

# **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

***Lifelong Learning Council***  
**Representative Jerry Melvin, Chair**  
**Representative Frederica Wilson, Vice Chair**

## **2001 SUMMARY OF PASSED LEGISLATION**



### ***Colleges & Universities Committee***

**Representative Bev Kilmer, Chair**  
**Representative Dennis Baxley, Vice Chair**

### ***Education Innovation Committee***

**Representative Renier Diaz de la Portilla, Chair**  
**Representative Frank Attkisson, Vice Chair**

### ***General Education Committee***

**Representative Heather Fiorentino, Chair**  
**Representative Dick Kravitz, Vice Chair**

### ***Workforce & Technical Skills Committee***

**Representative Bill Andrews, Chair**  
**Representative Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Vice Chair**



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## **Colleges & Universities Committee**

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**CS/SB 302, 1st ENG. – Higher Educational Facilities Financing****By Appropriations; Pruitt; Horne****Linked Bills:** None**Tied Bills:** Identical CS/HB 281, 1st ENG.**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Education; Governmental Oversight &

Productivity; Finance &amp; Taxation; Appropriations Subcommittee on Education; Appropriations.

This bill creates a statewide corporate public body known as the Higher Educational Facilities Financing Authority. The purpose of this statewide authority is to assist not-for-profit, nonpublic postsecondary education institutions in the construction, financing, and refinancing of educational and other campus facilities throughout the State of Florida. The authority consists of five members appointed by the Governor. Any bonds issued by the Higher Educational Facilities Financing Authority are not secured by the full faith and credit of the State of Florida and do not constitute an obligation of the State of Florida.

This bill authorizes the Higher Educational Facilities Financing Authority to issue bonds; receive and accept loans or grants for the construction of a project in conjunction with a not-for-profit and nonpublic postsecondary education institution; mortgage such projects for the benefit of holders of revenue bonds issued to finance these projects; provide loans to any not-for-profit and nonpublic postsecondary education institution for the cost of a project, including a loan in anticipation of tuition revenues; provide loans to any not-for-profit and nonpublic postsecondary education institution in order to refund outstanding obligations provided by such an institution for the cost of a project; and charge to and equitably apportion its administrative costs and expenses among participating institutions.

This bill stipulates that the Higher Educational Facilities Financing Authority or its agents are not required to pay any taxes on a project, any property acquired by the authority or its agents, or any income generated from a project. Additionally, any bonds issued; income generated from the issuance of bonds; profits generated from the sale of bonds; and all notes, mortgages, security agreements, or letters of credit intended to secure the repayment of issued bonds are exempt from any tax of the state, a local unit, a political subdivision, or other instrumentality of the state.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is upon becoming a law.

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**SB 1162, 2nd ENG – Education Governance/Postsecondary Education**

**By Sebesta**

**Linked Bills:** None

**Tied Bills:** Includes portions of CS/HB 463, 1<sup>st</sup> ENG; HB 977; HB 1339; CS/HB 1369; CS/CS/HB 1509, 1<sup>st</sup> ENG; CS/CS/HB 1533, 1<sup>st</sup> ENG; HB 1547; CS/SB 986, 1<sup>st</sup> ENG; CS/SB 1190, 1<sup>st</sup> ENG; SB 1596; CS/SB 2088; and CS/CS/SB 2108, 2<sup>nd</sup> ENG

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Senate Education; Appropriations

Subcommittee on Education; Appropriations

This bill expedites the reorganization of Florida's education system. The Governor must appoint the 7-member Florida Board of Education (FBE) and a Secretary of the FBE by July 1, 2001. The FBE is housed within and operates under the direction of the State Board of Education. The Governor must appoint the 13 member university boards of trustees between July 1, 2001 and November 1, 2001. A university student body president sits as a voting member on each university board of trustees.

The Board of Regents and the State Board of Community Colleges are abolished and all powers, duties, and personnel are transferred to the FBE. The Postsecondary Education Planning Commission is abolished and its personnel and funding are transferred to the Council for Education Policy Research and Improvement, a 9-member citizen board, housed within the Office of Legislative Services. Powers and duties of the State Board of Independent Colleges and Universities and the State Board of Nonpublic Career Education are transferred to a single board, the Commission for Independent Education.

