

Committee on Education Pre-k - 12

CS/CS/HB 1255 — Public School Accountability

by Education Committee; K-20 Competitiveness Subcommittee, and Representative Adkins (CS/CS/SB 1696 by Budget Subcommittee on Education Pre-K - 12 Appropriations, Education Pre-K – 12, and Senator Wise)

The bill is a comprehensive public school accountability package which will implement reforms in the following areas:

- Virtual Education—The bill requires school districts to provide students access to Florida Virtual School (FLVS) courses during and after the normal school day to provide uniformity among school districts and increase student access to the FLVS.
- Gift Ban—The bill prohibits school board members and their relatives from soliciting or accepting any gift in excess of \$50 from any person, vendor, potential vendor, or other entity doing business with the school district.
- Voluntary Prekindergarten Program (VPK) and kindergarten screening—The bill requires a VPK provider that is on probation and who seeks a good cause exemption to administer the statewide VPK enrollment screening, which the Department of Education (DOE) must adopt, to newly admitted VPK students. The provider must pay for the screening. The bill also repeals a numeric limitation on providers who fail to meet the kindergarten readiness rate.
- Digital Curriculum—The bill authorizes school districts to implement a digital curriculum for students in grades 6-12. DOE would develop a model curriculum to serve as a guide.
- Career and Professional Academies—The bill specifies criteria for middle school career and professional academies relating to alignment to high school career and professional academies, an opportunity to earn an industry certification and partnerships with the business community.
- Student Assessment and School Accountability—The bill:
 - Repeals the requirement for certain middle school students to take the Algebra I end-of-course assessment (EOC) in 2010-2011;
 - Revises the middle school grading formula to add the performance of students in high school courses with statewide standardized assessments and students who earn designated industry certifications;
 - Requires passage of civics for middle school promotion;
 - Provides that a determination of school grades for the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) will be based on statewide assessments alone;
 - Provides that for purposes of calculating the performance category under differentiated accountability, the statewide assessments' portion of a school grade would be used in determining the appropriate performance category;
 - Provides for the assignment of scores from hospital/homebound students to be assigned to their home school;
 - Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to revise statewide testing dates; and

- Provides for postsecondary preparatory courses for high school students with designated academic deficiencies.
- Supplemental Education Services (SES)—The bill authorizes school districts to select pre and post methods for measuring student learning gains.
- Students with Disabilities—The bill:
 - Authorizes the waiver of certain EOC assessment requirements for students with disabilities;
 - Establishes training, accountability and reporting requirements for students who are restrained and secluded;
 - Provides that a McKay scholarship student who enters a Department of Juvenile Justice detention center for less than 21 days would not lose the scholarship;
 - Allows a parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing to enroll an eligible child in an auditory-oral education program and adds listening and spoken language specialists to eligible instructional services for exceptional students; and
 - Requires the Department of Education to revise the matrix of services for students with disabilities, which is used to determine exceptional education cost factors, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year.
- Budget Transparency—The bill requires school districts to post each proposed, tentative, and official budget on their websites and encourages school districts to provide additional information on their websites.
- Accelerated High School Graduation Options—The bill authorizes students to choose the 18 credit accelerated graduation option at any time during grades 9 through 12, rather than requiring a student to choose this option no later than grade 9.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2011, except as otherwise provided in the bill.

Vote: Senate 33-5; House 94-23