

DON GAETZ
President of the Senate



Senator Rob Bradley
Senator Alan Hays
Senator Jeremy Ring
Senator Wilton Simpson

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE
JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDITING COMMITTEE

Representative Lake Ray, Chair
Senator Joseph Abruzzo, Vice Chair

WILL WEATHERFORD
Speaker of the House



Representative Daphne D. Campbell
Representative Gayle B. Harrell
Representative Daniel D. Raulerson
Representative Ray Rodrigues
Representative Cynthia A. Stafford

February 26, 2014

Honorable Rick Scott, Governor
State of Florida
Plaza Level 05, The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001

Honorable Don Gaetz, President
The Florida Senate
409 The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

Honorable Will Weatherford, Speaker
The Florida House of Representatives
420 The Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1300

Dear Governor Scott, President Gaetz, and Speaker Weatherford:

Please find enclosed the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee's (Committee) report on Transparency Florida. As required by s. 215.985(7), F.S., this report provides the Committee's recommendation related the possible expansion of the Transparency Florida website, including whether to expand the scope to include educational, local governmental, and other non-state governmental entities. Also, as required by s. 215.985(13), F.S., this report provides the progress made in establishing the single website required by the Transparency Florida Act and recommendations for enhancing the content and format of the website and related policies and procedures.

In addition, subsequent to the approval of the enclosed report, the Committee approved a related recommendation. On February 17, 2014, the Committee recommended that the Florida Has a Right to Know website include the salary of each State University and Florida College System institution employee by position number only. The name of the employee should not be attached to the salary. Currently, the website provides the name

Honorable Rick Scott
Honorable Don Gaetz
Honorable Will Weatherford
February 26, 2014
Page 2

and salary of each State University employee, in compliance with s. 215.985(6), F.S. The salaries of Florida College System institution employees are neither provided on the website, nor are they required to be provided under the provisions of the Transparency Florida Act (s. 215.985, F.S.).

Best regards,



Lake Ray

Joseph Abruzzo

Chair

Vice Chair

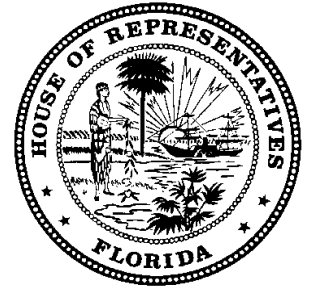
cc by email: Cynthia Kelly, State Budget Director
Cindy Kynoch, Staff Director, Senate Committee on Appropriations
JoAnne Leznoff, Staff Director, House Appropriations Committee
Joe McVaney, Staff Director, Senate Committee on Governmental Oversight
and Accountability
Karen Camechis, Staff Director, House State Affairs Committee

Enclosure: Report on Transparency Florida Status and Recommendations

DON GAETZ
President



WILL WEATHERFORD
Speaker



TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Joint Legislative Auditing Committee
January 2014**

Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

Representative Lake Ray, Chair
Senator Joseph Abruzzo, Vice Chair

Senator Rob Bradley
Senator Alan Hays
Senator Jeremy Ring
Senator Wilton Simpson

Representative Daphne D. Campbell
Representative Gayle B. Harrell
Representative Daniel D. “Dan” Raulerson
Representative Cynthia A. Stafford

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SCOPE

As required by s. 215.985(7), F.S., this report from the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee (Committee) provides recommendations related the possible expansion of the Transparency Florida website,¹ including whether to expand the scope to include educational, local governmental, and other non-state governmental entities. Also, as required by s. 215.985(13), F.S., this report provides the progress made in establishing the single website required by the Transparency Florida Act and recommendations for enhancing the content and format of the website and related policies and procedures.

BACKGROUND

Overview of the Transparency Florida Act

The “Transparency Florida Act (Act),”² an act relating to transparency in government spending, requires several websites for public access to government entity financial information.

The Act, as originally approved in 2009,³ required a single website to be established by the Executive Office of the Governor (EOG), in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives. Specified information relating to state expenditures, appropriations, spending authority, and employee positions and pay rates was required to be provided on the website.

Responsibilities assigned by law to the Committee included:

- oversight and management of the website;⁴
- propose additional state fiscal information to be included on the website;
- develop a schedule for adding information from other governmental entities to the website;⁵
- coordinate with the Financial Management Information Board in developing any recommendations for including information on the website which is necessary to meet the requirements of s. 215.91(8); and,
- prepare an annual report detailing progress in establishing the website and providing recommendations for enhancement of the content and format of the website and related policies and procedures.

In 2011, the Act was revised to require the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) to provide public access to a state contract management system that provides information and documentation relating to the contracting agency.⁶ Other revisions included: (1) requiring the State’s five water management districts to provide

¹ Refers to the website established by the Executive Office of the Governor, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, which provides information related to the approved operating budget for the State of Florida.

² Chapter 2013-54, L.O.F.

³ Chapter 2009-74, L.O.F.