Guidelines are provided for the reorganization of the Department of Education. A workgroup, led by the Secretary of the FBE, is established to direct and provide oversight of the reorganization. The FBE appoints the new education governance officers, who serve at the pleasure of the Secretary.

The School Readiness Act is amended to transfer the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and a number of related programs to the Agency for Workforce Innovation. Obsolete and superceded provisions are deleted. The Partnership must establish staff credentials above minimum training requirements. Quality standards at the state level remain the responsibility of the partnership.

The bill establishes a process to authorize community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees in certain high-demand fields; designates St. Petersburg Junior College as St. Petersburg College and authorizes that institution to award baccalaureate degrees in selected disciplines; establishes USF St. Petersburg and USF Sarasota/Manatee as fiscally autonomous campuses; and establishes New College as the 11<sup>th</sup> member of the State University System.

The bill creates the Bright Futures Scholarship Testing Program to encourage use of acceleration mechanisms such as dual enrollment, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and CLEP and reduces the time required for a student to receive a degree, thereby producing savings for the student and the State.

The bill provides a uniform standard for calculating Prepaid College benefits and refunds due to receipt of a scholarship, death or disability; increases the number of members of

the Board of Directors of the Prepaid Foundation; and provides for certain 501(c)(3) corporations to purchase prepaid scholarships without naming a beneficiary.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is, except as otherwise provided for in the act, upon becoming a law.

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**CS/SB 1256, 1st ENG. – Nursing Education**

**By Health, Aging & Long-Term Care; Campbell**

**Linked Bills:** None

**Tied Bills:** Includes HB 1129 as amended; Includes parts of CS/HB 523; HB 1843, HB 1867, HB 1895, SB 782, SB 2158, and SB 792, which also passed both chambers.

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Health, Aging & Long-Term Care; Education

The bill requires that the Board of Nursing hold in abeyance until July 1, 2002, any rule which relates to the establishment of faculty/student clinical ratios. The Board of Nursing and the Department of Education must submit an implementation plan that details both the impact and cost of any such proposed rule change to the President of the Senate and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives by December 31, 2001. The above provisions were in HB 1129 as amended.

The bill also expands the types of facilities whose employees are eligible to participate in the Nursing Student Loan Forgiveness Program to include family practice teaching hospitals and specialty hospitals for children. The Nursing Scholarship Program is expanded to include nursing homes, family practice teaching hospitals, and specialty hospitals for children. In addition, the bill exempts family practice teaching hospitals and specialty hospitals for children from the requirement to match loan forgiveness payments. The bill establishes priorities for the distribution of funds if there are insufficient funds available to grant all eligible applicant requests. Priority in the distribution of awards is to be given based on the following priority of employer: county health departments; federally sponsored community health centers; state operated medical and health care facilities; teaching hospitals as defined in s. 408.07, F.S.; family practice teaching hospitals as defined in s. 395.805, F.S.; specialty hospitals for children as used in s. 409.9119, F.S.; and other hospitals, birth centers, and nursing homes where a match is required. These provisions were a part of CS/HB 523.

Additionally, the bill transfers the Nursing Student Forgiveness Loan Program, by type two transfer, to the Department of Health from the Department of Education.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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## **Education Innovation Committee**

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**CS/HB 277, 1st ENG. – School Attendance/Learnfare Program****By Council for Lifelong Learning, Atwater and others****Linked Bills:** None.**Tied Bills:** Similar SB 1278**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Education Innovation (LLC); Fiscal Policy & Resources (FRC); Lifelong Learning

This bill reestablishes the Learnfare Program, which requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to reduce the temporary cash assistance (TCA) for a participant's eligible dependent child or for an eligible teenage participant that displays a pattern of habitual truancy or is a dropout. The TCA is also reduced for a participant with a school-aged child that fails to attend a conference with a school official each semester to discuss his or her child's attendance, behavior, and academic progress. The TCA that is reduced must be reinstated once a participant complies with the requirements of the Learnfare Program.

This bill also required DCF to develop an electronic data transfer system that will collect, report, and share data and information relating to the program. The bill appropriates \$251,000 in nonrecurring Temporary Assistance for Needy Families funds to DCF in order to develop the electronic data transfer system.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is upon becoming law.

