

MEMORANDUM

October 18, 2019

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

FROM: Alberto M. Carvalho, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2020 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – INTERIM COMMITTEE WEEK #2

The Florida Legislature held its second week of interim committees the week of October 14-18, 2019. For the most part, committees met for the purpose of hearing updates and presentations. As you are aware, the 2020 Legislative Session is scheduled to begin Tuesday, January 14, 2020.

The Senate Education Committee met and heard a presentation on Educator Professional Development by the Florida Department of Education (FDOE). In addition, the superintendents of three school districts discussed the need for relevant professional development for teachers. Chairman Manny Diaz asked for input on in-service needs of school districts for teachers.

The Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability committee met and heard several bills, including SB 142 sponsored by Senator Jeff Brandes. The bill would abolish the state's Constitutional Revision Commission by repealing provisions in the Florida Constitution that establish it. As a joint resolution, the legislation must be agreed to by three-fifths of the membership of each chamber of the Florida Legislature and ultimately approved by 60 percent of the electorate.

The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education met and heard presentations on Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Legislative Budget Requests from the FDOE, the Office of Early Learning, and the Board of Governors. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education is not scheduled to meet next week.

The House PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee met and heard a presentation by the FDOE on the system of school improvement. The House PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee heard a presentation on Florida Classroom Teacher Compensation and discussed a budget analysis. Chairman Chris Latvala advised the committee members that their committee has been assigned the task of reviewing the Education base budget and reprioritizing \$520 million.

Recently, Governor DeSantis released a proposal to use \$603 million to increase teacher salaries to \$47,500. His proposal is expected to impact approximately 100,000 teachers statewide. While it is laudable and beneficial to have the conversation on increasing teacher compensation, the proposal is not without some concerns. It:

- Circumvents collective bargaining provisions in the Florida Constitution and state statutes;
- Does not identify funding source(s) – one potential source is Best & Brightest, which is approximately \$284 million, but no other source has been identified;

- Violates the Florida constitutional provision guaranteeing the right to an equal education regardless of where a student lives;
- Disequalizes funding among school districts and nullifies any impact the District Cost Differential has in the formula;
- Rewards school districts that have not invested in teacher salaries despite having the financial ability to do so; and
- Punishes school districts that have prioritized increasing teacher salaries.

SB 360, sponsored by Senator Manny Diaz, requires school districts that participate in the Florida Education Finance Program to expend 80 percent of funds from the program on classroom spending. If you recall, Governor DeSantis had proposed this during his campaign. At the time of this report, a House companion bill has not been filed in the Florida House of Representatives.

The next committee week is scheduled for the week of October 21-25, 2019. During that week, the Florida Senate will be holding a special session on Executive Order 19-14, which suspended Mr. Scott Israel from the Broward County Sheriff's Office.

Additionally, the Republican Conference of the Florida Senate met to officially elect Senator Wilton Simpson from Trilby, Florida, to the position of Republican Leader-Designate to serve as the Florida Senate President for the two-year term beginning with the Organization Session of November 2020. The Senate President-Designate outlined priorities that he would like to address during his tenure, including improving Florida's water quality, foster care system, services for at-risk youth, and economic development.

If you have any questions or wish to schedule a briefing, please contact Ms. Iraidia R. Mendez-Cartaya, Associate Superintendent, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and Community Engagement, at 305 995-2532.

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cc: School Board Attorney
Superintendent's Cabinet