⁴ Section 11.40(4)(b), F.S. (2009)

⁵ These entities included any state, county, municipal, special district, or other political subdivision whether executive, judicial or legislative, including, but not limited, to any department, division, bureau, commission, authority, district, or agency thereof, or any public school district, community college, state university, or associated board.

⁶ Chapter 2011-49, L.O.F.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

monthly financial statements to their board members and to make such statements available for public access on their website, (2) exempting municipalities and special districts with total annual revenues of less than \$10 million from the Act's requirements, and (3) several technical and clarifying changes.⁷ Also, a revision to s. 11.40, F.S., removed the Committee's responsibility to manage and oversee the Transparency Florida website.⁸

Further revisions to the Act were adopted in 2013.⁹ In addition to the two websites previously required, the Act now also requires the following websites:

- The EOG, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, is required to establish and maintain a website that provides information relating to fiscal planning for the State. Minimum requirements include the Legislative Budget Commission's long-range financial outlook; instructions provided to state agencies relating to legislative budget requests; capital improvements plans, long-range program plans and legislative budget requests (LBR) submitted by each state agency or branch of state government; any amendments to LBRs; and, the Governor's budget recommendation submitted pursuant to s. 216.163, F.S.
- The Department of Management Services is required to establish and maintain a website that provides current information relating to each employee or officer of a state agency, a state university, or the State Board of Administration. Minimum requirements include providing the names of employees and their salary or hourly rate of pay; position number, class code, and class title; and employing agency and budget entity.
- The EOG, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, is required to establish and maintain a single website that provides access to all other websites (four) required by the Act.

Additional revisions include:

- The minimum requirements for the Act's original website (information relating to state expenditures, appropriations, spending authority, and employee positions) were expanded to include balance reports for trust funds and general revenue; fixed capital outlay project data; a 10-year history of appropriations by agency; links to state audits or reports related to the expenditure and dispersal of state funds; and links to program or activity descriptions for which funds may be expended.
- The Committee is no longer required to recommend a format for collecting and displaying information from governmental entities, including local governmental and educational entities. Rather, the Committee is required to recommend: (1) whether additional information from these entities should be included on the website, and (2) a schedule and a format for collecting and displaying the additional information.
- Language related to the contract tracking system required to be posted by the CFO is expanded to: (1) provide timelines, (2) require each state entity to post information to the contract tracking system, (3) address confidentiality and other legal issues, (4) provide definitions, and (5) authorize Cabinet members to post the required contract tracking information to their own agency-managed websites in lieu of posting on the CFO's tracking system.

Additional details relating to the Act in its current form may be found in Appendix A.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Chapter 2011-34, L.O.F.

⁹ Chapter 2013-54, L.O.F.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Previous Committee Effort

The Committee has issued two previous reports related to the Act. A brief summary of the recommendations of each report follows.

2010 Committee Report

The act, as originally written, required the Committee to develop a plan to add fiscal information for other governmental entities, such as municipalities and school districts, to the website. Although the Committee was authorized to also make recommendations related to state agency information, much of that information was specified in statute and was being implemented by the EOG, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Committee's initial focus was on school districts due to the consistency of financial information required of the State's 67 school districts. Specific recommendations and timeframes for adding school district fiscal information to *Transparency Florida*¹⁰ were provided. Also, general recommendations were provided for adding fiscal information for other governmental entities, including state agencies, universities, colleges, counties, municipalities, special districts, and charter schools/charter technical career centers.

The Committee recommended the use of three phases for the addition of school district financial information to *Transparency Florida*. The Committee wanted citizens who visit either the home page of a school district's website or *Transparency Florida* to have the ability to easily access the school district's financial information that was located on the school district's website, the Department of Education's (DOE) website, and *Transparency Florida*.

The overall approach was to recommend that information which was readily available, with minimal effort and cost, to be included for school districts during the first phases of implementation. Most of the information should be located on the DOE's website with links to access it on *Transparency Florida*. This information included numerous reports prepared by the school districts, the DOE, and the Auditor General. The Committee expected that the first two phases could be accomplished without the need for additional resources.

Ultimately, once all phases were implemented, the goal was to provide transaction-level details of expenditures. Stakeholders expressed concern about the school districts' ability to provide this level of detail. School districts' accounting systems have the ability to capture expenditures at the sub-function and the sub-object levels.¹¹ These systems do not usually capture details of the amount spent on specific supplies, such as pencils or paper, or on a roofing project. Stakeholders also had concerns about the school districts' ability to provide this information on their websites, primarily due to cost and staffing issues. Their preference was for the State to build a data-system and require the school districts to upload via FTP (File Transfer Protocol) a monthly summary of expenditures at the sub-function and sub-object levels to *Transparency Florida*. Although Committee members were interested in more detailed information, this approach was agreed to with the idea that it was a starting point. In addition, the Committee recommended that the school districts provide vendor histories, to include details of expenditures for each vendor.

