

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **SB 122 — Instructional Materials/K-12**

by Senators Fasano and Dockery

The bill allows the Department of Education to conduct a pilot program to enable school districts to realize cost savings in purchasing used instructional materials. Three counties (Hernando County, Pasco County, and Polk County) may participate. Charter schools in the three counties may also participate in the program. Secondhand book dealers or third party book vendors that provide used, state adopted instructional materials to a school district are subject to specific disclosure requirements.

The requirements in s. 1006.37, F.S., for the requisition of instructional materials from publisher depositories do not apply to the pilot project. The state is not responsible for a financial loss resulting from a school district's deviation from the requirements in s. 1006.37, F.S. Also, the Council for Education Policy Research and Improvement must submit a report to the legislative leaders of each chamber, for consideration during the 2005 Legislative Session, on the cost savings to the school districts due to the pilot program. The pilot program is repealed July 1, 2007.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 34-6; House 109-0*

### **CS/SB 184 — Student Discipline and School Safety**

by Education Committee and Senator Lynn

This bill deletes the notice requirement in the code of student conduct of possible disciplinary action or criminal penalties for possession of an electronic telephone pager by a student while he or she is on school property or in attendance at a school function. Notice must be given to all teachers, school personnel, students, and parents at the beginning of each school year that using a wireless communications device to commit a criminal act may result in the imposition of disciplinary action or criminal penalties.

Under the bill, a student may possess a wireless communications device while he or she is on school property or in attendance at a school function. District school boards must adopt rules governing the student's use of a wireless communications device while he or she is on school property or in attendance at a school function.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 39-1; House 116-0*

## **CS/CS/SB 354 — Public School Educational Instruction, including Middle School Reform and Physical Education**

by Appropriations Committee; Education Committee; and Senators Constantine and Cowin

### ***Middle Grades Reform Act***

This bill amends ss. 1008.25 and 1012.34, F.S., and creates s. 1003.415, F.S., the Middle Grades Reform Act, to improve learning for middle school students. The Middle Grades Reform Act contains four initiatives for improving learning for middle school students.

First, the Act requires the Department of Education to recommend a new middle school reading curriculum to the State Board of Education. The new curriculum will be implemented beginning in 2005-2006, with completion of implementation by 2008-2009.

Second, the Act requires every public middle school with fewer than 75 percent of its 6th, 7th, or 8th grade students scoring at level 3 or above on the FCAT reading test to implement a new part of its school improvement plan that will focus primarily on reading. Under this new Rigorous Reading Requirement, schools will identify areas for improvement in the student population, set desired performance levels in those areas, and identify services to help students meet their goals. Results of the school's Rigorous Reading Requirement program will be used as part of the annual evaluation of the school's instructional personnel and administrators.

Third, the Act requires the Department of Education to study ways to improve the performance of middle school students and schools. Based on this study, the Commissioner of Education will submit recommendations on enhancing academic performance to the Legislature and the State Board of Education by December 1, 2004.

Finally, the Act requires that every 6th grade student who scored below Level 3 on the FCAT reading test must have a personalized middle school success plan developed for him or her that will be in place until the student finishes 8th grade or scores at level 3 or better on the reading FCAT, whichever comes first. The plan will note the student's specific weaknesses and identify ways to help them.

The Department of Education will provide technical assistance to school districts in implementing the requirements of the Middle Grades Reform Act.

### ***Physical Education***

The bill also amends ss. 1001.42 and 1012.98, F.S., and creates s. 1003.455, F.S., to add new requirements for K-12 physical education in Florida. The bill first requires that the Department of Education conduct a study to determine the status of physical education instruction in the public schools and develop recommendations for changes to physical education programs. As part of this study, the Department of Education will examine the physical education currently offered by schools and evaluate issues that would require attention in order to implement additional physical education. The Department of Education must report its study findings to the Governor and the Legislature by February 1, 2005. The bill also requires the Department of Education to develop a fitness assessment and support materials for use by school districts.

