

Legislative Session Update

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Amendments, Bills and Budgets...oh my!

On Tuesday, April 23, Budget Conference began. There were high expectations that the Florida College System (FCS) would receive a significant bump. The House increased their higher education allocation by \$135M, but the Senate decreased theirs by \$145M. A brief breakdown is provided in the chart below. It is important to note that the recurring \$2.5M provided by the legislature last year was not provided as was an additional \$3.1M for Florida Retirement System (FRS) contributions. The FRS contribution funds are not guaranteed each year, so each college will still have pay its share toward the FRS without the help of those additional funds. The Senate had requested \$40M for student success initiatives ("2+2" and "Work Florida") but in the end they came to the House position of only \$30M.

Each college's funding from these two initiatives can be found on pages 38 and 39 of [SB 2500](#). The House and Senate also agreed to \$10M for general operating and \$10M for compression for a total of \$20M. The Senate had originally requested a total of \$38M (\$15.5M in compression and \$22.5M for general operating). Additionally, the legislature moved funds from the EETF (Lottery) fund to General Revenue (GR), so colleges will receive more funds in July instead of February. The Legislature did maintain the \$550,000 for dual enrollment instructional materials. Because the Legislature removed the \$60M (\$30M State / \$30M Institutional investments), the only incentive/performance funds received by the colleges will be the \$30M for student success initiatives. For some colleges, this will come as a hit to their budgets

based on their former Gold or Silver status. The Legislature appropriated \$280M total in PECO funds plus \$42.4M in GR for Fixed Capital Outlay (FCO) projects. They are broken down as follows:

- \$107.2M for Universities (\$67.8M for Universities from PECO funds plus \$39.4M from GR for FCO projects)
- \$11.3M for FCS (\$2.1M from PECO funds and \$3M from GR for Daytona, \$4.2M for IRSC; \$2M for Manatee-Sarasota)
- \$158.2M for Charter Schools
- \$0 for Public Schools
- \$0 for Maintenance (Sum of the Digits) for any school
- \$46M in Special School Projects (i.e. University Lab Schools, Division of Blind Services, etc.)

Final 2019-20 Budget at a Glance

The final budget shows a total of \$1,255,757,765, which is a \$27,216,762 or 2.2% increase over the prior year.

	Proposed HOUSE	Proposed SENATE	FINAL Budget
CAPE Performance	\$ 14,000,000	\$ 15,000,000	Agreed: \$14M
Program Fund—Total	\$ 1,147,130,083	\$ 1,221,304,321 \$38M operational increase (\$15.5M Compression and \$22.5M Program Fund Formula) Difference of \$74,174,238	Agreed: \$10M – Compression \$10M – General Operating
Performance Funding	\$ 60,000,000 \$30M state / \$30M institutional (same as last year)	\$ 40,000,000 \$28M for "2+2" and \$12M for Work Florida	Agreed: \$20M for 2+2 \$10M for Work Florida
Dual Enrollment Instructional Materials	\$550,000	\$550,000	\$550,000
TOTAL	\$ 1,222,663,265	\$ 1,277,837,503	\$ 1,255,757,765

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST

Brief Overview:

On Saturday, May 4, the Legislature passed the only bill it is constitutionally required to pass, **SB 2500**—a balanced budget. Budget Conference lasted through Wednesday, May 1, and due to the statutory requirement of a 72-hour cooling off period, the earliest the legislature could vote on the budget was 1:30pm on May 4. It is a \$91.1 billion budget, the largest budget in Florida's history—a significant increase from last year's \$88.7 billion budget.

Appropriations

HB 5501: Higher Education/Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO)

Sponsor: Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee; Rep. Randy Fine

House Bill 5501 was indefinitely postponed and withdrawn from further consideration. It was never brought up for consideration by either the full House or Senate.

HB 5501 would have limited the ability of colleges and universities to transfer state funds to any other fund within the institution (i.e. Fund 1 to Fund 7) or direct support organization (DSO) without specific authorization from the Legislature. Beginning July 1, 2019, college transfers of any state appropriation to DSOs with a fund balance of greater than \$50 million could only include funds pledged for capital projects.

The bill would have authorized universities and colleges to use their carry forward funds each year for operations, maintenance, or to finish previously funded PECO projects. While the Division of Florida Colleges currently has a method by which it ranks Fixed Capital Outlay projects, this bill required the Board of Governors and State Board of Education to develop a points based methodology to rank projects for recommendation for funding.

HB 5501 provides that any new construction, renovation or remodeling project that has not received an appropriation in a previous year may only be considered for the prioritized list if:

- The institution has allocated funding equal to no less than 10 percent (for Colleges), or 15 percent (for State Universities) of the total project cost or the project is needed to preserve the safety of persons using the facility or the project is consistent with a strategic legislative initiative;
- A plan is provided to reserve an amount of funds in an escrow account, specific to the project, into which shall be deposited each year an amount equal to 3 percent of the building's value for future maintenance; and
- There is sufficient PECO cash which is not needed to complete previously funded previously PECO projects.