¹⁰ For the purpose of this report, *Transparency Florida* refers to www.transparencyflorida.gov/, the original website created pursuant to the Transparency Florida Act.

¹¹ For example, sub-function categories include costs associated with K-12, food services, and pupil transportation services; sub-object categories include costs associated with classroom teachers, travel, and textbooks.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although both the State and the school districts would incur costs, the main financial burden of the project would fall on the State. Rough estimates of the State's cost ran into the millions of dollars. Due to the uncertainty of the cost estimates, the Committee members voted to recommend to delay this phase until further information is available.

2011 Committee Report

The initial Committee report, discussed above, recommended deferring implementation related to detailed school district financial transactions until the Committee had additional information and could further discuss the issues and potential costs involved. The premise was that the school districts would transmit monthly data to the State for display on *Transparency Florida*. As explained, the cost was expected to be in the millions of dollars, but only a rough estimate was available.

In light of the continued financial difficulties being faced by the State, the Committee decided to abandon this approach and recommend an alternative. The new focus was to keep local information at the local level and for the State to provide access to it on *Transparency Florida*.

Although the Committee understood that the goal of the project was to provide more financial transparency at all levels of government, it recognized that local governments¹² know best what information their citizens want available for review. The Committee did not believe that it was the State's responsibility to design and build a system to collect and display local governments' information. Rather, the Committee recommended that the State work in partnership with local governments, as they increase transparency on their websites, so that the full financial burden did not fall on the local governments.

The Committee recommended that representatives for each type of entity develop suggested guidelines for the type of financial information and the level of detail that should be included. Each local government should be responsible for providing its financial information on its own website. A link should be included on *Transparency Florida* for each entity that implements the suggested guidelines in order to provide a central access point.

The Committee suggested that the guidelines include a uniform framework to display the information in a well-organized fashion so as to provide easy, consistent access to all online financial information for all local governments. When developing the suggested guidelines, some of the financial information that the Committee recommended for consideration included a searchable electronic checkbook, plus various documents that are prepared during the normal course of business, such as budget documents, monthly financial statements, audit reports, and contracts and related information. The Committee's intent was to provide an opportunity for increased financial transparency for Florida's citizens, by providing guidance and flexibility to local governments, without causing a financial burden in the process.

Transparency-Related Legislation

During the 2010 Legislative Session, the Legislature adopted proviso language to implement the Committee's recommendations related to school districts for the first two phases. The DOE was required to provide access to existing school district financial-related reports on its website, create a working group to develop recommendations to provide school-level data in greater detail and frequency, and publish a

¹² Local government in this context referred to all non-state entities subject to the requirements of the Transparency Florida Act at the time of the Committee's recommendation.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

report of its findings by December 1, 2010. School districts were required to provide a link to *Transparency Florida* on their website. Links to the DOE and other website information were provided on *Transparency Florida*. The requirements assigned to the DOE and school districts were fulfilled.

In 2011, two bills were passed which, although not directly related to the Act, relate to efforts to provide more financial transparency to Florida's citizens. Senate Bill 1292 (2011)¹³ requires the Chief Financial Officer to conduct workshops with state agencies, local governments, and educational entities and develop recommendations for uniform charts of accounts. The final report is due in January 2014. An entity's charts of accounts refers to the coding structure used to identify financial transactions. Most of the non-state entities are currently authorized to adopt their own charts of accounts. The school districts are the exception; the chart of accounts that they are required to use is specified by the DOE. During discussions related to determining recommendations for its first required report required by the Act, the Committee understood that the various charts of accounts used by entities across the state was an obstacle for providing financial data that could be compared from one entity to another.

Senate Bill 224 (2011)¹⁴ requires counties, municipalities, special districts, and school districts to post their tentative budgets, final budgets, and adopted budget amendments on their official websites within a specified period of time. If a municipality or special district does not have an official website, these documents are required to be posted on the official website of a county or other specified local governing authority, as applicable. Another provision requires each local governmental entity to provide a link to the DFS' website to view the entity's annual financial report (AFR). The AFR presents a financial snapshot at fiscal year-end of the entity's financial condition. It includes the types of revenue received and expenditures incurred by the entity. The format and content of the AFR is prescribed by the DFS.¹⁵ See Appendix B for the specific requirements of the bill.

In 2013, a provision in House Bill 5401 (2013),¹⁶ the bill which revised the Act, created the User Experience Task Force. Its purpose is to develop and recommend a design for consolidating existing state-managed websites that provide public access to state operational and fiscal information into a single website. The task force is comprised of four members, with one member each designated by the Governor, Chief Financial Officer, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House. The task force's work plan is required to include a review of: (1) all relevant state-managed websites, (2) options for reducing the number of websites without losing detailed data, and (3) options for linking expenditure data with related invoices and contracts. The recommendations are due March 1, 2014, and must include: (1) a design that provides an intuitive and cohesive user experience that allows users to move easily between varied types of related data, and (2) a cost estimate for implementation of the design.

