SUMMARY ANALYSIS

CS/HB 1467 passed the House on February 10, 2022, and subsequently passed the Senate on March 10, 2022.

Florida’s Constitution provides that each school district must be governed by a school board composed of five or more elected members elected to staggered, 4-year terms, as provided by law. The bill prohibits a school board member from appearing on a ballot for reelection if the member will have served, or would have served if not for resignation, in that office for 12 consecutive years. The proposed limitation would apply only to terms of office beginning on or after November 8, 2022, and is prospective, so that school board members reelected to a consecutive term in 2022 could serve another 12 consecutive years before reaching the term limit.

The bill also increases school district transparency and accountability for selecting and using instructional materials and library materials by:

- requiring that certain school district instructional materials review committee meetings be noticed and open to the public;
- requiring school district personnel who are involved in reviewing and selecting library media and collections or materials maintained on a reading list to complete training developed by the Department of Education (DOE), prior to making selections;
- requiring school districts to adopt and post procedures for developing library media center collections;
- requiring each elementary school to post on its website a list of all materials maintained in the school library or recommended or assigned as part of a school- or grade-level reading list;
- requiring that each material in a school library or assigned school- or grade-level reading list be selected by a certified educational media specialist;
- requiring school districts to publish on its website a searchable list of all instructional materials available to students;
- requiring school districts to provide a public review process for district-adopted materials consistent with current instructional materials adoption requirements and to select, approve, adopt, or purchase materials as a separate line item on a board meeting agenda; and
- beginning June 30, 2023, requiring school districts annually to report to the Commissioner of Education, and identify in the superintendent’s annual certification of approved instructional materials programs, materials for which the school district received an objection for the school year, and requiring the DOE to publish removed or discontinued materials as a result of an objection.

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact. See fiscal comments, infra.

The bill was approved by the Governor on March 25, 2022, ch. 2022-21, L.O.F., and will become effective on July 1, 2022.
I. SUBSTANTIVE INFORMATION

A. EFFECT OF CHANGES:

District School Board Member Terms of Office

Present Situation

The Florida Constitution provides that “[i]n each school district there shall be a school board composed of five or more members chosen by vote of the electors in a nonpartisan election for appropriately staggered terms of four years, as provided by law.”¹ This provision has been interpreted to allow school board member qualifications to be established by statute.² Neither the Florida Constitution nor Florida Statutes address the number of terms a school board member may serve.³

However, Florida’s Constitution establishes term limits for the following elected officials:⁴
- Florida Governor;
- Florida representatives;
- Florida senators;
- Florida Lieutenant Governor;
- Florida Cabinet members;
- U.S. representatives from Florida; and
- U.S. senators from Florida.

Term limits imposed by states for federal elected officials were held to be unconstitutional, and thus unenforceable, by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1995.⁵

The Florida Constitution states that none of these officials, except for the office of Governor which is governed by a slightly different provision, may appear on a ballot for reelection if, by the end of the current term of office, the person will have served or, but for resignation, would have served in that office for eight consecutive years.⁶ These term limits became effective in 1992 and were prospective, so that officials reelected to a consecutive term in 1992 could serve another consecutive eight years before reaching the term limit.⁷

Currently, Duval County is the only school district in Florida with established term limits for its members, with two consecutive full terms of 4 years.⁸

