

# **FLASH NEWSY**

**February 28, 2011**

**MIXON & ASSOCIATES**

**This Week in K-12 Education**

**Feb 28 - March 4, 2011**

As noted in the recent summary, Senate and House Committees were busy last week. However, they will be silent this week as all prepare for the annual Legislative Session, commencing next Tuesday (March 8). A complete summary of all proposed bills impacting Public Education is in preparation, but since the final deadline for submitting proposals is this Friday (March 4), the summary will not be complete until next week.

During the past few months there have been many committee meetings held by House and Senate Education-related committees. The House committee and sub-committees have focused their efforts on a series of discussion forums to help new members get a grasp of the many issues that will be addressed during the Session. However, in addition to general issue discussion forums, the Senate has been "fast-tracking" two proposed bills; deliberating and forwarding them through the assigned committees so that they will be ready for consideration for final passage early in the Session. Those proposals, Senate Bills 736 and 1130, have received much media attention. Senate Bill 736 has been dubbed "The Student Success Act", and Senate Bill 1130 is an overhaul of the Florida Retirement System. Because both will get to the Senate floor very soon, we are including a short summary of each, along with internet links to the official staff analyses and bill text so that interested parties may become more familiar with their content and impact. (If interested in further reading, please "cut-and-paste" the listed links into your internet browser).

**Senate Bill 1130**, relating to the Florida Retirement System was discussed at a workshop during the Senate Governmental Oversight and Accountability Committee on

Feb 23. The bill text is at: <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2011/1130/BillText/Filed/PDF> and the analysis is located at:

<http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2011/1130/Analyses/hqyJHIAwIfvhd73WhEqKrOr/W4Y=%7C7/Publi c/Bills/1100-1199/1130/Analysis/2011s1130.pre.go.PDF>

#### SUMMARY:

- This bill makes the following changes to the Florida Retirement System (FRS):
  - Closes the defined benefit plan to members enrolled on or after July 1, 2011, and requires members enrolling on or after that date to enter the defined contribution plan.
  - Changes vesting for members enrolled in the defined contribution plan on or after July 1, 2011. They will vest in graded increments over a five-year period.
  - Changes the FRS from a noncontributory system to a contributory system and requires each active member of the FRS to contribute a percentage of gross salary to fund retirement benefits, effective July 1, 2011.
  - Amends the definitions of "compensation" and "average final compensation" to exclude overtime and accumulated annual leave for all members, effective July 1, 2011.
  - Creates an additional death benefit for members of the defined contribution plan who are killed in the line of duty.
- The bill also:
  - Establishes the required employer payroll contribution rates for each membership class and subclass of the FRS retirement plan for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2011.
  - Requires each active member of the Senior Management Service Optional Annuity Program, the State University System Optional Retirement Program, and the Community College Optional Retirement Program to contribute the same percentage of gross salary to fund retirement benefits as those contributed by FRS employees, effective July 1, 2011.
  - Creates conforming and implementing provisions related to the substantive changes.

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**Senate Bill 736**, "The Student Success Act", has cleared all assigned committees and is scheduled for a hearing "on the Floor" March 9, 2011.

The bill text is at: <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2011/0736/BillText/c2/PDF> and the analysis is located at: <http://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2011/0736/Analyses/muFTDvHr0Q73q2juitoddnRzzqw=%7C7/Public/Bills/0700-0799/0736/Analysis/2011s0736.bc.PDF>.

#### SUMMARY:

A comprehensive education personnel initiative that provides for a reform of the evaluations of instructional personnel and school administrators; compensation; and employment practices. The bill provides for the following:

- Performance Evaluations for Instructional Personnel and School Administrators
  - Requires the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) to establish a learning growth model for school district use for the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) and other statewide assessments to measure the effectiveness of instructional personnel and school administrators based on what a student learns;
  - Provides that 50 percent of an evaluation is based on student performance over a 3-year period, with the remainder of the evaluation based on instructional practice or leadership, as applicable;
- Compensation for Performance
  - Requires school districts to establish a new performance salary schedule by July 1, 2014, that provides annual salary increases based upon the performance evaluation;
  - Allows current teachers and school administrators to remain on the current salary schedule with an option to move to the new performance salary schedule;
  - Requires current instructional personnel who want to move to the new performance