The Legislature did not address the recommendations made in the Committee's 2011 report.

PRESENT SITUATION

Status of Single Website

The requirements of s. 215.985(3), F.S., have been met. The single website titled "Florida Sunshine: Guiding you to the right financial source" provides external links to all other websites required by the Act

¹³ Chapter 2011-44, L.O.F.

¹⁴ Chapter 2011-144, L.O.F.

¹⁵ See s. 218.32, F.S.

¹⁶ Chapter 2013-54, L.O.F.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

and is available at <http://floridasunshine.gov/>. It provides access to: (1) Transparency Florida (State Finances), (2) Transparency Florida (State Budget), (3) Florida Has a Right to Know, (4) Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System (FACTS), (5) Florida Fiscal Portal, (6) Florida Government Program Summaries, and a recent addition (7) Transparency Florida Act User Experience Task Force.

Status of the Website Related to the Approved Operating Budget for State Government

The requirements of s. 215.985(4), F.S., have been met. The website titled “[Transparency Florida](#)” includes detailed financial-related information for state agencies and other units of state government for the fiscal years 2008-09 through the current fiscal year, 2013-14. School district information is also available. The website includes the Transparency Florida Tour, a video overview of the website; a training overview which provides general information about the financial data, as well as tips on how to navigate the website; an agency contact list; a glossary of terms and definitions; and, frequently asked questions.

Summary of State Information Available on *Transparency Florida*

The main focus of *Transparency Florida* has been to provide current financial data related to the State’s operating budget and daily expenditures made by the state agencies. Such financial data is updated nightly as funds are released to the state agencies, transferred between budget categories, and used for goods and services.

Details of the operating budget are available in either agency/ledger or bill format. The agency/ledger format allows users to select a specific state agency, including the legislative branch and the state courts system, to view the fiscal year budget and the number of employee positions. The current fiscal year, 2013-14, is the default; however, users may view information for any fiscal year from 2008-09 through the current year by selecting from a drop-down menu. By clicking on the hyperlinks, users may drill down to view agency information broken down by program. The bill format displays the information as it appears in the General Appropriations Act. Again, users may drill down to view more detailed information by clicking on the hyperlinks. Both views provide detailed information for positions and the daily status of appropriations for each program. Hyperlinks also allow users to view disbursements by object and an organizational schedule of allotment balances. By continuing to drill down, the name of each vendor associated with an expenditure is provided. Since the State does not have electronic invoicing, images of invoices are not provided; however, the statewide document number is provided, and users may contact the specified agency contact to request further information or a copy of an invoice.

Various reports relating to the operating budget, appropriations/disbursements, fixed capital outlay, reversions, general revenue, and trust funds can be generated from *Transparency Florida* and include:

- Operating budget by expenditure type, fund source, or program area;
- Comparison of operational appropriations for two fiscal years by state agency and/or category;
- Comparison of operational appropriations to disbursements made within one fiscal year by state agency and/or category;
- Comparison of operational disbursements for two fiscal years by state agency, category, and/or object code;
- Disbursements by line item;
- Fixed capital outlay appropriations and disbursements by category and/or state agency;

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Operating budgets by expenditure type, fund source, or program area;
- Schedule of Allotment Balances;
- Annual operational reversions by fiscal year;
- Comparison of operational reversions by fiscal year;
- Fixed capital outlay appropriations, reversions, and outstanding disbursements by fiscal year;
- Five-year history of operational reversions;
- General Revenue Fund cash balance, cash receipts, and cash disbursements, by month and by year;
- Trust fund balances; and,
- Ten-Year History of Appropriation Reports

In addition, *Transparency Florida* provides links to various reports, websites, and other documents related to the state budget as follows:

- Fiscal Analysis in Brief: an annual report prepared and published by the Legislature that summarizes fiscal and budgetary information for a given fiscal year;
- Long-Range Financial Outlook 3-Year Plan: an annual report prepared and published by the Legislature that provides a long-range picture of the State's financial position by integrating projections of the major programs driving annual budget requirements with revenue estimates;
- The Chief Financial Officer's [Transparency Florida](#): a webpage which includes links to:
 - State Budget Information;
 - Florida State Contract Search (FACTS);
 - Vendor Payments;
 - State Cash Balances;
 - Estimated state taxes paid based on income;
 - State Contract Audits;
 - State Spending Reports and Graphs;
 - State Financial Reports;
 - Local Government Financial Reporting; and,
 - State Employee Data (Florida Has a Right to Know).
- Reports on State Properties and Occupancy Rates: information from the Department of Management Services' Division of Real Estate Development and Management on state-owned buildings and occupancy rates; and,
- Government Program Summaries: encyclopedia of descriptive information on over 200 major state programs compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

EOG staff have indicated that planned revisions to the website include: (1) providing the amount of cash receipts, and (2) revising the look of the website. Some individuals have indicated that the website is difficult to navigate. Effort is being made to provide a simpler interface for users who may not be familiar with the state appropriations process and terminology, yet retain the depth of information for the more knowledgeable users.

