

SB 62 – K-12 Education

Bill Summary

SB 62 by Sen. Stargel related to K-12 Education

The bill was substantially amended in the Senate Education Appropriations Subcommittee.

The bill amends 212.055, F.S., relating to discretionary sales tax. The bill requires districts to share voted discretionary sales tax with charter schools. The language requires the dollars to be expended by charter schools in a manner consistent with s. 1013.62(4), Florida Statutes. This includes purchase of real property, lease arrangements, maintenance/repair, insurance, etc.

The bill retains the dual enrollment language for home school and private school students that was already in bill and also includes the early college program language.

The bill establishes a Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program. This supports postsecondary institutions in providing dual enrollment. Beginning in 2020, the program reimburses postsecondary institutions for cost of private school or home education students for tuition and instructional materials.

The bill amends s. 1011.62, F.S., relating to the funds for operation of schools. The bill provides for additional FTE membership for students enrolled in an early college program.

The provisions of the Mental Health Assistance Allocation are modified to require that the plan developed by a school district must include input from school and community stakeholders and informed by a needs assessment. In addition to existing requirements, the mental health plan must include mental health policies and procedures that include:

- Universal supports to promote students' psychological well-being and ensure safe and supportive school environments.
- Evidence-based strategies or programs to reduce the likelihood of at-risk students developing behavioral health problems, etc.
- Policies and procedures for responding to a student with suicidal ideation.
- A school crisis response plan that should include the establishment of district-level and school-level crisis response teams, including administration and school-based mental health service providers.

The annual report must reflect program outcomes and expenditures for all charter schools, including charter schools that submitted a separate plan. The report must include the number of students receiving screenings, services, etc. and the number of school-based and community-based mental health providers, the number and ratio of school social workers, school psychologists, certified school counselors employed by the districts and the total number of licensed mental health professionals employed directly by the district.

The bill removes the sunset provision relating to the Funding Compression Allocation. Therefore, the allocation is not repealed July 1, 2020.

The bill creates the TEACHER SALARY INCREASE ALLOCATION. – The Teacher Salary Increase Allocation is created to increase teacher salaries and improve this state’s relative teacher salary position when compared with teacher salaries in other states.

- (a) Subject to annual appropriation, funds may be provided for each school district to increase the minimum base salary for full-time classroom teachers as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a) or all instructional personnel as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a)-(d), plus certified prekindergarten teachers, but not including substitute teachers, by no less than the amount designated in the General Appropriations Act. In addition, funds may also be provided in an amount designated in the General Appropriations Act for salary increases for all full-time instructional personnel as determined by the school board and the local bargaining unit.
- (b) Funds for this purpose shall be allocated on each district’s share of the base FEFP allocation. Funds for the minimum base salary increase may be provided in multiple years in order to achieve a particular salary goal. As used in this subsection, the term “minimum base salary” means the base annual salary before payroll deductions and excluding additional 1060 supplements.

The bill amends provisions relating to Charter Schools Capital Outlay Funding. The bill caps charter school funding at \$165 million. If legislature does not appropriate \$165 million, then the capital outlay funds for that fiscal year, will come from any appropriated state funds and the revenue resulting from the 1.5 discretionary millage.

The bill was amended to provide that a charter school is not eligible for a funding allocation unless the governing board chair and chief administrative officer of the charter school annually certify under oath that the funds will be used solely for constructing, renovating, leasing, purchasing, financing or improving charter school facilities. Additional accountability provisions are required if the charter school is owned by and leased from, at a fair market value, a person or entity that is not an affiliated part of the charter school. Affiliated party is defined.

Finally, the bill was amended to allow school districts that use funds solely through local impact fees to build a school to use such fees to pay for any overages in the cost per student station.

This bill passed the Senate Education Appropriations Subcommittee favorably.