

MEMORANDUM

March 5, 2018

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

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools 

SUBJECT: 2018 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – WEEK #8

The 2018 Florida Legislative Session concluded its eighth week on Saturday, March 3, 2018. As reported last week, the presiding officers released budget allocations for each category of the budget, allowing for the two chambers to start negotiating the differences between the two spending plans. As of the date of this report, the state budget for 2018-2019 has not been finalized.

School Safety

The eighth week ended with the Florida Senate meeting in session on Saturday to discuss SB 7026, the safety package in response to the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on February 14, 2018. After more than six hours of questions, amendments, and emotionally-charged discussion, the Senate passed the bill. Numerous amendments were filed in an attempt to ban assault weapons in Florida and to eliminate the school marshal program, but all amendments to do so were defeated. The marshal plan is optional and subject to local law enforcement and school district agreement to implement. The bill includes the following provisions:

Firearm Safety

- Establishes new restrictions on purchase and ownership of firearms of all types;
- Increases the minimum age for purchasing a firearm from 18 to 21 years except for persons in law enforcement, and active and reserved military personnel;
- Establishes a 3-day waiting period for purchase of firearms except for concealed weapons permit holders or persons who complete a 16-hour hunter safety course approved by the Fish and Wildlife Commission;
- Bans bump stocks;
- Enhances restrictions for persons subject to involuntary examination and commitment or Baker Acted;
- Provides law enforcement and the court the ability to temporarily restrict firearm possession by a person who is undergoing a mental health crisis or when there is evidence of a threat of violence; and
- Prohibits a person adjudicated mentally impaired or committed to a mental institution from owning or purchasing a firearm or obtaining concealed weapon license.

School Safety

- Requires additional school resource and security officers, as well as school hardening;
- Establishes safe school and security standards;
- Requires a review of school safety and security plans;
- Implements a school safety specialist training program;
- Requires risk assessment procedures;
- Requires training for school safety specialists as well as students and faculty;

- Requires emergency drills for active shooter and hostage situations involving students, school personnel, and law enforcement experts;
- Establishes a “marshal” program to enhance safety and security in schools through the use of law enforcement trained and screened school personnel who function as part of school security teams;
- Requires each school district to designate a school safety specialist and each school to establish a threat assessment team to provide a coordinated approach to evaluating and responding to students who pose a threat of violence;
- Removes barriers preventing school district and law enforcement authorities from referring students appropriately to mental health services or law enforcement;
- Requires coordination, and information sharing between schools, law enforcement, and service agencies; and
- Establishes a statewide commission to investigate system failures in the Parkland school shooting and prior mass shooting events and make recommendations for system improvements.

Mental Health

- Provides funding for mental health training, screening, counseling and services in schools

Budget

As noted in the previous legislative report, the two chambers agreed on budget allocations for each portion of the state budget and began negotiating the differences between the two budget proposals earlier in the week. As of Saturday, March 3, most of the items related to K-12 education had been settled with the exception of the following:

- Base Student Allocation;
- Safe Schools;
- Teacher Classroom Supply Assistance Program;
- Mental Health Allocation;
- Virtual Education Contribution;
- Funding Compression Adjustment;
- District Cost Differential;
- New World School of the Arts funding; and
- Section 16 Lands Appropriations.

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