The bill modifies standards for calculating space needs by colleges and universities. The current utilization rate representing "100% utilized" consists of classrooms that are 60% occupied for 40 hours per week. The bill changes utilization rates for classrooms to 80% occupied for 60 hours per week to be considered fully utilized, and for teaching lab space to be 85% utilized for 40 hours a week. A more detailed summary of the bill that died can be found [here](#).

Senate Bill 190 was the bill that passed that included compromised PECO prioritization language.

Appropriations continued...

HB 4909: The Florida College System Self-Insurance Consortium

Sponsor: Rep. Elizabeth Anne Fetterhoff

This bill is an appropriations request on behalf of the Florida College System. Through the FCS self-insurance consortium, the FCS requested support through this bill for extraordinary losses from the last two hurricane seasons along with other losses associated with fires, floods, and tornadoes that impact various colleges over the last few years. The total cost requested is \$18.67M.

The bill was not considered by the full House; however, on Monday, April 1, the appropriation request was placed into the proposed Senate Budget, SB 2500 on page 6—Line Item 18, through an amendment that was filed by Sen. Rob Bradley, the Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman. It provided \$18,668,823 in nonrecurring funds from the PECO and Debt Service Trust Fund for the Florida College System Risk Management Insurance Consortium.

Unfortunately, this request did not make it through Budget Conference and was not placed in the agreed upon final budget.

SB 190: Education

Sponsor: Sen. Kelli Stargel

Senate Bill 190 became the vehicle for numerous pieces of legislation. It also became the bill of contention during the last week of Session. A strike-all amendment passed the Senate Appropriations Committee on April 18 (the staff analysis can be found [here](#)), Following some small amendments on the Floor of the Senate, it passed by a unanimous vote and was sent to the House. It was expected that the House would pass the strike-all, as it was thought to be an agreed upon policy bill that included some PECO provisions from HB 5501. That, however, was not the case. The House stripped the language from SB 190 and filed an amendment that would have made any fund balance transfers approved by each college institution's local District Board of Trustees subject to approval or amendment by the State Board of Education (SBE). The summary of what the amendment would have done can be found [here](#). The House sent back a completely new amended SB 190 to which the Senate did not concur and sent it back to the House. Behind closed doors, a deal was made on revised policy, so the Senate requested the bill back from the House to put it into proper posture to amend it one final time. So, in the final hours of the Legislative Session on Friday, May 3, the Senate amended the bill by removing the fund balance approval language and added back important provisions from the prior version.

The [Senate-amended SB 190](#) passed the Senate 39-0 and then the House 109-0.

With regards to the FCS, the final version provides the following:

- Includes PECO project prioritization and point system guidelines, which includes FCS institutions to set aside 0.5% of the cost for each fixed capital outlay project into an escrow account for future building maintenance needs;
- No longer includes reverse transfer language;
- Prohibits Direct-Support Organizations (DSOs) from giving a gift to a political action committee;

SB 190 continued...

- Includes “2+2” Targeted Pathway Articulation Agreements with SUS institutions;
- Includes Bright Futures Scholarship provisions;
- Removes \$15M CAPE industry certification cap;
- Requires FCS institutions with an FTE less than 15,000 FTE to maintain a 5% balance;
 - ⇒ A spending plan must be submitted to the SBE if the college goes over 5% or a plan on how to get to 5% if the college is has not yet attained that percentage.
- Requires FCS institutions with an FTE greater than 15,000 FTE to maintain a 7% balance;
 - ⇒ A spending plan must be submitted to the SBE if the college goes over 7% and a plan on how to get to 7% if the college is has not yet attained that percentage.

This bill is subject to the Governor’s approval.

Dual Enrollment

HB 189 / SB 1342: Postsecondary Education for Secondary Students

Sponsors: Rep. Ardian Zika and Sen. Kelli Stargel

On Monday, April 29, the Florida House passed House Bill 189 by a 113-0 vote with two additional amendments:

1. An additional \$550,000 in recurring funds would be added to dual enrollment for instructional materials.
2. Any public postsecondary institution that uses technology to provide dual enrollment courses and has a total number of dual enrolled students of at least 25% of the institution’s total FTE or total headcount enrollment would receive an appropriation of a fulltime faculty member’s salary and benefits. The institution would also receive an additional appropriation of the same amount for each 100 students served above the 25% threshold.

House Bill 189 would have authorized private schools, in addition to charter schools, to establish an early college program with a state college, state university, or other eligible postsecondary institution. The bill would have required instructional materials be made available to private school dual enrollment students, in addition to public school and home education dual enrollment students, free of charge. There’s also a reporting requirement regarding the total and average number of career dual enrollment clock hours and certificates earned for each dual enrollment articulation agreement it entered into during the previous year. Lastly, the bill would have allowed colleges to request a 1-year waiver, similar to language in SB 1342, from the prohibition on limiting student participation in dual enrollment programs, subject to approval by the Commissioner of Education, for any space/capacity issues.

