

(Below is a Legislative Summary created by Jim Warford, Executive Director of FASA. The legislation discussed is expected to be signed, but has not been signed as of this printing. – HASA)

2006 Florida Legislation Summary

By

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Another historic milestone was reached this session when the House accepted the Senate version of the A++ Education Bill. A++ requires a uniform school start date, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, of no earlier than 14 days before Labor Day. Authorizes the use of co-teaching. For 2006-2007 through 2009-2010 fiscal years and thereafter, each teacher assigned to any classroom shall be included in calculation for compliance with class size.

Establishes team-teaching strategies. Incorporates strategies used prior to July 1, 2005. Effective July 1, 2005, establishes specific strategies. School districts may not be penalized financially or otherwise for using any legal strategy.

Creates the Florida Secondary School Redesign Act which establishes guiding principles for secondary school redesign that must be used in annual preparation of each secondary school's improvement plan. Based on guiding principles, school boards must establish policies that address placement and promotion of out-of-state/foreign students; alternative methods to demonstrate competency; applied, integrated, combined courses; credit recovery courses and intensive reading/mathematics; grade forgiveness; summer academies; support for teacher's pursuit of reading endorsement; flexible scheduling; additional course requirement for promotion and graduation, etc.

Beginning with plan approved by 2007-2008 school year, each secondary school plan must include redesign component.

Requires the DOE, by February 1, 2007, to increase the number of approved applied, integrated, and combined courses. By beginning of 2006-2007 school year, make available a professional development package designed to provide information that content area teachers need to become proficient in applying scientifically based reading strategies through their content areas. Provide the Legislature with annual analysis of success of reform effort.

Beginning with students entering grade 6 in 2006-2007 school year, establishes middle school promotion requirements. Requires:

- (3) English, emphasizing literature, composition, technical text.
- (3) mathematics; at least 1 high school level math course must be offered
- (3) Social Studies; one semester must include study of state/federal government and civics education.
- (3) Science
- (1) Course in career and education planning to be completed in 7th or 8th grade. Course may be taught by any member of instructional staff; must include career exploration using CHOICES for 21st Century or comparable program; must include educational planning using FACTS.org; and must result in personalize academic and career plan signed by student, guidance counselor and parent.

By January 1, 2007, the DOE must develop course frameworks and professional development materials for a course to be implemented as stand-alone course or integrated into another course or courses.

Revises general requirements for high school graduation for students entering their first year of high school in 2007-2008 school year. Students must complete a total of 24 total credits which may be earned through applied, integrated, and combined courses.

(16) Core curricula credits including:

- (4) English with major concentration in composition, reading for information and literature.
- (4) Math, one of which must be Algebra I, a series of courses equivalent to Algebra I, or higher-level.
- (3) Science, two of which must have laboratory component.
- (3) Social Studies: one credit in American history; one credit in world history; one-half credit in economics; and one-half credit in American government.
- (1) Credit in fine arts.
- (1) Credit in physical education to include integration of health.
- (8) Credits in majors, minors, or electives: 4 credits in a major area of interest; 4 credits in elective courses. Minor areas may also be selected.

For each year a student scores at Level 1 in reading, the student must be enrolled in and complete an intensive reading course following year. Placement of Level 2 readers in intensive reading courses or content area courses determined by diagnosis of reading needs. For each year in which student scores Level 1 or Level 2 on FCAT Math, a student must receive remediation the following year. Through applied, integrated or combined courses.

Requires diagnostic assessments/intervention for students scoring below Level 3 in reading or math. Requires diagnostic assessments/intervention for students scoring below Level 3 in reading or math.

Standard diploma and certificate of completion. Specifies criteria/instruction school board must provide for students with a school board may require specific courses and a program of study within minimum credit requirements for high school graduation. Courses must be modified to assure exceptional students the opportunity to meet graduation requirements for standard diploma; specifies strategies.

Requires the SBE, after public hearing, to adopt rules based on commissioner recommendations for provision of test accommodation and modifications necessary for students with disabilities. Specifies the conditions for awarding disabilities.

Creates a section relating to career and professional academies. Defines program, establishes goals. Curriculum must be industry-driven. Provides academies may be offered in small learning communities including a school-within-a-school academy, or total school configuration. Provides requirements for each academy which includes opportunities for students to obtain Florida Ready to Work Certification.

Requires SBE to establish schedule for periodic review of SSS to ensure adequate rigor, relevance, logical student progression, and integration of reading, writing, and mathematics across subject areas. Curriculum review must include curriculum leaders in other content areas, including arts, to ensure content area integration, etc. Must include leadership and input from teachers, administrators, community colleges and universities, and the business community. Must be submitted to Governor and Legislature annually no later than January 1.

Requires SBE to adopt rules giving part-time/full-time no degreed teachers of career programs opportunity to earn reading credential equivalent to reading endorsement.

Amends school improvement plan requirements to align with Sunshine State Standards, address student achievement goals based on state and district proficiency standards. Additional requirements for schools earning a grade of "C" or below, or required to have plan under federal law.

Establishes paperwork and data collection and reporting requirements. Beginning with 2006-2007 school year, each school board must designate a classroom teacher to speak on behalf of teachers regarding paperwork and data collection reduction. School board must develop efficient method for school community to communicate with teacher designee. Teacher must annually report findings to school board and school board must submit findings and solutions to SBE by September 1 of each year. SBE submits report to Legislature and Governor by October 1 of each year.

Requires an exit interview with student if student decides to drop out and actions that could be taken to keep student in school. Requires student to complete survey in format prescribed by DOE to provide data on student reasons for terminating enrollment and actions taken by school to keep student enrolled.

DOE must develop and have an operating electronic IEP system for potential statewide use no later than July 1, 2007. System must be developed collaboratively with school districts and must include input from districts currently developing or operating electronic IEP systems.

Replaces academic improvement plan with "progress monitoring" plan. Progress monitoring plan is intended to provide school district and school flexibility in meeting academic needs of students and to reduce paperwork. Progress monitoring plans are limited to IEP, school-wide system of progress monitoring for all students; or an individualized progress monitoring plan. Removes language relating to middle school success plan.

From school boards. DOE compiles information and annually Authorizes school boards to require low performing students to attend remediation programs held before or after regular school hours or during the summer if transportation is provided.

Requires DOE to establish uniform format for school districts to report specific school information, with input reports to Governor and Legislature.

Authorizes use of class size reduction operating funds to implement differentiated pay requirements when class size requirements are met. Repeals BEST. Beginning with 2007-08 academic year, school boards must adopt salary schedule with differentiated pay for instructional and school-based administrators. Schedule subject to negotiation and must allow differentiated pay based on district-determine factors, including additional responsibilities, school demographics, critical shortage areas, and level of job performance difficulties. Addresses planning time and staff development to align with secondary redesign; requires districts to provide DOE with collective bargaining contracts and salaries/benefits of association personnel paid by school district.