

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE



January 11, 2009

The Honorable Jeff Atwater
President of the Senate

The Honorable Ray Sansom
Speaker, House of Representatives

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

Your Conference Committee on the disagreeing votes of the two houses on CS/CS/SB 6-A, same being:

An act relating to Education Funding.

having met, and after full and free conference, do recommend to their respective houses as follows:

1. That the House recede from its Amendment 1.
2. That the Senate and House of Representatives adopt the Conference Committee Amendment attached hereto, and by reference made a part of this report.

Managers on the part of the Senate

Senator JD Alexander, Chair

Senator Thad Altman, At Large

Senator Carey Baker

Senator Larcenia J. Bullard

Senator Victor D. Crist

Senator Nancy C. Detert

Senator Paula Dockery

Senator Don Gaetz

Senator Andy Gardiner

Senator Mike Haridopolos

Senator Dennis L. Jones, D.C.

Senator James E. "Jim" King, Jr.

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Senator Steve Oelrich

Senator Ken Pruitt, At Large

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Senator Christopher L. "Chris" Smith

Senator Ronda Storms

Senator Frederica S. Wilson

Managers on the part of the House of Representatives

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Representative Joseph Abruzzo

Representative Janet H. Adkins

Representative Thomas Anderson

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Representative Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.

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Representative Peter Nehr

Representative H. Marlene O'Toole

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Representative Richard Glorioso

Representative Adam Hasner, At Large

Representative Bill Heller

Representative Ed Hooper

Representative Matt Hudson

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Representative Kurt Kelly

Representative Paige Kreegel

Representative Carlos Lopez-Cantera, At Large

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Representative Charles E. Van Zant

Representative Michael B. Weinstein

Representative Trudi K. Williams

The Conference Committee Amendment for CS/CS/SB 6-A (873898), relating to Education Funding, provides for the following:

- Allows all districts to spend discretionary capital funds for property and casualty insurance and certain motor vehicles and increases the cap for this purpose from \$65 to \$100 per student for two years.
- Provides flexibility to use discretionary capital funds to pay for major enterprise resource software that meet certain standards.
- Allows the Commissioner to waive, in a year when appropriations are reduced, up to 50 percent of the transfer of funds from operating to facilities appropriations for districts that fail to meet class size limitations.
- Requires notice when a school district's approved operating budget fund balance is projected to fall below 3 percent of projected general fund revenues. Requires notice when a school district's approved operating budget fund balance is projected to fall below 2 percent of projected general fund revenues and then, if the Commissioner determines that the district does not have a plan to avoid a financial emergency, the Commissioner shall appoint a financial emergency board.
- Provides an extension of the 2 year requirement to purchase instructional materials that were adopted in the 2008-09 adoption cycle (language arts).
- Modifies the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program to provide a separate base student allocation (BSA) for regular school year programs and for summer programs; change summer teacher to student ratio from 10 to 12; establish minimum attendance of eighty percent for full-time equivalent student funding; provide flexibility for school district attendance reporting; reduce the amount early learning coalitions may retain and expend for administering programs from 5 to 4.85%; and reduce administrative burden on providers and streamline administration of the program.
- Removes class size reduction compliance as a condition for school districts to participate in the VPK program.
- Prohibits school districts from entering into any employment contract that provides for severance pay of more than one year of salary.
- Authorizes school district board members to voluntarily reduce their salaries.
- Authorizes the Commissioner to waive fiscal penalties based on certain audit findings of school district expenditures of discretionary capital funds for property and casualty insurance from May 1 to December 31, 2007 and software for 2006-2007. However, this provision shall only take effect if the School Board of Miami-Dade County dismisses a certain lawsuit pending in the Circuit Court of the Eleventh Judicial Circuit.
- Provides that payments for 2008-09 Merit Awards will be funded in 2009-10 to the extent that funds are available.
- Incorporates the Florida Education Finance Program workpapers by reference.