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**SB 636, 2nd ENG. – High School Grades****By Pruitt****Linked Bills:** None.**Tied Bills:** Identical HB 577**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Education, Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, and Appropriations

This bill amends the statewide grading scale by lowering the required ranges of percentage grades that equate to letter grades and grade points. The current statewide public high school grading scale is as follows: Grade "A" is equivalent to 94% through 100%; Grade "B" is equivalent to 85% through 93%; Grade "C" is equivalent to 77% through 84%; Grade "D" is equivalent to 70% through 76%; Grade "F" is equivalent to 0% through 69%; and Grade "I" is equivalent to 0%.

The new statewide public high school grading scale proposed by this bill is based on the following 10 percentage point scale: Grade "A" is equivalent to 90% through 100%; Grade "B" is equivalent to 80% through 89%; Grade "C" is equivalent to 70% through 79%; Grade "D" is equivalent to 60% through 69%; Grade "F" is equivalent to 0% through 59%; and Grade "I" is equivalent to 0%.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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**CS/CS/SB 1180, 1st ENG. – McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities**

**By Appropriations, Education, Pruitt**

**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Similar CS/CS/HB 1661

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Education, Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, and Appropriations

The bill amends current law to establish the “John M. McKay Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program;” establish eligibility criteria for students and participating schools; and specify the duties and responsibilities of parents, private schools, school districts, and the Department of Education (DOE) that are separate and independent of the Opportunity Scholarship Program.

The program provides a student with disabilities the option to attend a public school other than the one to which the student is assigned or receive a scholarship to a private school of choice. The scholarships are for students with disabilities for whom an individual educational plan (IEP) has been written according to the rules of the Commissioner of Education or the State Board of Education. Students with disabilities include K-12 students who are mentally handicapped, speech and language impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, visually impaired, dual sensory impaired, physically impaired, emotionally handicapped, specific learning disabled, hospitalized or homebound, or autistic.

The bill amends current law to specify that the parent of a public school student with a disability who is dissatisfied with the student’s progress may request and receive from the state a John M. McKay Scholarship for the child to enroll in and attend a private school if the following criteria are met: (1) the student, by assigned school attendance area or by special assignment, has spent the prior school year attending a Florida public school; (2) the student’s parent has obtained acceptance for admission of the student to a private school that is eligible for the program; and (3) the parent has notified the school district in writing of the request for a scholarship at least 60 days prior to the first scholarship payment.

The amount of a scholarship is equal to a student’s Florida Education Finance Program funds plus the per student share of Supplemental Academic Instruction funds, instructional materials, and public school technology categorical funds or the cost of tuition and fees at a private school, whichever is less.

Subject to the Governor’s veto powers, the effective date of this bill is upon becoming a law.

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**CS/HB 1633, 2nd ENG. – Student Assessment/School Grading System**

**By Education Innovation (LLC), Attkisson**

**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Similar CS/SB 988

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Education Innovation (LLC), Education Appropriations (FRC), and Lifelong Learning

This bill amends the school grading system to clarify that the school grades are to be based on the school’s current year performance and the school’s annual learning gains.

The bill specifies that beginning with the 2001-2002 school year and thereafter, a school's grade must be based on a combination of student achievement scores, student learning gains as measured by the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in grades 3 through 10, and improvement of the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of students in the school in reading, math, or writing on the FCAT, including Florida Writes, unless these students are performing above satisfactory performance. The bill requires a school graded "C" to demonstrate that students in the school that are in the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile in reading, math, or writing on the FCAT, including Florida Writes, are making adequate progress, unless the students are performing above satisfactory progress.

This bill provides that student assessment data used to determine school performance grade categories must include: (1) the aggregate, rather than the median, scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school who have been assessed on the FCAT; and (2) the aggregate, rather than the median, scores of all eligible students enrolled in the school who have been assessed on the FCAT, including Florida Writes, and who have scored at or in the lowest 25<sup>th</sup> percentile of students in the school in reading, math, or writing, unless these students are performing above satisfactory performance.

The Department of Education, in consultation with the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), and other sources as appropriate, must participate in the monitoring and reporting of the implementation of the methodology that will be used to identify student-learning gains.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is upon becoming law.