Presently, *Transparency Florida* includes all information required by the Act.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Background and Summary of School District Information Accessible from *Transparency Florida*

To date, the only non-state financial-related information that is accessible from *Transparency Florida* relates to school districts. As previously discussed, the Committee's focus for its 2010 report was on the addition of school district information to the website. Proviso language in the 2010 General Appropriations Act¹⁷ was based on the Committee's 2010 recommendations and required the DOE to:

- Coordinate, organize, and publish online all currently available reports relating to school district finances, including information generated from the DOE's school district finance database;
- Coordinate with the EOG to create links on *Transparency Florida* to school district reports by August 1, 2010;
- Publish additional finance data relating to school districts not currently available online, including school-level expenditure data, by December 31, 2010;
- Work with the school districts to ensure that each district website provides a link to *Transparency Florida*; and
- Establish a working group to study issues related to the future expansion of school finance data available to the public through *Transparency Florida*, develop recommendations regarding the establishment of a framework to provide school-level data in greater detail and frequency, and publish a report of its findings by December 1, 2010.

The DOE met the proviso language requirements and the EOG, working in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives, provided access to the related school district information on *Transparency Florida*. As a result, the following reports and links are now accessible:

- School District Summary Budget
- School District Annual Financial Report
- School District Audit Reports Prepared by the Auditor General
- School District Audit Reports Prepared by Private CPA Firms
- School District Program Cost Reports
- Return on Investment (ROI)/School Efficiency Measures
- Financial Profiles of School Districts
- Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) Calculations
- Five-Year Facilities Work Plan
- Public School District Websites

A description of these reports is provided in Appendix C.¹⁸

In addition, the websites of many school districts include a link to *Transparency Florida*, although in some cases the links are not working properly. Generally, the link is located on the homepage of the school district's website; however, some school districts have included the link only on the webpage for their finance or business services department. The proviso language that required school districts to post

¹⁷ Proviso language for Specific Appropriations 116 through 130 of Ch. 2010-152, L.O.F.

¹⁸ Links to school district reports on *Transparency Florida* are located at <http://transparencyflorida.gov/LinkInfo.aspx>.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

the link to *Transparency Florida* on their home page was in effect for the 2010-11 fiscal year. Currently, there is no such requirement.

The DOE established the workgroup required by the proviso language to address the expansion of school district information available on *Transparency Florida*. The School District Working Group's report, published in December 2010,¹⁹ recommended:

- Providing school-level data at the sub-function (i.e., K-12, food services, and pupil transportation services) and sub-object (i.e., classroom teachers, travel, and textbooks) levels;²⁰ and,
- Uploading school district data to *Transparency Florida* via file transfer protocol (FTP) on a monthly basis.

The sub-function and sub-object levels were recommended as the most cost effective method due to the variety of accounting packages used by the school districts. These report recommendations align with the Committee's 2010 recommendations for phase three of school district implementation. The goal of this phase was to provide more frequent and detailed information than had been recommended in the two earlier phases. The Committee's 2011 recommendation, however, was to require local entities, including school districts, to post their financial information on their own website. The Committee reversed the earlier recommendation which required entities to submit data to the State and the State bearing the responsibility to design and build a system to receive and display the information on *Transparency Florida*.

Status of the Website Related to Fiscal Planning for the State

The requirements of s. 215.985(5), F.S., have been met. The website titled "[Florida Fiscal Portal](#)" includes budget-related information for the fiscal years 2000-2001 through 2014-2015. Publications available include: (1) planning and budgeting instructions provided to state agencies, (2) agency legislative budget requests, (3) the Governor's recommended budget, (4) appropriations bills, (5) the approved budget, (6) the final budget report (prepared after year-end), (7) agency long-range program plans, (8) agency capital improvement plans, (9) fiscal analysis in brief, (10) long-range financial outlook 3-year plan, and other documents for selected years.

Status of the Website Related to Employee Positions and Salary

The requirements of s. 215.985(6), F.S., have been met. The website titled "[Florida Has A Right To Know](#)," allows users to search payroll data from the State of Florida People First personnel information system. The database includes information from all Executive Branch agencies, the Lottery, the Justice Administrative Commission (including state attorneys and public defenders) and the State Courts System (including judges). In addition, spreadsheets provide information related to employees of the State Board of Administration and all 12 of the state universities.

Information available includes: (1) name of employee, (2) salary or other rate of pay,²¹ (3) employing agency or entity, (4) budget entity, (5) position number, (6) class code, and (7) class title. The People First

¹⁹ The report can be viewed at <http://www.fldoe.org/fefp/pdf/TransparencyFloridaWorkingGroup.pdf>.