The bill requires each school district to develop a written physical education policy and deliver a copy of the policy to the Department of Education by December 15, 2004. Any district that does not develop a written policy will be required, at a minimum, to implement a mandatory physical education program for students in kindergarten through grade 5 that provides students with 30 minutes of physical education per day, 3 days per week. The bill also requires student health issues to be included in every school improvement plan.

The bill establishes an internet-based clearinghouse, funded primarily by private sources, for physical education professional development. The Department of Education will approve a state university to develop this clearinghouse, which will be available to all teachers.

### ***Charter Lab School Appropriation***

This bill also contains an appropriation for \$445,000 from the General Revenue Fund to the Florida State University Charter Lab Elementary School in Broward County for the purposes delineated in s. 1002.32(9)(e), F.S.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 114-0*

## **CS/SB 364 — Public K-12 Educational Instruction**

by Education Committee and Senators Constantine, Lynn, Dockery, Crist, and Wilson

### ***Accelerated High School Graduation Programs***

This bill amends s. 1003.429, F.S., to revise accelerated high school graduation provisions set forth in law. It revises the course and required grade requirements for both the college preparatory and career preparatory accelerated high school graduation programs, including adding a requirement that students maintain a 3.0 grade point average to remain in the program. The bill also requires that, prior to choosing a 3-year accelerated high school graduation

program, a student must have achieved at least a reading achievement level of 3, a mathematics achievement level of 3, and a writing score of 3 on the most recent FCAT assessments.

The bill provides notice and consent requirements in connection with the various graduation options. It requires that each student in grades 6 through 9 be informed about the graduation options, including curriculum requirements for those options, and requires students and parents to meet with school personnel to get an explanation of the relative benefits and disadvantages of the various options before choosing a 3-year accelerated graduation program. It also requires students to get the written consent of their parent before choosing a 3-year program.

The bill requires students to choose an accelerated graduation option before the end of 9th grade, but provides certain exceptions for students who weren't able to choose the accelerated option during 9th grade because of illness or because they transferred into the public schools from a private school or from out-of-state.

The bill requires schools to provide specified notices to students and parents if, at the end of grade 10, the student is not on track to graduate, and specifies circumstances under which a student will be moved from a 3-year to the 4-year graduation program. The bill also permits students to use alternative assessments authorized under s. 1008.22(9), F.S., instead of the FCAT, in order to qualify for high school graduation under the accelerated programs. Students already participating in an accelerated high school graduation program will be permitted to continue in their program with all current statutory requirements intact.

### ***Standard High School Graduation Program***

The bill amends s. 1003.43, F.S., to provide that students may use alternative assessments authorized under s. 1008.22(9), F.S., instead of the FCAT, in order to qualify for high school graduation.

### ***Alternative Assessments for High School Graduation***

The bill amends s. 1008.22, F.S., to permit high school students to use ACT and SAT scores concordant to passing scores on the grade 10 FCAT in order to meet statutory requirements for high school graduation. The bill only extends the use of these concordance scores for the 2003-2004 school year. Additionally, students will have to take the grade 10 FCAT at least 3 times before they can rely on concordance scores to graduate; this requirement will not apply, however, to students who are new to the Florida public schools in grade 12.

### ***Classrooms for Kids Program***

The bill amends s. 1013.735, F.S., to revise the factors for determining allocations under the Classrooms for Kids program set forth in law. The bill clarifies that only K-12 capital outlay applies with respect to these allocations.

### ***Remedial Help for K-3 Readers***

The bill amends ss. 1002.20 and 1008.25, F.S., to add new reading remediation for struggling K-3 students. It requires the implementation – primarily by school districts – of several initiatives to remedy reading problems in students who have been retained or are in danger of being retained under the state’s mandatory retention law for 3rd graders.

The bill requires a mandatory review of the academic improvement plan of every student who may be retained because of his or her FCAT scores and requires that an academic portfolio be completed for each of these students. All students who have been retained will be required to receive 90 minutes of daily intensive instruction in reading.

The bill requires that certain specified notices be given to parents, including a written notification when a student will not be promoted that contains information as to why good cause exemptions did not apply to the student. The bill also requires school districts to implement a policy for mid-year promotion of retained students.

