing school districts some flexibility on the construction and maintenance of its facilities was heard in Senate Education K-12 committee, and it passed unanimously. The companion bill, HB 119, sponsored by Representative Bileca is on the calendar in the House waiting for final passage.

HB 499, sponsored by Representative Avila, related to modifying the value adjustment board process was heard in House Local and Federal Affairs, and it passed unanimously. The companion bill, SB 766, sponsored by Senator Flores is currently in the Senate Finance and Tax committee. A hearing is expected on February 8, 2016.

HB 535, sponsored by Representative Eagle, related to the Florida Building Code, includes language that would ensure District's continuation of its iSwim program. The bill passed unanimously by the House Government Operations Appropriations committee. The Senate companion bill, SB 704, sponsored by Senator Hutson, was scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Community Affairs committee next week.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Florida School Boards Association is holding its legislative days February 3-4, 2016. The Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards will have its business meeting the evening of Wednesday, February 3, 2016, and its legislative visits on Thursday, February 4, 2016. Miami-Dade Days take place on February 9-10, 2016, and the Board's advocacy trip is scheduled for February 16, 2016.

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