


MEMORANDUM

February 23, 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 #6 FEBRUARY 15-19, 2016

The Florida Legislature has completed its sixth week of the 60-day 2016 regular legislative session that began on Tuesday, January 12, 2016. At the conclusion of the week six, neither chamber had announced its budget conferees. We anticipate the appointments will be made this week. There are several issues still unresolved which impacts budget development-tax relief, allocations, and gaming. The leadership in both chambers must agree on these issues prior to budget negotiations beginning.

The Board's advocacy trip took place last week. Board members Feldman, Holloway, Karp, Navarro, Perez, and Regalado met with Senators Bullard, Diaz de la Portilla, Flores, Garcia, Margolis, and Montford, as well as, Representatives Campbell, J. Diaz, M. Diaz, Fresen, Nuñez, Oliva, Raschien, Richardson, Rodriguez, Stafford, Trujillo, and Watson. Discussions revolved around the Board's priorities, including the passage of the value adjustment board (VAB) legislation, capital funding, funding for additional instructional time in the lowest performing elementary schools, and flexibility on how we build and maintain schools.

BOARD'S PRIORITY BILLS

The VAB bill was heard in the House and Senate last week. In the House, HB 499, sponsored by Representative Avila, was heard in its last committee of reference. It passed unanimously in House Appropriations and has been placed on the House calendar for second reading. SB 766, sponsored by Senator Flores, was heard in Senate Finance and Tax, and it passed unanimously. The bill has one last stop - Senate Appropriations.

HB 119, sponsored by Representative Bileca, regarding limited flexibility on how educational facilities are built and maintained passed the House by a vote of 111-1. The companion bill, SB 442, sponsored by Senator Flores, was heard in Senate Education Appropriations and passed unanimously. The next stop for this bill is Senate Appropriations.

SB 704, related to the Florida Building Code, is currently in Senate Fiscal Policy - its last committee of reference. This bill is an omnibus bill that includes language to facilitate the continuation of the District's iSwim program. The companion bill, HB 504, is currently in House Regulatory Affairs - its last committee of reference.

Unfortunately, SB 890 sponsored by Senator Flores related to the creation of a Seal of Biliteracy was never heard. Senator Legg, Chair of Education K-12, did not calendar the bill for a hearing. Thus, this bill is not viable for passage this legislative session. It will be the first bill District staff will file for the 2017 session, subject to Board approval.

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