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**CS/SB 1872, 1st ENG. – District School Tax**

**By Finance and Taxation; Carlton**

**Linked Bills:** None

**Tied Bills:** Compare HB 1411

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Education, Finance and Taxation, Appropriations Subcommittee on Education, Appropriations.

This bill authorizes a school board to levy, subject to referendum approval by the registered voters in the county, additional millage for operating purposes that, when combined with the non-voted millage a school board may levy, does not exceed the 10-mill limit established in the State Constitution. This additional millage levy may be for a period of up to four years, and the millage election must be conducted according to the procedures for district millage elections contained in current law.

In the event an increase occurs in the local taxing effort necessary to participate in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) so that the required local effort millage for a school district plus the discretionary millage levied under the provisions of this bill exceeds the constitutional 10-mill limit, any millage levied according to the provisions of this bill must be considered as required local effort to the extent necessary to stay within the 10-mill limit.

Proceeds from the additional millage levy are not to be included in the FEFP calculation of total potential funds and are not to be included in any FEFP hold-harmless calculation.

The bill provides a mechanism for a school board to call for a millage election and prescribes how the election must be held and conducted.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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## General Education Committee

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**CS/HB 1 – Special Facilities Construction****By Council for Lifelong Learning; Kilmer****Linked Bills:** None**Tied Bills:** SB 462**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** General Education; Fiscal Policy & Resources; Education Appropriations; Council for Lifelong Learning

CS/HB 1 provides an alternative option for participation in the Special Facilities Construction Account. The bill authorizes eligible school districts to levy a school capital outlay surtax (1/2 cent sales tax), in an amount equivalent to a 2-mill levy, in order to fulfill their participation requirement. The provisions for school districts to follow, including a voter referendum on the sales tax, are outlined in s. 212.055(6), F.S.

CS/HB 1 also grandfathered in any special facility plans that were certified by August 1, 2000, and meet building and safety codes. Beginning July 1, 2001 and ending October 1, 2002, these plans are eligible for funding under the new provisions of the committee substitute.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is upon becoming law.

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**CS/CS/HB 267, 2nd ENG. – Juvenile Justice****By Council for Lifelong Learning; Juvenile Justice (SGC); Kravitz; Barreiro; Davis****Linked Bills:** None.**Tied Bills:** Compare CS/HB 1425; H 1743; CS/SB 0974; CS/SB 1864, 1st ENG; CS/SB 1914; Includes HB 1771**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** General Education (LLC); Juvenile Justice (SGC); Council for Lifelong Learning

The bill prohibits students who are found to have committed certain felony offenses against another student from attending the same school or riding on a school bus with the victim or the victim's sibling. The bill makes certain exceptions if the victim or the victim's parents affirmatively states that he or she has no objection to his or her child attending the same school or riding the same bus as the offender. The bill also recognizes that in some school districts, an alternative school setting may not be available. In those circumstances, schools must nonetheless take measures to separate the offending student from the victim. This may include the use of in-school suspension.

The bill links a principal's eligibility for performance pay incentive money to fulfilling his or her responsibilities to students who have been victimized by another student who attends the same school or rides the same bus. The bill expands current school zero-tolerance policies to include zero-tolerance for victimization of students. The bill enhances the existing guidelines for the fair treatment of victims by ensuring that victims are notified of their rights.

Several sections of chapter 985, relating to juvenile proceedings, are revised for the purpose of ensuring the court addresses whether it is appropriate to enter a no contact order in favor of the victim or the victim's sibling if an offending student is subject to criminal prosecution for the offense. The bill requires the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) to provide notice to the appropriate school district of the adjudication or plea, and the operation of this bill.

The bill also contains provisions providing that each school district shall use the Safety and Security Best Practices to conduct a self-assessment. Each year, beginning July 1, 2002, each school district shall hold a public meeting to review the self-assessment results.