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¹ Art. IX, s. 4(a), Fla. Const.
² In Askew v. Thomas, 293 So.2d 40, 42 (Fla. 1974), the court interpreted section 4(a) of article IX and refused to invoke the constitutional principle that “statutes imposing additional qualifications for office are unconstitutional where the basic document of the constitution itself has already undertaken to set forth those requirement” because that section does not address school board member qualifications. Similarly, in Telli v. Broward County, 94 So. 3d 504 (Fla. 2012), the court receded from prior opinions which held that article VI, section 4(b), Florida Constitution, listing the state elected offices with mandatory term limits, prohibited the imposition of term limits on other officials. The court held that “[i]nterpreting Florida’s Constitution to find implied restrictions on powers otherwise authorized is unsound in principle” and that “express restrictions must be found not implied.” Id. at 513.
³ Art. IX, s. 4(a), Fla. Const.
⁴ Art. VI, s. 4(c), Fla. Const.
⁵ See U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton, 514 U.S. 779 (1995). See also Ray v. Mortham, 742 So. 2d 1276 (Fla. 1999) (holding that term limits imposed on elected state officials were severable from provisions imposing term limits on elected federal officials).
⁶ Art. VI, s. 4(c), Fla. Const.

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Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill prohibits a school board member from appearing on a ballot for reelection if, by the end of his or her current term of office, the member will have served, or would have served if not for resignation, in that office for 12 consecutive years. The proposed limitation would apply only to terms of office beginning on or after November 8, 2022, and is prospective, so that school board members reelected to a consecutive term in 2022 could serve another 12 consecutive years before reaching the term limit.

The bill does not preempt term limits of less than 12 years. Consequently, a school board member who resides in Duval County would not appear on the ballot after the eighth year.

Curriculum and Library Materials in Traditional Public Schools

Present Situation

Instructional Materials Adoption

Each district school board has the constitutional duty and responsibility to select and provide adequate instructional materials to each student for core courses in mathematics, language arts, science, social studies, reading, and literature for kindergarten through grade 12. "Adequate instructional materials" are defined by law as a sufficient number of student or site licenses or sets of materials that are available in bound, unbound, kit, or package form and may consist of hardbacked or softbacked textbooks, electronic content, consumables, learning laboratories, manipulatives, electronic media, and computer courseware or software that serve as the basis for instruction for students.

The Florida Department of Education (DOE) facilitates the instructional materials adoption process statewide through evaluation of materials submitted by publishers and manufacturers. Expert reviewers chosen by the DOE must objectively evaluate materials based on alignment to Florida's state-adopted standards, accuracy, and appropriateness for age and grade level. Instructional materials selected by reviewers must:

- accurately portray the ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, religious, physical, and racial diversity of our society, including men and women in professional, career, and executive roles, and the role and contributions of the entrepreneur and labor in the total development of this state and the United States;
- accurately portray humankind's place in ecological systems, including the necessity for the protection of our environment and conservation of our natural resources and the effects on the human system of the use of tobacco, alcohol, controlled substances, and other dangerous substances;
- encourage thrift, fire prevention, and humane treatment of people and animals;
- contain the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States when appropriate to the comprehension of students for social science, history, or civics classes; and
- not contain any matter reflecting unfairly upon persons because of their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or occupation.

Based on reviewer recommendations of materials that are "suitable, usable, and desirable," the Commissioner of Education then selects and adopts instructional materials for each subject and grade.

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9 See s. 1006.40(2), F.S.
10 Section 1006.28(1), F.S. Digital and instructional materials, including software applications, must be provided by each school board, in consultation with the district school superintendent, to students with disabilities in prekindergarten through grade 12. Section 1003.4203(2), F.S.
11 Section 1006.34(1), F.S.
12 Section 1006.31, F.S.
13 Section 1006.31(2)(a)-(d), F.S.
under consideration. The DOE must provide training to instructional materials reviewers on competencies for making valid, culturally sensitive, and objective recommendations prior to the reviewers beginning the review and selection process.

After adoption, the DOE must make the final report of instructional materials available at all times for public inspection. The DOE Office of Instructional Materials announces the adoption by publicly posting the list on its website, as well as emailing district instructional materials contacts with the newly approved materials.

School districts receive an allocation of state funds each year for instructional materials, library books, and reference books. Unless a school district has implemented its own instructional materials review process, at least 50 percent of the allocation of funds must be used to purchase instructional materials on the state-adopted list. The remaining 50 percent of the annual allocation may be used for the purchase of library and reference books, nonprint materials, and the repair and renovation of materials; however, such materials are not subject to the same school-district adoption procedures as instructional materials.