²⁰ The level of detail required by *Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools*. Known as the Red Book, this is the uniform chart of accounts required to be used by all Florida school districts for budgeting and financial reporting (see Sections 1010.01 and 1010.20, F.S., and Rule 6A-1.001, F.A.C.).

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

information is updated weekly, the university information is updated twice per year, and the State Board of Administration information is reportedly updated quarterly.

Status of the Contract Management System

The requirements of s. 215.985(14), F.S., have been substantially met. The CFO established the [Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System \(FACTS\)](#), which provides online public access to information related to contracts executed by state agencies. It includes contracts for executive branch agencies, including the Department of Legal Services and some documents for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services;²² the state court system; the Justice Administrative Commission, including state attorneys, public defenders; and, the Public Service Commission. To date, contracts that have been procured following ch. 287, F.S., or similar requirements are included in the system. Information available includes: (1) the contract short title, (2) agency name, (3) vendor name, (4) contract ID, (5) total contract amount, (6) commodity/service type, (7) contract type, and (8) DFS contract audits, if applicable. Users may search for contracts by agency name, contract ID, beginning and/or ending dates of contracts, vendor name, contract dollar value, and commodity/service type. By selecting a specific contract and drilling down, users may access detailed information related to the contract, such as its statutory authority and whether there were any legal challenges to the procurement; a schedule of deliverables; a record of payments made; and, an image of the contract, if available. State agencies are required to redact confidential information prior to posting the contract document image online. Due, in part, to the length of time necessary to review contracts to ensure that all confidential information has been redacted, not all required images have been posted yet. At a minimum, the images of each agency's five largest contracts, based on total contract amount, are reportedly available on FACTS. Remaining contracts are in the process of being redacted and added to the system.

FACTS has been enhanced to allow agencies to post information related to grant agreements and purchase orders. However, due to the volume of contracts included in these categories, it will likely require considerable time before complete information is accessible on FACTS.

Status of Water Management District Information

The requirements of s. 215.985(11), F.S., have been met. All five of the state's water management districts indicated that they provide monthly financial statements to their governing board members. Also, three or more recent monthly financial statements were posted on the website of each water management district.

Potential Entities Subject to Transparency Florida Act Requirements

A governmental entity, as defined in the Act, means any state, regional, county, municipal, special district, or other political subdivision whether executive, judicial, or legislative, including, but not limited to, any department, division, bureau, commission, authority, district, or agency thereof, or any public school district, community college, state university, or associated board. As originally passed, the Act

²¹ Universities provide the amount paid per term for Other Personnel Service (OPS) employees; the remaining entities provide the hourly rate of pay for OPS employees.

²² An exemption for these two Cabinet agencies, provided in s. 215.985(14)(i), F.S., authorized each to create its own agency-managed website for posting contracts in lieu of posting such information on the CFO's contract management system. Although some documents for the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services are included on FACTS, the Department has created its own contract management system which is similar to FACTS.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

required the Committee to recommend a format for displaying information from these entities on *Transparency Florida*. Smaller municipalities and special districts, defined as those with a population of 10,000 or less, were exempt from the Act. Entities that did not receive state appropriations were also exempt. Later, the Act was revised to provide an exemption based on revenues rather than population. Municipalities and special districts with total annual revenues of less than \$10 million were then exempt from the Act's requirements. In addition, the exemption for entities that did not receive state appropriations was removed.

Subsequent to a major revision in 2013, current law does not require specific non-state entities to be included in the Committee's recommendations or provide an exemption to any of these entities. The Committee is required to recommend "additional information to be added to a website, such as whether to expand the scope of the information provided to include state universities, Florida college system institutions, school districts, charter schools, charter technical career centers, local government units, and other governmental entities."²³ The following table shows the number of non-state entities of each type that could potentially be recommended for inclusion:

Type of Entity (Non-State)	Total Number
School Districts	67
Charter Schools and Charter Technical Career Centers	622 ²⁴
State Universities	12
Florida College System Institutions	28
Counties	67 ²⁵
Municipalities	410
Special Districts	1628 active ²⁶
Regional Planning Councils	11
Metropolitan Planning Organizations	26
Entities affiliated with Universities and Colleges, such as the Moffitt Cancer Center	Unknown

To date, only school districts have been assigned responsibility related to the Transparency Florida Act. As previously discussed, the DOE was directed to work with the school districts to ensure that each district's website provided a link to *Transparency Florida*. This requirement was based on proviso language and was applicable for the 2010-11 fiscal year.

²³ Section 215.985(7)(a), F.S.

²⁴ As reported by the Department of Education on January 8, 2014.

²⁵ While there are 67 counties within the State, there are many more independent reporting entities since many of the constitutional officers operate their own financial management/accounting systems. The 38 counties that responded to a 2009 survey by the Florida Association of Counties reported 193 independent reporting entities.

²⁶ Current as of January 8, 2014.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

To Be Determined.

