

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Date: April 7, 1998 Revised: _____

Subject: School Board's Tentative Budget

	<u>Analyst</u>	<u>Staff Director</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Action</u>
1.	O'Farrell	O'Farrell	ED	Favorable/CS
2.	_____	_____	WM	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

Public school boards would be required to include with their public advertisements of proposed millage levies and tentative budgets, a series of graphs reflecting a summary of specified financial and demographic data for the current fiscal year and for the fiscal years 5 and 10 years prior to the current year.

This bill amends section 237.081 of the Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Sections 200.065 and 237.081, F.S., prescribe the methods local school boards must follow in advertising proposed millage levies and budgets as well as the date, time, and place of budget hearings open to the public. Section 200.065, F.S., also prescribes the format, size, and size of type of such advertisements.

Section 237.081, F.S., states that the primary purpose of such hearings is to give citizens the opportunity to present requests and complaints to the school board regarding proposed tax levies and budgets, and to give the board the opportunity to explain the budget to the public. Once these activities have been completed, the board is required to direct the superintendent to transmit copies of the adopted budget to the Department of Education for approval.

A familiar complaint heard by school boards at budget hearings is that the public is not presented with sufficient information to understand spending decisions reflected by the budget or the reasons why proposed tax increases are necessary.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The legislation being considered would direct school boards to include with their advertisements of tentative budgets and proposed millage required by s. 237.081, F.S., related graphs providing an historical summary of financial and demographic data. The information is to be presented at least once in a full-page ad in the newspaper with the largest circulation in the district. Current law provides that if no such newspaper exists, the information is to be posted at the courthouse door.

The bill is very specific about the format of the graphs to be included in the advertisement, with data values to be plotted along the vertical axis and the relevant fiscal years plotted along the horizontal axis. The graphs must display information from the current fiscal year and from the fiscal years 5 and 10 years prior to the current year. The data plotted for the school district for each of the 3 years must include the appropriate financial and demographic values for the following:

- The total revenue provided from all sources, federal, state, and local.
- The total revenue for current operations.
- The total revenue for fixed capital outlay projects.
- The total revenue for debt service.
- The total number of unweighted full-time equivalent students provided for through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP).
- The total current operating revenue divided by the total number of unweighted full-time equivalent students.
- The total number of district employees.
- The total number of employees meeting the statutory definition of instructional personnel contained in s. 228.041, F.S. The definition includes: classroom teachers, pupil personnel services staff, librarians/media specialists, other instructional staff, and instructional aides.

Finally, the Commissioner of Education would be authorized to adopt rules that may be necessary to provide specific format requirements for the advertisements.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The additional cost to a school board of compiling and preparing the required graphs should be minimal.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.