Each school district superintendent must annually, by July 1, certify to the Commissioner of Education that the district school board has approved a comprehensive staff development plan supporting fidelity of implementation of instructional materials programs. Certification includes verification that:

- training was provided;
- materials are being implemented as designed; and
- core reading and reading intervention materials used in kindergarten through grade 5 meet minimum requirements.

Each district school board must maintain a list of all purchased instructional materials, by grade level, on its website. Materials purchased, including instructional materials and library media and reference books, must be free of pornography and harmful materials to minors; suited to student needs and their ability to comprehend the materials presented; and appropriate for the grade level and age group for which the materials are used or made available.

Prior to the purchase of any instructional material, whether from the state-adopted list or through a district-established instructional materials review process, a district school board must:

- establish a process to allow student editions of recommended instructional materials to be accessed and viewed online by the public at least 20 calendar days before the required school board hearing and public meeting;
- conduct an open, noticed school board hearing to receive public comment on the recommended instructional materials;
- conduct an open, noticed public meeting, on another date, to approve an annual instructional materials plan to identify any instructional materials that will be purchased;

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14 Section 1006.34(2)(a), F.S. Generally, the commissioner adopts instructional materials according to a 5-year rotating schedule. The commissioner may approve a shorter schedule if the content area requires more frequent revision. Section 1006.36(1), F.S.
15 Section 1006.29(5), F.S.
17 See s. 1011.67, F.S.
18 See s. 1006.283, F.S.
20 See s. 1006.40(3)(b), F.S.
21 Section 1011.67(2), F.S.
22 See s. 1001.215(8), F.S. (requirements for reading programs are established by the Just Read, Florida! Office at DOE).
23 Section 1006.28(2)(a)(1), F.S.
24 See s. 847.012, F.S.
25 Section 1006.40(3)(d), F.S.
• provide notice for the school board hearing and the public meeting that specifically states the instructional materials being reviewed and how they can be accessed for public review; and
• establish a process for public comment on, and review of, the recommended instructional materials.26

The below graphic portrays the state and district level adoption of instructional materials compared to the adoption of all other materials, including library media materials.27

As part of the adoption process, some school districts convene a committee composed of teachers and other stakeholders to provide a preliminary review of instructional materials and make recommendations to the district school board for adoption.28 Not all instructional materials review committee meetings are noticed and open to the public. However, in September 2021, the Second District Court of Appeal held that when a district school board delegates decision-making authority to an instructional materials review committee, any meeting in which the committee exercises the authority to

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26 Sections 1006.40(4)(b) and 1006.283(2)(b)8., 9., and 11., F.S.
rank, eliminate, or select materials for final approval by the school board must be noticed and open in
accordance with the Sunshine Law.  

Library Media and Other Materials

In addition to instructional materials, each district school board is responsible for the content of any
other materials used in the classroom, made available in a school library, or included on a reading list,
whether adopted and purchased from the state-adopted instructional materials list, adopted and
purchased through a district instructional materials program, or otherwise purchased or made available.

Librarians/Media Specialists

Librarians/media specialists are defined by law as staff members responsible for evaluating, selecting,
organizing, and managing media and technology resources, equipment, and related systems. They are
also responsible for working with teachers and students to make resources available in instructional
programs, media productions, and location and use of information resources. Educators in Florida
may become certified educational media specialists through the DOE certification process, but Florida
schools are not required to employ a certified educational media specialist.

To become a certified educational media specialist in prekindergarten through grade 12, an individual
must complete one of the following pathways:

- a bachelor’s degree or higher with an undergraduate or graduate major in educational media or
  library science; or
- a bachelor’s degree or higher with thirty semester hours in educational media or library science
to include credit in management of library media programs, collection development, library
media resources, reference sources and services, organization of collections, and design and
production of educational media.