Note: At its meeting on January 13, 2014, the Committee voted to accept this report “as is.” As a result, there are no recommendations.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix A

Requirements of the Transparency Florida Act		
Entity	Section of Law	Requirement
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee	215.985(7)	By November 1, 2013, and annually thereafter, the Committee shall recommend to the President of the Senate and the Speaker or the House of Representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional information to be added to a website, such as whether to expand the scope of the information provided to include state universities, Florida College System institutions, school districts, charter schools, charter technical career centers, local government units, and other governmental entities. • A schedule for adding information to the website by type of information and governmental entity, including timeframes and development entity. • A format for collecting and displaying the additional information.
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee	215.985(13)	Prepare an annual report detailing progress in establishing the single website and providing recommendations for enhancement of the content and format of the website and related policies and procedures. Report shall be submitted to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by November 1.
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee	215.985(9)	Coordinate with the Financial Management Information Board in developing recommendations for including information on the website which is necessary to meet the requirements of s. 215.91(8) . ²⁷
Executive Office of the Governor (EOG), in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives	215.985(3)	Establish and maintain a single website that provides access to all other websites required by the Transparency Florida Act. These websites include information relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approved operating budget for each branch of state government and state agency; • Fiscal planning for the state; • Each employee or officer of a state agency, a state university, or the State Board of Administration; and, • A contract tracking system. Specific requirements include compliance with the American Disabilities Act, compatible with all major web browsers, provide an intuitive user experience to the extent possible, and provide a consistent visual design, interaction or navigation design and information or data presentation.
EOG, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives	215.985(4)	Establish and maintain a website that provides information relating to the approved operating budget for each branch of state government and state agency. Information must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disbursement data and details of expenditure data, must be searchable; • Appropriations, including adjustments, vetoes, approved supplemental appropriations included in legislation other than the General Appropriations Act (GAA), budget amendments, and other actions and adjustments; • Status of spending authority for each appropriation in the approved operating budget, including released, unreleased, reserved, and disbursed balances. • Position and rate information for employees; • Allotments for planned expenditures and the current balance for such allotments; • Trust fund balance reports;

²⁷ The Financial Management Information Board, comprised of the Governor and Cabinet, has not met in a number of years.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Requirements of the Transparency Florida Act		
Entity	Section of Law	Requirement
EOG, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives (Continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General revenue fund balance reports; • Fixed capital outlay project data; • A 10-year history of appropriations by agency; and Links to state audits or reports related to the expenditure and dispersal of state funds.
EOG, in consultation with the appropriations committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives	215.985(5)	Establish and maintain a website that provides information relating to fiscal planning for the state: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The long-range fiscal outlook adopted by the Legislative Budget Commission; • Instructions to agencies relating to the legislative budget requests, capital improvement plans, and long-range program plans; • The legislative budget requests submitted by each state agency or branch of state government, including any amendments; • The Capital improvement plans submitted by each state agency or branch of state government; • The long-range program plans submitted by each state agency or branch of state government; and • The Governor’s budget recommendation submitted pursuant to s. 216.163, must be searchable by the fiscal year, agency, appropriation category, and keywords. The Office of Policy and Budget in the EOG shall ensure that all data added to the website remains accessible to the public for 10 years.
Department of Management Services (DMS)	215.985(6)	Establish and maintain a website that provides current information relating to each employee or officer of a state agency, a state university, or the State Board of Administration. Information to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and salary or hourly rate of pay of each employee; • Position number, class code, and class title; • Employing agency and budget entity. Information must be searchable by state agency, state university, and the State Board of Administration, and by employee name, salary range, or class code and must be downloadable in a format that allows offline analysis.
Manager of each website described in 215.985(4), (5), and (6). This refers to the three preceding websites and to staff of the EOG and DMS	215.985(8)	Submit to the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee information relating to the cost of creating and maintaining such website, and the number of times the website has been accessed.
Chief Financial Officer	215.985(14)	Establish and maintain a secure contract tracking system available for viewing and downloading by the public through a secure website. Appropriate Internet security measures must be used to ensure that no person has the ability to alter or modify records available on the website
Each State Agency	215.985(14)(a)	Post contract related information on the CFO’s contract tracking system within 30 days after executing a contract. Information to include names of contracting entities, procurement method, contract beginning and ending dates, nature or type of commodities or services purchased, total compensation to be paid or received, all payments made to the contractor to date, and applicable contract performance measures. If competitive solicitation was not used, justification must be provided. Information must be updated within 30 days of any contract amendments.
Water Management Districts	215.985(11)	Provide a monthly financial statement to its governing board and make such statement available for public access on its website.