Additionally, several provisions covering a broad range of Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) issues were included in the bill. These provisions:

- Allow FDLE to expunge the non-judicial arrest record of a juvenile for a non-violent misdemeanor, providing the juvenile successfully completes the required diversion program.
- Allow DJJ to designate certain employees as certified law enforcement officers to conduct criminal investigations that relate to state-operated programs and facilities over which DJJ has jurisdiction.
- Permit detention of a juvenile offender for a period not to exceed 24 hours for being transported by DJJ in order to ensure the safe delivery of the child to a commitment program, to court, or back to the community.
- Clarify that all juvenile justice youth are compelled to participate in education programs.
- Remove the protection of confidentiality presently provided for the name, photograph, address, and arrest report of certain juvenile offenders.
- Authorize DJJ to collect fees while a child is in detention or under the supervision of the department. However, if the fees are determined to constitute a significant hardship to the parent, they may be reduced or waived.
- Provide DJJ with discretion in collecting and settling unpaid fees or judgments, including settling for less than the full amount owed or selling the right to collect to third parties.
- Allow DJJ to withhold a portion of a provider's payment, pursuant to contract, for the purposes of establishing a fund for significant maintenance, repairs, or upgrades to state-owned or leased facilities.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is October 1, 2001(except as otherwise provide within the bill).

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**CS/CS/HB 269, 1st ENG. – Sharpening the Pencil Act/Charter Schools**  
**By Council for Lifelong Learning; Education Appropriations (FRC); Murman; Lacasa; Byrd; Mack; Melvin; Diaz-Balart; Cantens; Bense; Argenziano; Lynn**  
**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Compare CS/SB 1780; Includes part of HB 1361

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** General Education (LLC); Education Appropriations (FRC); Council for Lifelong Learning

The bill creates the "Sharpening the Pencil Act" requiring each school district to undergo

a best financial practices review on a five year cycle. The best financial management practice reviews are in-depth projects that involve reviewing district operations at the individual program level. They are intended to improve the use of resources and identify cost savings. The state will fully fund all reviews subject to an annual appropriation in the General Appropriations Act. Most of the funds will be used for contracted services with private firms. However, if sufficient funds are not provided to contract for all the scheduled reviews, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) will conduct the remaining scheduled reviews. School districts successfully implementing the best financial management practices earn a "Seal of Best Financial Management." Districts that are awarded the Seal and continue to maintain the best practices may request a waiver from undergoing its next scheduled review.

The bill also provides that if OPPAGA determines that significant deficiencies exist in a school district's land acquisition and facilities operational processes, a Land Acquisition and Facilities Advisory Board (LAFAB) shall be created by the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House to provide expert advice and assist the district. After assessing the district's response to their recommendation, the LAFAB shall report to the Commissioner of the Department of Education.

This bill also amends various provisions in current law relating to charter schools. Significant provisions include: (1) Expanding the purpose of charter schools; (2) Requiring existing public schools to be in operation for at least two years before converting to a charter school; (3) Requiring a school board that denies an existing public school's application to convert to a charter school to provide a written notice that specifies the exact reasons for the denial; (4) Permitting an appeal of a charter school denial; (5) Providing additional criteria that must be used for the approval of a charter; (6) Requiring that PECO maintenance funds generated by a conversion charter school remain with that school; and (7) Authorizing the establishment of charter schools-in-a-municipality in order to encourage municipalities to provide the land or facility to be used for a charter school.

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Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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**CS/HB 279 – Barry Grunow Act/Teacher Death Benefits**

**By Education Appropriations (FRC); Lynn**

**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Similar CS/SB 0866

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** General Education (LLC); Education Appropriations (FRC); Council for Lifelong Learning

The bill provides designated benefits for any teacher or school-based administrator who is killed while engaged in the performance of teaching duties. The bill provides four benefits: (1) \$75,000 to the beneficiary or heirs of a decedent teacher or administrator; (2) \$1,000 to be paid toward the funeral and burial expenses of such teacher or administrator; (3) Payment of health insurance premiums for the spouse and dependent children of the decedent teacher or administrator; (4) Waiver of any state matriculation and tuition fees for the teacher's or administrator's dependent children admitted into a public funded vocational-technical school, community college, or university.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is Upon becoming a law.