Each school district must provide training to school librarians and media specialists regarding the
prohibition against distributing harmful materials to minors, and best practices for providing students
access to age-appropriate materials and library resources.

The Office of Library Media Services at the DOE supports district library media supervisors to help
create and maintain quality library programs and foster a love of reading and effective use of ideas and
information by students and faculty.

Selection Processes of Library Media Materials

The selection of instructional materials, library media, and other reading materials used in the public-
school system must include consideration of the age of the students who normally could be expected to
have access to the material, the educational purpose to be served by the material, the degree to which
the material would be supplemented and explained by classroom programs, and the consideration of
the diversity of the students in Florida. As provided, supra, library media books and materials are not
included in state-level instructional materials adoption, and are reviewed and selected at the school
level.

29 Florida Citizens Alliance, Inc. v. School Bd. of Collier Cnty., 328 So.3d 22 (Fla. 2d DCA 2021). Florida’s Sunshine Law is
established in s. 286.011, F.S.
30 Section 1006.28(2)(a)1., F.S.
31 Section 1012.01(2)(c), F.S.
32 Rule 6A-4.0251, F.A.C.
33 Section 1006.34(2)(b), F.S.
34 Florida Department of Education, Library Media Services, https://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards/subject-areas/library-media-
services-instructional-t/ (last visited Jan. 18, 2022).
35 Section 1006.34(2)(b), F.S.
School district policies regarding library media materials selection vary. Some school districts have policies that provide criteria for the selection of materials, with consideration being given to the needs of the school based on the knowledge of curriculum and existing collection, and the needs of the students attending the school. Such procedures may include the school media specialist evaluating reputable, unbiased, and professionally prepared aids such as those published by companies and accepted by the educational media profession. The school media specialist may also consult with other staff members of a school regarding evaluation of materials. Some school districts also utilize district handbooks that provide support for library media specialists.

Best practices for developing a school library collection include research on potential books and basing selections on the goals and objectives of the school and the students’ personal interests and learning. Materials should be appropriate for the subject area and age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and development of the students for whom the materials are selected. Resources such as Association for Library Service to Children, Booklist, School Library Journal, Kirkus, and Young Adult Library Services Association are commonly recommended review sources for school librarians.

Several school districts in Florida implement an online, searchable catalogue of all library materials at each school for parents, students, and the public to access materials. Objection to Materials

Each district school board is required to establish a process by which a parent or resident of the county may contest the district school board’s adoption of a specific material. The parent or resident must file a petition, on a form provided by the school board, within 30 calendar days after the adoption of the material. The school board is required to conduct at least one open public hearing before an unbiased and qualified hearing officer that is not an employee or agent of the school district. Following the hearing, the school board’s decision is made and not subject to further petition or review.

In addition, each school district must have a process by which a parent or resident of the county can object to the use of a specific instructional material that was not subject to public adoption procedures or other material used in a classroom, made available in a school library, or included on a reading list. If, through this process, the district school board finds that an instructional material does not meet state standards for adoption or that a material contains content harmful to a minor, is not suited to student needs and ability to comprehend the material, or is inappropriate for the grade level and age group it is used for, the district must discontinue the use of the material for that grade level or age group. There is no requirement that a current list of removed or discontinued materials be published.

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39 Id.
41 Section 1006.28(2)(a)(3), F.S.
42 Id.
43 Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S.
44 Id.
Required Instruction

Florida law requires certain topics to be taught in kindergarten through grade 12 public schools annually to ensure coverage of all State Board of Education adopted standards in reading and language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, health and physical education, and the arts. Instructional personnel must teach these topics efficiently and faithfully, utilizing materials that meet the highest standards for professionalism and historical accuracy.

Districts must submit a report to the Commissioner of Education annually describing how instruction was provided during the previous school year, including specific courses in which instruction was delivered, a description of materials and resources utilized to deliver instruction, and the professional qualifications of the person delivering instruction for specified topics.