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix B

Summary of Senate Bill 224 (2011) Requirements Related to Financial Transparency <i>Documents That Entities Are Required to Post on Their Official Websites</i>				
Type of Entity	Tentative Budget <i>(must be posted online)</i>	Final Budget <i>(must be posted online)</i>	Adopted Budget Amendments <i>(must be posted online)</i>	If No Official Website
Board of County Commissioners	2 days before public hearing	Within 30 days after adoption	Within 5 days after adoption	N/A
Municipality	2 days before public hearing	Within 30 days after adoption	Within 5 days after adoption	The municipality must, within a reasonable period of time as established by the county or counties in which the municipality is located, transmit the tentative and final budget to the manager or administrator of such county or counties who shall post the budget on the county's website
Special District (excludes Water Management Districts)	2 days before public hearing	Within 30 days after adoption	Within 5 days after adoption	The special district must, within a reasonable period of time as established by the local general-purpose government or governments in which the special district is located or the local governing authority to which the district is dependent, transmit the tentative budget or final budget to the manager or administrator of the local general-purpose government or the local governing authority. The manager or administrator shall post the tentative budget or final budget on the website of the local general-purpose government or local governing authority.
Property Appraiser	N/A	Within 30 days after adoption	N/A	Must be posted on the county's official website
Tax Collector	N/A	Within 30 days after adoption	N/A	Must be posted on the county's official website
Clerk of Circuit Court <i>(budget may be included in county budget)</i>	N/A	Within 30 days after adoption	N/A	Must be posted on the county's official website
Water Management District	2 days before public hearing	Within 30 days after adoption	N/A	N/A
District School Board	2 days before public hearing	Within 30 days after adoption	Within 5 days after adoption	N/A
Additional Requirement				
Each local governmental entity website must provide a link to the DFS website to view the entity's AFR submitted; if an entity does not have an official website, the county government website must provide the link.				

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Appendix C

Transparency Florida Links: Reports and Other Information Available for School Districts <i>(As recommended in the Committee's 2010 report)</i>	
Title of Report / Other Information	Summary Description of Report / Other Information
School District Summary Budget	<i>At the beginning of each fiscal year, each district school board formally adopts a budget. The District Summary Budget is the adopted budget that is submitted to the DOE by school districts. The budget document provides millage levies; estimated revenues detailed by federal, state, and local sources; and estimated expenditures.</i>
School District Annual Financial Report	<i>The Annual Financial Report is the unaudited data submitted to the DOE by school districts after the close of each fiscal year. It includes actual revenues detailed by federal, state, and local sources, and actual expenditures.</i>
School District Audit Reports Prepared by the Auditor General	<i>The Auditor General provides periodic financial, federal, and operational audits of district school boards. The Auditor General also provides periodic audits of district school boards to determine whether the district: 1) complied with state requirements governing the determination and reporting of the number of full-time equivalent students under the Florida Education Finance Program and 2) complied with state requirements governing the determination and reporting of the number of students transported.</i>
School District Audit Reports Prepared by Private CPA Firms	<i>The Auditor General maintains copies of district school board financial and federal audit reports, which are prepared on a rotational basis by private certified public accounting firms.</i>
School District Program Cost Reports	<i>The Program Cost Report data is submitted to the DOE by school districts after the close of each fiscal year. Actual expenditures by fund type are presented as either direct costs or indirect costs, and are attributed to each program at each school. A total of nine separate reports are produced from the cost reporting system.</i>
Return on Investment (ROI)/ School Efficiency Measures http://roi.fldoe.org/index.cfm	<p><i>Two major categories of information are provided at the state and school district level. Much of the information is also provided on an individual school level.</i></p> <p><i>Student/Staff Indicators include: School and District Demographics, School and District Staff, School and District Student Performance, School Students in Special Programs/School Discipline, School and District Graduation Follow-up, District School Readiness, and District Community Information. Financial Indicators include: School Return on Investment Index, School Total Costs Per Students, District Revenues, District Expenditures, District Financial Margins and Reserves, District Taxes, and District Debt.</i></p> <p><i>The ROI website allows users to evaluate measures of performance in light of the resources allocated to the individual schools and school districts.</i></p>

TRANSPARENCY FLORIDA STATUS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transparency Florida Links: Reports and Other Information Available for School Districts <i>(As recommended in the Committee's 2010 report)</i>	
Title of Report / Other Information	Summary Description of Report / Other Information
Financial Profiles of School Districts http://www.fldoe.org/fefp/profile.asp	<i>The Financial Profiles of School Districts reports provide detailed summary information about revenues and expenditures of the school districts – revenues by source and expenditures by function and object.</i>
Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) Calculations http://www.fldoe.org/fefp/offrfefp.asp	<i>The FEFP is the primary mechanism for funding the operating costs of the school districts, and calculations are made five times throughout each school year to arrive at each year's final appropriation. The amount allocated to each of the components of the FEFP funding formula is shown for each school district.</i>
Five-Year Facilities Work Plan http://www.fldoe.org/edfacil/workplanlibrary.asp	<i>Each school district must annually prepare a Five-Year Facilities Work Plan that includes long-range planning for its facilities needs over 5-, 10-, and 20-year periods.</i>
Public School Websites	<i>Provides a link to the homepage of each school district. The homepage of many school districts includes a link to Transparency Florida.</i>