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**CS/HB 409, 1st ENG. – Educator Professional Liability Insurance**

**By Council for Lifelong Learning; Farkas**

**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Similar SB 0878, 1st ENG

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** General Education (LLC); Education Appropriations (FRC); Council for Lifelong Learning

The bill provides that the state shall, in its annual General Appropriations Act (GAA), provide funding for educator professional liability coverage for all full-time instruction personnel (as defined in s. 228.041[9], F.S.), including: teachers, media specialists, librarians, social workers, guidance counselors, and education paraprofessionals. This insurance will be provided at no cost to full-time instructional personnel. The same liability insurance will be offered to all part-time instructional personnel, and to administrative personnel (as defined in s. 228.041[10], F.S.), at the low-cost group rate. The Department of Education shall administer this program.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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**CS/CS/HB 1193, 2nd ENG – Teacher Package**

**By Council for Lifelong Learning; General Education (LLC); Arza; Atwater; Brutus**

**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Similar CS/SB 1704, 1st ENG, CS/SB 1640, 1st ENG, SB 1644, 1st ENG, HB 1773

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** General Education (LLC); State Administration (SGC); Council for Lifelong Learning

The bill contains provisions intended to get more, and better, teachers into the classroom, and to retain these teachers for a longer period. The bill:

- Provides that instructional personnel may elect to participate in the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) at any time after the person reaches normal retirement date, rather than having to do so within 12 months of that date.
- Requires school districts to treat years of teaching experience outside the district the same as years of teaching experience within the district, for purposes of pay.
- Allows districts to certify adjunct educators, persons qualified by professional or life experience to teach in a certain subject area on a part-time basis.
- Authorizes the use of an approved alternative certification program by a district other than the district that developed the program.
- Establishes three teacher education pilot programs for high-achieving students.
- Allows school boards to determine what demonstrates sufficient subject area expertise for a teacher to be determined teaching in field.
- Allows teachers employed under contract to finish teaching until the end of the school year if they have not passed the CLAST.

- Requires the district superintendent to consult with the school's principal before transferring a teacher to that school, and allows an alternative placement to be sought, if the students would not benefit, in the judgment of the principal.
- Requires each district school board to develop policies and procedures relating to the reporting of complaints against teachers; and provides for penalties for non-reporting. The superintendent, in consultation with the principal may, and upon request of the Commissioner of Education shall, if deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of students, temporarily suspend a teacher from regularly assigned duties, with pay, and reassign the teacher to a position which does not require direct student contact.
- Requires the Department of Education (DOE) to post teacher vacancies, establish a database of applicants, develop a long-range plan for educator recruitment and retention, identify best practices for retaining high-quality teachers, and, in consultation with Workforce Florida, Inc., and the Agency for Workforce Innovation, develop a plan for accessing available resources to enhance teacher recruitment and retention. Each district school board is required to contact the regional workforce board to identify resources that may assist teachers who are teaching out-of-field and pursuing certification.
- Allows regional educational consortia to become eligible to establish professional development academies for teachers, and, if the consortia serves a rural area of critical economic concern, they are exempt from the matching funds requirement.
- Allows mentor teachers to mentor other teachers during planning time, and allows an athletic coaching certificate to be used for part- or full-time positions.
- Allows bonuses to International Baccalaureate (IB) teachers like those for Advanced Placement (AP) teachers.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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**CS/SB 1018, 1st ENG. – Learning Gateway**

**By Education; Pruitt**

**Linked Bills:** CS/SB 906

**Tied Bills:** Compare CS/HB 1015

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Senate Education; Appropriations

Subcommittee on Education; Appropriations

This bill authorizes three pilot programs (a.k.a. "demonstration projects") in Broward, Manatee, and St. Lucie Counties to identify and address learning problems in children from birth to age nine by:

- Establishing a single access point for screening, assessment, and referral for services.
- Developing strategies for providing systematic hospital visits or home visits to new mothers, to increase early identification of precursors to learning problems and disabilities through improved screening and referral practices, and to increase the use of appropriate intervention practices, including training and technical assistance teams.
- Developing a system to log the number of children screened, assessed, and referred for services. In conjunction with the technical assistance of the steering committee, demonstration projects shall develop a system for targeted screening. Procedures must be established within the demonstration community

to ensure than periodic developmental screening is conducted for children from birth through age 9 who are served by state intervention programs.