Required instruction topics are not correlated with the instructional materials adoption process at the DOE; therefore, instructional materials that are purchased by a school district to teach these topics may not go through a public adoption process as with instructional materials for core courses. For example, the most recent state instructional materials adoption that included a call for health and physical education materials was in the 2015-2016 adoption; however, no materials were adopted for health and physical education for kindergarten through grade 8. The previous year's adoption, in 2014-2015, adopted three instructional materials for health and physical education courses in high school grade levels.

Effect of Proposed Changes

The bill improves transparency and accountability relating to the selection and use of instructional materials and library materials in schools.

Specifically, the bill requires each school district to publish on its website, in a searchable format prescribed by the DOE, a list of all instructional materials, including those used to teach required instruction topics. Before the district adoption of a material, the district must provide public access to the material, excluding teacher editions, for public inspection, consistent with current procedures and safeguards for school district instructional materials adoption. The selection, approval, adoption, or purchase of the material must be a separate line item on the school board meeting agenda, with reasonable opportunity for public comment.

The bill also codifies the holding of the Second District Court of Appeal by requiring that any meeting of a school district instructional review committee in which materials are ranked, eliminated, or selected for recommendation to the school board be noticed and open to the public as required by state law.

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45 Section 1003.42(1), F.S.
46 Section 1003.42(2), F.S.
sunshine laws. Any committee convened for this purpose must include parents of students in the district.

Beginning June 30, 2022, school districts must annually submit to the Commissioner of Education a report identifying materials for which the school district received an objection for the school year, materials that are removed or discontinued as a part of the objection, and the grade level and course for which a removed material was used. Superintendents must include removed or discontinued materials in the annual certification of approved instructional materials programs annually due to the Commissioner of Education. The DOE must publish, regularly update, and disseminate to school districts a list of materials that are removed or discontinued as a result of an objection.

The bill also requires the DOE to develop an online training for school librarians, media specialists, and other personnel involved in selecting library media and collections or materials maintained on a reading list. Personnel involved in the selection of school district library materials must complete the training prior to reviewing and selecting materials and library resources. The bill specifies that the training must be available no later than January 1, 2023, and must assist reviewers in complying with section 1006.31(2), F.S., which requires, among other things, reviewers to include materials portraying the ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, religious, physical, and racial diversity of our society, and to exclude materials containing pornography and prohibited under section 847.012, F.S.51 Personnel must complete the training by July 1, 2023, and annually thereafter, as certified by each school district superintendent.

With respect to the selection of library materials, the bill requires that each book included in a school library collection or recommended or assigned as part of a school- or grade-level reading list be selected by a certified educational media specialist, regardless of how the book is acquired. The bill also requires each elementary school to publish on its website, in a searchable format prescribed by the DOE, a list of all materials maintained in the school library media center or required as part of a school or grade-level reading list.

The bill provides consistency for selecting library materials within each district by requiring each district school board to adopt and post on its website procedures for developing library media center collections. The procedures must:

- require that book selections be free of pornography and prohibited materials harmful to minors, suited to student needs, and appropriate for the grade level and age group;
- require consultation of reputable, professionally recognized reviewing periodicals and school community stakeholders for each selection;
- consider reader interest, support of academic standards and aligned curriculum, and academic needs of students and faculty; and
- provide for regular removal or discontinuance of books based on physical condition, rate of recent circulation, alignment to state standards and relevancy to curriculum, out-of-date content, and required removal.

The bill provides that school principals are responsible for overseeing compliance with school library media center materials selection procedures at their school.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

51 Section 1006.31(2), F.S.
None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

   See fiscal comments.

2. Expenditures:

   See fiscal comments.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

The bill has an indeterminate fiscal impact to the DOE for development of a training program for library media reviewers. The bill allows for more than one training program for other personnel involved in the selection of school district library materials. District school boards may incur costs to ensure approval of all district materials have been evaluated and selected by certified library media specialists.