Under the bill, each school district will be required to implement a Reading Enhancement and Acceleration Development (READ) Initiative, which will provide intensive instruction to all K-3 students who show a deficiency in reading. The READ Initiative must also provide an intensive acceleration class for 3rd graders who have been retained, but continue to score at level 1 on their FCAT reading test. In this intensive class, students will receive reading instruction as well as instruction in 4th grade content in other areas, to enable them to catch up in other subjects while working on their reading.

The bill corrects current statutory language regarding two of the existing good cause exemptions for promotion. Under current law, two of these good cause exemptions apply to students who were previously retained in kindergarten, grade 1 or grade 2, provided there are certain other specified circumstances present. However, a student subject to these circumstances could also have been previously retained in grade 3, but would not be eligible for the exemptions. Under the bill, a student who had been retained in grade 3 would be permitted to make use of the exemptions as well.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 114-0*

### **HB 769 — Career Education**

by Rep. Jennings (CS/SB 1452 by Education Committee and Senators Bennett and Lynn)

The bill establishes a uniform procedure for calculating FTE at charter technical career centers which are jointly operated by a school district and a community college.

Requirements allowing a student to receive a career education certification on his or her high school diploma are created. The Legislature is authorized to provide incentive funding as a reward to districts which implement such a certification program.

Career education programs must be coordinated with the appropriate industry to insure that programs use technology and training that will meet industry standards.

Each school district is required to evaluate and report to the Department of Education on the provision of guidance services to students.

The Department is required to conduct two studies and report the findings. One study is to evaluate the impact of industry-certified career education programs to determine the performance of students in such programs over time. Among the factors to be examined are graduation rates, retention rates, additional education attainment, employment records, earnings and industry satisfaction. The second study is to determine if a cost factor should be applied to industry-certified career education programs and to review the need for startup funding for such programs. Both studies are to be completed by December 31, 2004.

The bill also requires a joint study by the Agency for Workforce Innovation and the Council for Education Policy Research and Improvement to study the need for new and expanded apprenticeship and other workforce education programs. The joint report is to be submitted by December 31, 2004.

The Commissioner of Education is required to convene a study group to investigate workforce education issues. Specific areas related to career education are identified to be studied. The group's report to the Commissioner is due by October 1, 2004. The Commissioner shall in turn report a summary of the conclusions of the study group to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to the President of the Senate by December 1, 2004.

The bill changes nomenclature throughout existing statutes to delete the term technical education and replace it with career education.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 40-0; House 117-0*

## GENERAL EDUCATION

### **CS/CS/SB 206 — Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

by Appropriations Committee; Governmental Oversight and Productivity Committee; and Senator Fasano

This bill creates the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, which is assigned to the Department of Health. The Council is designed to serve as an advisory and coordinating body in the state, recommending policies that address the needs of deaf, hard-of-hearing, and late-deafened persons. The Council is also directed to recommend ways to improve the coordination of services among the public and private entities that provide services relating to interpreter services, computer aided real-time captioning services, and assistive listening devices, excluding hearing aids. The Council is authorized to provide technical assistance, advocacy, and education. It is required to prepare and file a report on compliance, coordination and other related issues with the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, by January 1, 2005.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 118-0*

### **CS/SB 340 — Florida School Code Rewrite Technical Corrections**

by Education Committee and Senator Constantine

This committee substitute makes technical corrections to the statutes to conform to the passage of the Florida School Code, ch. 2002-387, L.O.F. The committee substitute corrects cross-references and minor technical errors, removes obsolete boards, reconciles school code revisions with other legislation passed contemporaneously with the new school code, and rectifies unintended consequences of the revisions of the new school code.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 117-0*

### **HB 951 — Public Records and Public Meetings Exemption for Florida Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, Inc.**

by State Administration Committee, Rep. Arza, and others (CS/CS/SB 114 by Governmental Oversight and Productivity Committee; Education Committee; and Senator Clary)

This bill creates a public records and public meetings exemption for the Florida Institute of Human and Machine Cognition, Inc., for specified materials and certain portions of meetings of the corporation or its subsidiaries.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 40-0; House 116-0*

### **CS/SB 1090 — Apprenticeship Training**

by Commerce, Economic Opportunities, and Consumer Services Committee and Senator Cowin

The bill revises provisions governing the State Apprenticeship Advisory Council by deleting a requirement that the Governor appoint two nominating councils for the purpose of filling vacancies on the Council.

