

## MEMORANDUM

October 17, 2017

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

**FROM:** Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools *AMC/8*

**SUBJECT: 2018 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – INTERIM COMMITTEE WEEK  
OCTOBER 9-13, 2017**

The Florida Legislature met the week of October 9, 2017, for its first week of interim committees leading up to the 2018 Legislative Session. During this week, the substantive Education and appropriations committees in both the Senate and the House met.

### **Representative Jose Oliva Officially Selected as Speaker-Designate**

Florida's Republicans formally announced their support of Representative Jose Oliva as the next House speaker, selecting him as their designate if they hold the majority in the 2018 elections as expected. Oliva will ascend to the two-year post in November 2018 if Republicans retain control of the state House. He would become the second House speaker from Miami in 12 years, following Marco Rubio who served as speaker from 2006-2008 and was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2010.

### **New Scholarship Program Proposed**

House Republicans led by the Speaker of the House of Representatives announced a new scholarship program for children in Florida's K-12 public schools who have been victimized by bullying, assault, or other violent trauma. The new program will provide an option for students to change schools, including the ability to leave the public school system for a private alternative. Parents would report an incident of abuse to the school, and administrators would then investigate it. After 15 days, the parent could then transfer his/her child to either a public school in the same school district or to a private school of their choice using the financial aid from the Hope Scholarship. As of this time, no legislation has been filed.

### **Hurricane Readiness**

Speaker of the House Richard Corcoran created a new committee to assess how the state handled Hurricane Irma and identify areas of improvement. The committee will determine whether protections for residents of nursing homes, group homes, and assisted living facilities should be strengthened, conduct a review of the Florida building code, and identify ways to improve storage of food, water, and fuel in advance of a storm.

### **Financial Outlook**

The state's economists provided legislators an analysis of the state's financial outlook, which projects a \$52 million surplus for lawmakers to work with next session. That amount would be left over after the state pays for critical and high priority needs and squirrels away \$1 billion into reserves. However, that projection does not include the

impact of Hurricane Irma and any budget amendments necessary to address damage from the storm. The true impact will not be fully known until later in the year.

As you may recall, the economists initially projected a large shortfall for 2018-2019, but a settlement over gaming revenue from the Seminole Tribe of Florida boosted nonrecurring funding. The infusion of gaming funds helped delay a billion-dollar deficit by a year. If nothing changes, the state will have a \$1.14 billion deficit in 2019-2020.

If you have any questions, 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