- Establishing an automatic referral of high-risk newborns.
- Developing a model system that builds upon, integrates, and fills the gaps in existing services.
- Hiring staff knowledgeable about child development, early identification of learning problems and disabilities, family service planning, and services in the local area.
- Collaborating with readiness coalitions, local school boards, and community resources in arranging and providing training and technical assistance for early identification and screening.

Additionally, the demonstration projects may include “high-quality” early education and care programs; assistance to parents; speech and language therapy; parent education and training; comprehensive medical screening and referral with biomedical interventions; referrals for family therapy, mental health services, and treatment programs; family support services; therapy for learning differences; referral for IDEA services; expanded access to community services; parental choice in the provision of services.

The bill also creates a steering committee for policy development, consultation, oversight, and support for the implementation of the projects. By January 2003, the steering committee will make recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Commissioner of Education regarding the merits of expanding the pilot projects.

Subject to the Governor’s veto powers, the effective date of this bill is upon becoming a law.

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**CS/SB 1684, 1st ENG. – Teacher Recruitment/Transition to Teaching Program**

**By Appropriations; Klein**

**Linked Bills:** None.

**Tied Bills:** Similar HB 1689

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Senate Education; Appropriations Subcommittee on Education; Appropriations

The bill creates a program to recruit retiring or career-changing professionals into teaching. Institutions may apply to the Commissioner of Education for grants to provide training, placement, and other assistance to program participants. Program participants must agree to teach in an eligible (pursuant to federal regulations) school district for at least three years after certification.

Subject to the Governor’s veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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## **Workforce & Technical Skills Committee**

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**CS/SB 350, 1st ENG. – Individual Development Accounts****By Children and Families; Dawson****Linked Bills:** None**Tied Bills:** Identical HB 423**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Children and Families, Commerce and Economic Opportunities, Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government; Appropriations

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 350 allows families receiving temporary cash assistance to establish Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) for saving earned income to purchase a home, pay for a college or vocational education, or start a business. The committee substitute allows regional workforce boards to match IDA contributions using funds from the federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant and other funds. The funds saved in an individual's IDA are not considered when determining eligibility for TANF, food stamps, Medicaid, or other means-tested programs. The regional workforce boards or other community-based organizations will serve as fiduciary organizations for the IDAs. Funds from an IDA may only be withdrawn after the family no longer receives cash assistance and may only be used for postsecondary education expenses, acquisition costs of a residence for a first-time homebuyer, or business capitalization expenses.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is October 1, 2001.

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**CS/CS/SB 1624 – Welfare Transition Trust Fund****By Appropriations; Commerce & Economic Opportunity; King****Linked Bills:** None**Tied Bills:** Identical HB 1241**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Commerce and Economic Opportunities, Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government, Appropriations

The bill creates the Welfare Transition Trust Fund to be administered by the Agency of Workforce Innovation and to be used for supporting the welfare transition program conducted under specified sections of ch. 445, F.S.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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**CS/CS/SB 1672 – Welfare Transition**

**By Appropriations Committee, Commerce and Economic Opportunities Committee, Lee, and others**

**Linked Bills:** None

**Tied Bills:** Identical HB 1431 and CS/HB 135, Includes part of HB 1953 & HB 1601, 1st ENG

**Committee(s)/Council(s) of Reference:** Commerce and Economic Opportunities, Children and Families, Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services, Appropriations

Creates the Passport to Economic Progress demonstration program in Hillsborough and Manatee counties. The program, administered by Workforce Florida, Inc., the Agency for Workforce Innovation, and the Department of Children and Family Services, increases the earned income disregard, provides wage supplementation, and extends transitional benefits for recipients of cash assistance. Provides for representation on state and local workforce boards of persons who are receiving workforce and transitional assistance services. Requires a portion of federal WIA youth services funds and TANF funds to be used for after-school care programs through faith- and community- based organizations.

Creates the Digital Divide Council in the State Technology Office to facilitate the design and implementation of pilot programs through regional workforce boards. The programs are intended to educate and train economically disadvantaged families to become qualified for high skill/high wage employment and to close the digital divide. The office must report the progress of the students as measured by academic performance on the Sunshine State Standards. The office must track the student, student's siblings, and parents enrolled in the program.

Subject to the Governor's veto powers, the effective date of this bill is July 1, 2001.

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