Current statutory language is amended to conform terminology to a reorganization of the Department of Education.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 113-0*

### **HB 1757 — Carey Baker Freedom Flag Act**

by Education K-12 Committee, Rep. Allen, and others (CS/SB 612 by Military and Veterans' Affairs, Base Protection, and Spaceports Committee and Senators Fasano, Webster, and Cowin)

This bill contains the Carey Baker Freedom Flag Act, which amends s. 1000.06, F.S., to require that the U.S. flag be displayed in each classroom in Florida's public K-20 educational institutions. Each educational institution will be required to acquire all of the flags necessary to meet the bill's requirements, first by soliciting donations and then by allocating funds. A flag will be required to be displayed in each classroom under the bill's requirements by August 1, 2005.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0*

### **HB 1989 — Juvenile Justice Education**

by Education K-20 Committee, Rep. Bogdanoff, and others (CS/SB 2326 by Education Committee and Senators Bennett and Lynn)

This bill requires gender specific programming, models, and services for children in the care and custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice. In addition, the bill requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to conduct an analysis of programs for females to determine if existing programs meet their gender specific needs, the cost of providing the services, and if females charged with status or probation violation offenses could be better served by less costly community-based programs.

The bill provides an increase in the percentage of the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) funds generated by students in juvenile justice programs that must be spent on instructional costs. Also, the bill:

- Requires the Department of Education to select a common student assessment instrument and protocol for measuring student learning gains and student progression;
- Provides for the receipt of all federal funds by eligible juvenile justice programs;
- Requires access by juvenile justice programs to Florida Virtual School courses;
- Provides that juvenile justice teachers are eligible for all teacher recruitment and retention programs;
- Amends the requirements for the career and technical education plan;
- Requires school districts to make the GED Exit Option available to all juvenile justice programs; and
- Requires a workgroup to provide strategies for meeting the requirements under the federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 113-2*

### **CS/CS/SB 2184 — Student Achievement**

by Appropriations Committee; Education Committee; and Senators Miller, Bullard, Garcia, Webster, and Wilson

The bill creates the Florida Partnership for Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement Act to allow the Department of Education (DOE) to contract for the operation of the partnership. The mission of the partnership will be to prepare students for postsecondary success and opportunity, with particular emphasis on minority and underrepresented students. The bill provides legislative intent, PSAT/NMSQT and Preliminary ACT (PLAN) mandatory 10th grade testing, funding for the testing to be contingent upon an appropriation, and the purposes and duties of the Partnership and the DOE, which include the provision of teacher training and professional development for advanced placement or other advanced courses. The bill requires evaluation reports by the Partnership to the DOE. The DOE must provide the Partnership with access to specific data and the Partnership must protect the confidentiality of information.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 118-0*

**CS/SB 2918 — Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind**

by Governmental Oversight and Productivity Committee and Senator Atwater

The bill requires the Auditor General to conduct annual audits of the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and specifies that the Department of Education's Inspector General may examine the activities of the School.

The School is required to comply with all laws and rules generally applicable to state agencies. The bill changes the way the School develops its master plan and establishes conditions for growth into areas around the present campus.

Certain financial accounting and investing statutes relating to the school are amended.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law except as otherwise provided.

*Vote: Senate 38-0; House 112-1*

**PERSONNEL**

**SB 300 — Employees of Public Schools**

by Senators Clary, Dockery, Bullard, and Crist

Senate Bill 300 deletes restriction on who may receive annual payments for accumulated sick leave. The bill also revises restrictions on the amount of payment which an employee may receive for accumulated sick leave when his or her employment terminates.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect on July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 40-0; House 117-0*

**CS/SB 2986 — Educational Personnel**

by Education Committee and Senator Constantine

This bill contains a number of changes to state laws regarding educational personnel, including both instructional and noninstructional personnel.

