2019 Florida Legislative Overview

Highlight of HB 1027, SB 7070 and HB 7071

Presentation to the Florida Philanthropic Network Education Affinity Group
June 11, 2019

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SB 2500, the General Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2019-2020, provides for a total state budget of $91.1 billion, including:

- $34.0 billion from the General Revenue Fund (GR)
- $2.1 billion from the Education Enhancement Trust Fund
- $1.18 billion from the Public Education Capital Outlay Trust Fund (PECO TF)
- $53.9 billion from other trust funds
- $3.4 billion in reserves
Major Budget Items: K-12

- **FEFP: $21.8 billion (State = $12.5 billion)**
  - Increase of $783 million to the FEFP
  - $242 per student increase to the FEFP
  - $75 per student increase to the Base Student Allocation
  - $286 million for Best and Brightest teachers and principals Program
- **School Safety: $180 million for Safe Schools and $50 million for school hardening**
- **Family Empowerment Scholarship: $128 million (approx)**
Major Budget Items: Higher Ed

- **State University System**: $5.1 billion
  - Includes $1.9 billion tuition/fees (no tuition increase)

- **Florida College System**: $1.26 billion
  - Student Success Initiatives: $30 million

- **School District Workforce Education**: $428 million
  - Pathways to Career (Apprenticeships): $10 million
  - Workforce Diploma Program: $1.25 million
HB 1027 – Early Learning

- Requires the office of early learning to develop early learning professional development standards to be utilized for school readiness program providers aligned with training for K-12 teachers, reading coaches and school principals.

- The office is also required to identify both formal and informal early learning career pathways with stackable credentials and certifications that allow early childhood teachers to access specialized professional development that:
  - Strengthens knowledge and teaching practices.
  - Aligns to established professional standards and core competencies.
  - Provides a progression of attainable, competency-based stackable credentials and certifications.
  - Improves outcomes for children to increase kindergarten readiness and early grade success.
Family Empowerment Scholarship Program

For 2019-2020, establishes the FES for up to 18,000 students annually on a first-come, first-served basis. Beginning in 2020-2021, the number of students participating in the program may increase by .25 percent of the state’s total public school student enrollment.

Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Program

Removes the sliding scale for an award based on income level between 185 percent and 260 percent of the federal poverty level.
Schools of Hope/School Turnaround

- Revises the Schools of Hope Program by redefining persistently low-performing schools, eliminating the awards for traditional public schools and expanding the allowable use of funding.
- Creates a new categorical program, the Turnaround School Supplemental Services Allocation, within the FEFP. The allocation provides funding to schools in, or exiting, turnaround status and provides schools with $500 per-FTE, or as otherwise provided in the GAA, to offer services designed to improve the overall academic and community welfare of the school’s students and families.
Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Program

- Modifies the Best and Brightest Teachers Scholarship Program to provide three types of awards: recruitment (up to $4,000), retention (up to $2,500), and recognition (up to $1,000) bonus funds to teachers with distinct eligibility requirements.

- The Best and Brightest Principal awards are based on the academic improvement of schools (up to $5,000).
Teacher Preparation

- SB 7070 also modifies teacher certification requirements relating to the general knowledge examination, requiring changes to specified certification examination fees, and specifying that classroom teachers only are required to demonstrate mastery of general knowledge.

- Authorizes a 2-year extension to temporary certificate for teachers who have not passed the General Knowledge exam within first three years if the teacher is rated as highly effective or completes a 2-year mentorship program.
“SAIL to 60” Goal and Strategic Plan

- Establishes the SAIL to 60 Initiative (SAIL stands for “Strengthening Alignment between Industry and Learning”). The initiative aims to increase the percentage of working-age Floridians with high-quality degrees or credentials from the current 49% to 60% by 2030.
- Renames the Higher Education Coordinating Council to the Talent Development Council and makes some changes to its membership.
- It also tasks the Talent Development Council with developing a coordinated strategic plan for strengthening workforce education and accountability metrics.
Reverse Transfer
- Students must be awarded an associate in arts degree by the Florida College System institution upon completion of degree requirements at the state university if the student earned more than 30 credit hours toward the associate in arts degree from the Florida College System institution.

Last Mile College Completion Program
- Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, the Last Mile College Completion Program is established within the Department of Education to annually award the cost of in-state tuition and required fees to students classified as residents pursuant to s. 1009.21 who are in good standing at Florida College System institutions and state universities and who are within 12 or fewer credit hours of completing their first associate or baccalaureate degree.
High School Graduation Requirements

- The bill specifies that a student may earn two mathematics credits by successfully completing Algebra I through two full-year courses.
- A student who earns a computer science credit may substitute the credit for up to one credit of the mathematics requirement, with the exception of Algebra I and Geometry, if the commissioner identifies the computer science credit as being equivalent in rigor to the mathematics credit.
- Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, all school districts must offer a financial literacy course consisting of at least one-half credit as an elective.
- Adds a CTE high school graduation option for students who take at least 2 credits in career and technical education and work-based learning.
Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant
- Provides competitive grants to high schools, career centers, charter technical career centers, Florida College System institutions, and other entities authorized to sponsor an apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship program (administered by FLDOE)

CTE audit and articulation
- K-12 and postsecondary career and technical education offerings, in consultation with the Department of Economic Opportunity, CareerSource Florida, Inc., leaders of business and industry, the Board of Governors, the Florida College System, school districts, and other education stakeholders, to determine the alignment of existing offerings with employer demand, postsecondary degree or certificate programs, and professional industry certifications.
“The education priorities passed this session represent a resounding victory for students, parents and teachers across Florida.”

- Governor Ron DeSantis