- salary schedule or who move from one district to another to relinquish their professional service contract in exchange for an annual contract;
  - Beginning with instructional personnel hired on or after July 1, 2011, prohibits a district school board from using advanced degrees to set the salary schedule unless the advanced degree is held in the individual's area of certification;
  - Provides for earning additional salary supplements for differentiated pay based on assignment to a high priority location, certification and teaching in critical teacher shortage areas, or assignment of additional academic responsibilities;
  - Employment
    - Eliminates professional service contracts for instructional personnel newly-hired, beginning July 1, 2011;
    - Revises the criteria for renewal of contracts by tying renewal to the performance evaluation;
    - Provides that professional service contracts are not automatically renewed; and
    - Clarifies that just cause under a professional service contract includes unsatisfactory performance on the individual's evaluation.
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The following education-related topics may be of interest:

- Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability [OPPAGA] provided a presentation to the House PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee, February 16, 2011, on Budget reduction strategies by other states:  
[http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/monitordocs/presentations/2-16-11/Other\\_States\\_Budget\\_Reduction\\_Strategies/2-16-11\\_Other\\_States\\_Budget\\_Reduction\\_Strategies\\_frame.htm](http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/monitordocs/presentations/2-16-11/Other_States_Budget_Reduction_Strategies/2-16-11_Other_States_Budget_Reduction_Strategies_frame.htm)
- National Governors Association convened a Work Group on Common College Completion Metrics to make recommendations on the common higher education

measures that states should collect and report publicly. This group recommends collecting several outcome metrics, including degrees and certificates awarded, graduation rates, transfer rates, and time and credits to degree. In addition, progress metrics such as enrollment in remedial education, success beyond remedial education, success in first-year college courses, credit accumulation, retention rates, and course completion should also be collected and reported. Collecting and reporting metrics at the campus, system, and state levels is a necessary first step for states as they seek to improve completion rates and productivity in higher education. Interested parties may see the report, *Complete to Compete: Common College Completion Metrics*, at: <http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/1007COMMONCOLLEGEMETRICS.PDF>

- National Conference of State Legislatures looked into expanded learning opportunities that support state education goals by providing safe, structured learning environments for students outside the regular school day. These include after-school and summer learning programs, as well as before-school, evening, and weekend programs. This report provides an overview of the lessons learned from a grant-funded, six-state project. It describes the major policy strategies and processes by which the participating states were able to improve education outcomes. The states found three key strategies necessary for success: using data to drive decision-making, fostering expanded learning opportunity champions across sectors and at multiple levels, and supporting innovative expanded learning opportunities and having a vision for scaling up. See *Supporting Student Success: The Promise of Expanded Learning Opportunities*, at: <http://www.ncsl.org/documents/educ/1101studentsuccess.pdf>
- ENLACE Florida prepared a report that compared the participation, college continuation, and college-readiness rates of Florida high school graduates taking an Advanced Placement course during their senior year with graduates taking a dual enrollment course their senior year. It found that dual enrollment is equally effective as Advanced Placement in preparing Florida high school students for success in college. According to the analysis, 78% of limited-income high school graduates who took at least one dual enrollment course, immediately enrolled in college following graduation without the need for remediation. For limited-income graduates who took at least one Advanced Placement course in their senior year, 61% immediately entered college without the need for remediation. The findings suggest that it may be worthwhile to encourage student participation in a variety of acceleration programs. The report, *Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement: Preparing More Limited-Income Students For Success In College* is at: [http://enlacefl.usf.edu/research/Research%20Briefs/2010/AP\\_2010\\_Final.pdf](http://enlacefl.usf.edu/research/Research%20Briefs/2010/AP_2010_Final.pdf)
- Public Broadcasting Service finds that the Internet is quickly becoming the source for media-based instruction, with streaming and downloading of content surging. Teachers believe that a variety of technology devices and web-based systems help them do their jobs better and help them to engage students in learning. Teachers see great educational potential in smart, portable devices, including laptops, tablets, e-readers and handhelds. Teachers are joining online

professional communities to connect, collaborate, and share resources with other teachers. Their report, *Deepening Connections: Teachers Increasingly Rely on Media and Technology*, is at:

[http://www.pbs.org/about/media/about/cms\\_page\\_media/182/PBS-Grunwald-2011e.pdf](http://www.pbs.org/about/media/about/cms_page_media/182/PBS-Grunwald-2011e.pdf)