***Background Screening***

This bill amends ss. 943.0585 and 943.059, F.S., to prohibit applicants for education-related jobs from denying or failing to acknowledge arrests covered by an expunged or sealed criminal record. The bill also amends ss. 1002.33, 1012.32, 1012.55, 1012.56, and 1012.57, F.S., and creates s. 1012.465, F.S., to make clear that background screening is required for all contract employees, instructional and noninstructional personnel, charter and alternative school

employees, and charter school governing board members, and to provide certain recordkeeping requirements.

### ***Teacher Preparation and Training***

The bill amends s. 1004.04, F.S., to revise criteria for admission to approved teacher preparation programs, to require these programs to maintain a certification ombudsman, and to authorize certain postsecondary institutions to develop and implement short-term teacher assistant experiences. It amends ss. 1012.55 and 1012.56, F.S., to revise certain teacher certification provisions. It also creates s. 1004.85, F.S., which authorizes the creation of institutes to offer alternative teacher certification programs and to provide other professional development to educators.

### ***Teacher Retention and Recruitment***

The bill amends s. 1012.05, F.S., to authorize several new initiatives for teacher retention and recruitment. Among these initiatives, the bill requires guidelines for teacher mentors, requires electronic access to professional resources for teachers, creates an Educator Appreciation Week and requires the Commissioner of Education to assist teachers in meeting highly qualified teacher criteria. Additionally, it contains provisions to help ensure that teachers are notified of legislation and rules affecting them.

### ***Teacher Discipline and Treatment***

The bill amends several sections of law to change provisions regarding teacher discipline and treatment. In part, it permits the Education Practices Commission to suspend teaching certificates for 5 years and provides that a person who is suspended or has a revoked certificate cannot be employed in any capacity that requires contact with students. It also requires that certificates be revoked after the third offense by an educator that results in sanctions.

The bill revises provisions regarding investigations of certified teachers as well as applicants for certification, and it adds new requirements for educators who are on probation. It permits applicants for certification to participate in the educator recovery network program and provides that participation in the recovery network program may be voluntary or mandatory. The bill makes procedural changes to the recovery network program and to the operations of the Education Practices Commission.

### ***Other***

The bill amends s. 1012.231, F.S., to delay the implementation of the BEST teacher program until 2005-2006. It also amends s. 1012.01, F.S., to specify that the term “instructional personnel” includes K-12 personnel only, and reenacts four other sections of law to incorporate this clarified definition. The bill amends ss. 1012.35 and 1012.39, F.S., to adopt new

requirements and training provisions for substitute teachers, and amends s. 1012.33, F.S., to ensure that certain personnel will receive credit for all years of teaching service for pay purposes. It also amends s. 1012.34, F.S., to reiterate that school districts may use a variety of criteria to assess instructor performance. It creates s. 1012.561, F.S., to require certified educators to maintain a current address with the Department of Education.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 103-4*

## **FUNDING**

### **CS/SB 1212 — Tax Levy/School Buses**

by Education Committee and Senators Wise, Bullard, and Lynn

The bill authorizes school districts which contract with private providers for student transportation, to pay for a certain portion of the cost of the transportation from the district's 2 mill levy revenue. A formula based on the cost of the state contract for school buses is established to determine how much may be paid from the 2 mill revenue. This change in statute gives the contracting districts use of 2 mill funds in the same way as districts which have chosen to provide transportation services without contracting with private providers.

This makes permanent provisions allowed in proviso of the General Appropriations Act for FY 2003-2004.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 37-0; House 118-0*

### **SB 2810 — State University Student Athletic Fees**

by Senator Alexander

This bill authorizes a state university to increase its athletic fee to defray the costs associated with changing athletic divisions within the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The athletic fee increase may not exceed \$2 per credit hour and must be approved by the athletic fee committee. The athletic fee increase is exempt from the requirement that the sum of the activity and service, health, and athletic fees may not exceed 40 percent of tuition. In addition, the increase in the athletic fee is exempt from the 5 percent per year cap on increases in the aggregate sum of the activity and service, health, and athletic fees.

