

**EMERGENT DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**  
**APRIL 9, 2010**

As predicted, this is a very difficult Legislative session, for all. The development and funding of the Budget, which drives all government systems, is a major concern and impacts almost all legislation. For educators, concern over the four main educational bills seems as important as the budget. This week was very busy since many Committees will not meet again. Many, many bills are still tied up in committee and have little chance of being able to go to the floor of the Legislature for action.

**BUDGET**

This week saw the passage of the Budget by both houses of the Legislature. Senate Bill 2700, the Senate version of the budget, passed with a vote of 37-0. House Bill 5001, the House version of the budget, passed with a vote of 74-44. While the total funding is very similar in both budgets, the individual line items are vastly different. Because of the differences, the budgets will go to conference committees, where they will reach agreement on all items. There are also many differences in the implementing and conforming bills.

One good bit of budget news was that agreement was reached regarding the Seminole Indian gaming compact. This agreement will add over \$1.2 Billion to the budget over the next 5 years. This year it will add approximately \$425 Million. (The Senate has already included it.)

**EDUCATION BILLS THAT HAVE PASSED BOTH HOUSES**

Today the House made it official, all four major education bills have passed both the House and Senate in identical form. These bills now go to the Governor for his action. He can sign them into law, take no action and they will become law without his signature, or he can use the power of the veto to kill a bill. No other education bills have passed both houses. A list of bills that were heard in committees of either the Senate or House are provided below.

**SB 002 / HB 7039**

This bill will place a constitutional amendment on the November ballot, which is intended to maintain the class-size requirements. However, it will grant a bit of relief to schools by allowing individual classes to exceed the absolute number as long as the school grade levels do not exceed the Constitutional requirement. The amendment will have to pass with a 60% majority of Florida voters. Many feel that this number is unattainable. This bill passed with a vote of 26-12 in the Senate and 77-41 in the House.

There is no reason to believe that the Governor will delay signing this bill. Links to both the bill and the Staff analysis are below.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/analysis/pdf/2010s0002.wpsc.pdf>

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0002.pdf>

### **SB 004 / HB 7053**

This bill has been referred to as the High School Standards bill. The bill will require a phase-in of required subjects for high school graduation. When fully implemented, students will graduate with Alg.I, Alg. II, Geometry, Biology I, and either Physics or Chemistry. The bill requires end of the course exams in these subjects and clarifies the weight that the exam carries. Students will be required to pass these exams to graduate. There are worries that the implementation of this bill will lower graduation rates and increase the number of dropouts. Links to the staff analysis and the bill are below. The bill passed the Senate 36-1 and the House 106-12.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0002.pdf>

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0004e2.pdf>

### **SB 006 / HB 7189**

This is the most controversial of the four main education bills. Referred to as the teacher quality bill, there are many parts to this bill and I encourage you to look at both the bill and the staff analysis. This is a phased-in bill, complete with deadlines, auditing and penalties. While much of the bill applies to new hires, parts of the bill impact all educators. This bill will require valid and reliable end of course exams in all subjects. This will allow for the part of the bill which will require 51% of the evaluation of an educator to be based upon a performance model. Another part of the bill relates to teacher preparation and impacts the teacher preparation programs. For new hires, teacher tenure is no longer available. New teachers will work the first year as probationary (termination for any reason), years 2-5 will be annual contract. Year 6, in order to be rehired a teacher must be in the category of “qualified” or “highly qualified”. Please read, there are other parts of this bill. This bill passed the Senate 21-17 and the House 64-55. Governor Crist has indicated that he may have some problem with this bill. He has urged Legislators to go slow in this area. A quote in the Miami Herald “Shame on any public servant who doesn’t listen to the people.” Some people think that he is considering a veto of this bill.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/analysis/pdf/2010s0006.wpsc.pdf>

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0006er.pdf>

### **SB 2126 / HB 1009**

This is the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program. Some refer to this bill as “The Massive Voucher Bill”. The bill basically expands this program which currently grants \$3,950 scholarships to 25,000 Florida students, enabling them to attend private school. Corporations donate to this program and in return

receive a tax credit. The changes reflected in this bill, increase the total amount in the fund from \$118 Million to \$140 Million and increases the individual student award to 80% of the per pupil public school funding. The Senate passed the bill 27-11 and the house voted 95-23 in favor.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/analysis/pdf/2010s2126.wpsc.pdf>

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/analysis/pdf/2010s2126.wpsc.pdf>

## **BILLS IN THE SYSTEM THAT WERE HEARD IN COMMITTEE THIS WEEK**

These bills would appear to have some life, although they have not as yet, received the blessing of both houses and in some cases have not reached the Legislative floor. In reality many of these will probably not pass.

**HB 5607** This is the FRS (Florida Retirement System ) contribution that is required by law each year. The employer pays this amount to the state on behalf of the employee. It is currently non-contributory on the part of the employee. Watch this bill since this is where one would expect to find any change which may make the employee begin contributing to their own retirement.

**HB 5703** Related to Retirement This bill has passed the House.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/House/bills/billtext/pdf/h570301e1.pdf>

**HB 1107** Relating to sovereign immunity. This would probably increase the cost of insurance for school districts as it increases the exposure to liability.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/House/bills/billtext/pdf/h110702c2.pdf>

**SB 642** relates to teen dating and violence.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0642c1.pdf>

**SB 2118** Relates to students with disabilities and the restraint issue.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2118c1.pdf>

**SB 2224** Relates to Job opportunities for youth.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2224.pdf>

**SB 2014** Relates to early learning.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2014c2.pdf>

**SB 2042** Relates to college and career transition.

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2042.pdf>

**SB 648** Relates to building safety

<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0648c1.pdf>

**SB 806** Relates to PreK-12 Education and vocational rehabilitation.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s1806c1.pdf>

**SB 2550** Relates to Religious Freedom.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2550.pdf>

**SB 206** Relates to academic recognition.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0206c1.pdf>

**SB 820** Relates to fine arts being counted as part of high school scores.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0820c1.pdf>

**SB 1096** Relates to middle school civics course.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s1096c1.pdf>

**SB 1058** Relates to cooperation between public schools and the Dept. of Juvenile justice.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s1058c2.pdf>

**SB 1598** Relates to public records.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s1598c3.pdf>

**SB 2580** Relates to group insurance for public employees.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s2580c1.pdf>

**SB 1060** Relates to the military compact for children.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s1060.pdf>

**SB 140** Relates to school food service programs.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/Senate/bills/billtext/pdf/s0140c1.pdf>

**HB 055** Relates to school board policies.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/House/bills/billtext/pdf/h005501c1.pdf>

**HB 747** Relates to the treatment of students with diabetes.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/House/bills/billtext/pdf/h074702c2.pdf>

**HB 1233** Relates to Educational plant surveys.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/House/bills/billtext/pdf/h123301c1.pdf>

**HB 1505** Relates to Mc Kay Scholarships.  
<http://www.flsenate.gov/data/session/2010/House/bills/billtext/pdf/h150501c1.pdf>