



OVERVIEW

The Legislature held its fifth, and final Interim Committee Week, February 15 – 18, 2021. Several bills began to move through the legislative process this week. SB 48 (Vouchers) by Sen. Diaz passed its second committee. The bill combines and restructures many of the current Florida scholarships and voucher programs. SB 48 will consolidate the Family Empowerment, Florida Tax Credit Scholarship, and the Hope Scholarship programs while funding it through the Florida Education Finance Program. The bill will also expand eligibility for vouchers, increase the number of vouchers, and financially impact school districts across the state.

The House PreK-12 Appropriation Subcommittee discussed the concern of the nearly 90,000 missing students (not registered in schools) due to the pandemic, with several district Superintendents. The Superintendents are concerned that permanent cuts would leave districts unprepared to deal with students who ultimately return to school. Chair Fine stated that districts need to be prepared to have their budgets adjusted for the nearly 90,000 missing students. The Legislature is unlikely to craft a budget that funds the hold harmless provision for next school year.

Additionally, Commissioner Corcoran issued a new Emergency Order ([2021-EO-01](#)), which expanded the testing windows for multiple spring assessments.

Please find below a summary of the Senate Committee & Subcommittee hearings this past week.

Senate Education Committee

SB 258 - Internship Tax Credit Program by Jones: Designating the “Florida Internship Tax Credit Program”; providing a corporate income tax credit for qualified businesses employing degree-seeking student interns if certain criteria are met; specifying the amount of the credit a qualified business may claim per student intern, etc.

Effective Date: July 1, 2021. **Passed - now in Finance and Tax**

SB 280 - Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Training in Public Schools by Baxley: Bill will require school districts to provide basic training in first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation,

in specified grades; revising requirements for instruction in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2021. **Passed - now in Appropriations Subcommittee on Education**

SB 538 - Use of Epinephrine Auto-injectors on Public K-20 Campuses by Polsky: Providing that state universities and Florida College System institutions are considered authorized entities for specified purposes relating to the emergency use of epinephrine auto-injectors; requiring, rather than authorizing, public schools to purchase or acquire a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors for specified purposes; requiring state universities and Florida College System institutions to purchase or acquire a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors for specified purposes, etc. Effective Date: July 1, 2021. **Passed - now in Health Policy**

SB 760 - Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) by Burgess: Requiring the FHSAA to allow certain schools and home education cooperatives to maintain full membership in the association or to join by sport; prohibiting the FHSAA from discouraging such schools or cooperatives from simultaneously maintaining membership in another athletic association; requiring, rather than authorizing, the FHSAA to allow public schools to join other athletic associations, etc. Effective Date July 1, 2021. **Passed - now in Community Affairs.**

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Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

SB 48 - Educational Scholarship Programs by Diaz: Educational Scholarship Programs; Requiring the Auditor General to conduct certain audits at least every 3 years instead of annually; adding certain students to those whom district school boards must provide preferential treatment in the controlled open enrollment process; establishing the McKay-Gardiner Scholarship Program; prohibiting a student from participating in the program under certain circumstances; providing that program funding for specified children constitutes their full funding under part V of Ch. 1002, F.S.; providing commissioner authority and obligations relating to suspending or revoking program participation, etc. Effective Date July 1, 2021. **Passed - now in Appropriations**

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Please find below a summary of the House Committee & Subcommittee hearings this past week.

House Education & Employment Committee

Presentations and Discussion on the Oversight and Accountability of Florida's Workforce System.

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Early Learning & Elementary Education Subcommittee

HB 529 - Moments of Silence in Public Schools by Fine: Requires principals to require teachers to set aside time for moment of silence; prohibits teachers from making suggestions as to the nature of any reflection during moment of silence; deletes provision authorizing district school boards to provide brief period of silent prayer or meditation; requires certain teachers,

encourage parents, or guardians to discuss moment of silence and make suggestions as to the best use of this time. Effective Date July 1, 2021. **Passed in the Secondary Education & Career Development Subcommittee**

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Secondary Education & Career Development Subcommittee

Presentation on Florida's school choice landscape and panelist discussion on preparing students for college and careers.

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House Pre-K Appropriations Subcommittee

Overview of the Florida Education Finance Program.

Panel Discussion on the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Florida Education Finance Program and the Federal Assistance Related to the COVID-19 Pandemic for Elementary and Secondary Schools.

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