The amount of the increase in the athletic fee that causes the sum of the activity and service, health, and athletic fees to exceed the 40 percent and 5 percent per year cap may not be included for purposes of calculating the award a student receives under a Bright Futures Scholarship.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law.

*Vote: Senate 36-0; House 81-37*

## **CS/SB 3000 — Charter Schools**

by Education Committee and Senator Diaz de la Portilla

The committee substitute revises the authorized purposes of charter schools to include the mitigation of the impact of growth in a residential development. The committee substitute allows certain charter schools access to educational impact fees for facilities construction. After all charter schools in a feeder system of charter schools are approved, the committee substitute authorizes the feeder system to be treated as one charter.

The committee substitute requires the Department of Education to conduct a study of transportation issues relating to charter schools.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect July 1, 2004.

*Vote: Senate 27-12; House 93-25*

## **UNIVERSAL PREKINDERGARTEN**

### **HB 821 — Early Childhood Education**

by Rep. Barreiro and others (CS/CS/SB 3036 by Appropriations Committee; Education Committee; and Senators Carlton, Constantine, Cowin, and Lynn)

The bill creates the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program within the Department of Education. The program allows a parent to enroll his or her child in a voluntary, free prekindergarten program provided by the state during the year before the child is eligible for admission to kindergarten. The VPK program gives parents of eligible children a choice among three program options:

- A 540-hour prekindergarten program delivered by a child development provider that is accredited by specified accrediting organizations or that meets or exceeds Gold Seal Quality Care program standards, that has a director with a prekindergarten director credential, and that has for each class a teacher who has at least a Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent credential and completes a 5-clock-hour course in emergent literacy training;
- A 300-hour summer prekindergarten program delivered by a public school that has at least one Florida-certified teacher for every 10 prekindergarten students; or
- A 540-hour school-year prekindergarten program delivered by a public school in school districts that meet class-size reduction requirements and that have sufficient educational

facilities and capital outlay funds to continue reducing the class sizes in elementary school classrooms in accordance with class-size reduction requirements.

The bill directs the Department of Education to adopt performance standards for the VPK program. Each child development provider or public school may select or design its own curriculum for the VPK program if the curriculum addresses the Department of Education's performance standards, including emergent literacy. However, if any child development provider or public school fails for 2 consecutive years to maintain an 85-percent kindergarten readiness rate based upon results from the statewide kindergarten screening, the provider or public school would be subject to corrective actions, including the required use of a curriculum approved by the Department of Education. The bill establishes a phase-in schedule for replacing the current school readiness uniform screening instrument (i.e., Early Screening Inventory-Kindergarten or "ESI-K") with new statewide kindergarten screening instruments. The bill also authorizes the Department of Education to immediately begin administration of new screening instruments, in addition to the ESI-K, if the new instruments are administered statewide.

The bill creates a summer prekindergarten demonstration program in 10 counties throughout the state during summer 2004. The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability must conduct a study of the demonstration program before the Legislature's 2005 Regular Session.

The bill transfers the existing school readiness system from the Florida Partnership for School Readiness to the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI). The bill specifies that AWI would be directly responsible for state-level coordination of the school readiness program and the school readiness coalitions, which the bill renames as regional child development boards. The bill reduces the number of regional boards from 50 to 30 or fewer boards and requires each board to serve at least 2,000 children in the school readiness program. The bill also revises the membership of the regional child development boards, establishes that the chair and two additional members of the boards shall be appointed by the Governor, prohibits board members from voting when they have a conflict of interest, and ensures that more than one-third of the board members will be private-sector business members who do not have a substantial financial interest in the VPK program or the board's school readiness program.

The bill creates the Florida Child Development Advisory Council within the Department of Education to advise both the department and AWI on child development policy, including the VPK program and school readiness programs.

If approved by the Governor, these provisions take effect upon becoming law, except as otherwise expressly provided in the bill.

*Vote: Senate 39-0; House 78-40*