The bill sponsor, Rep. Zika, again admitted during committee that there would be a cost to colleges. Rep. Fine stated that the Colleges had the funds available to provide for this additional cost.

[HB 189 / SB 1342 continued...](#)

House Bill 189 would have renamed the “collegiate high school program” to the “early college acceleration program” and expanded the program from 1 to 2 years. It would have deleted the requirement for a separate early college program contract and required each dual enrollment articulation agreement between a Florida College System institution and a school district to establish at least

one early college program. The bill would have exempted private schools from paying for tuition for their dual enrolled students. Colleges already absorb the tuition cost for dual enrolled home school students.

Currently, FCS institutions serve close to 3,000 private school dual enrolled students. Most tuition costs for dual enrollment include \$71.98 per credit hour. If the cost per credit hour is multiplied by 3, the cost per course is close to \$216. If the cost for a class is multiplied by 3,000 students, the amount is approximately \$648,000. An estimated number of classes has not yet been identified, but if one student takes a course per semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer), then the colleges would absorb close to \$1,944,000.

The House and Senate agreed to keep the \$550,000 in recurring funds to help offset some of the home school instructional materials costs.

Senate Bill 1342 would have modified Florida law regarding student eligibility criteria for participating in dual enrollment by changing the GPA requirement from 3.0 to 2.5. It is important to note that current law, Ch. 1007.271(3), Florida Statutes, states student eligibility requirements for initial and continued enrollment in career certificate dual enrollment courses is a 2.0 unweighted high school GPA. Language regarding the 2.5 GPA in SB 1342 only pertains to courses taken for college credit dual enrollment courses. A more in depth summary of SB 1342 can be found [here](#).

Senate Bill 1342 got stuck in the Senate Appropriations Committee. Therefore, HB 189 and SB 1342 died, and the dual enrollment language was not amended onto any other bills.

[Workforce Education](#)

[SB 522: Apprenticeship Programs](#)

Sponsor: Sen. Manny Diaz, Jr.

Senate Bill 522 would have established a new reporting requirement and funding source to expand apprenticeship and preapprenticeship opportunities. Specifically, the bill would have required the Department of Education (DOE) to report specified information to the Legislature and the State Apprentice Advisory Council regarding apprenticeship and preapprenticeship training in Florida. The bill also would have required DOE to provide information on its website explaining how a Florida College System institution or a school district may assume the responsibilities of a local education agency for the purposes of administering an apprenticeship program. This legislation would have created the Florida Apprenticeship Grant (FLAG) Program, which provides eligibility for grant awards to registered apprenticeship program sponsors who do not require assistance from a career educational institution.

Senate Bill 522 died, as it got stuck in the full Appropriations Committee; however, some similar workforce language was amended onto [HB 7071](#).

Workforce Education continued...

HB 661 / SB 770: Alternative High School Graduation Requirements

Sponsor: Rep. Wyman Duggan and Sen. Travis Hutson

Even though **HB 661** was never heard in any committees, language from **HB 661** can be found in **HB 7071**, which is the workforce legislation that passed both the House and Senate. Provisions from **HB 661** include the creation of a career and technical education (CTE) pathway option that would allow for eligible students to acquire a CTE diploma instead of a traditional standard high school diploma. The courses must result in a program completion and an industry certification. Additionally, the legislation requires principles to meet and discuss with students, who have a cumulative grade point average that falls below 2.0, CTE pathway options.

On Thursday, April 18, **SB 770** was amended to include additional CTE pathway graduation requirements and reverse transfer language that would award AA degrees to students who transferred early to an SUS institution but completed 30+ credit hours at an FCS institution but had met requirements for an AA degree while at the university.

SB 770 modifies the 24-credit pathway for earning a standard high school diploma by revising computer science credit substitution for mathematics or science credits, and creates a mechanism for the review of the sufficiency of career education course standards to meet the Algebra I credit requirement. Receipt of a standard high school diploma awarded through the CTE pathway option requires the student's successful completion of at least 18 credits.

The legislation revises the acceleration mechanism component for the school grade calculation for high schools by specifying that dual enrollment courses include career clock-hour dual enrollment courses. **The Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Program was amended out of SB 770, but in the end, the Grant Program was passed in HB 7071 along with a \$10,000,000 appropriation in the final budget on page 36.** This program would enable high school and Florida College System institutions to offer applied learning opportunities for students in high-demand career pathways linked to occupations that will provide students with middle-level and high-level wages. The Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant Program could also be found in [Senate Bill 1588](#), relating to Enhancing Florida's Workforce, by Sen. Diaz.

The amended language now includes the "SAIL to 60" Initiative, which can also be found in **HB 7071**, and creates the Florida Apprenticeship Grant (FLAG) Program to provide competitive grants to expand and enhance apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs. **The FLAG Program did not succeed in any passed legislation.**

The bill increases from 15 to 30, the limit on the number of CAPE Digital Tool Certificates that must be identified annually. Additionally, the legislation restores middle grades career education and planning course requirements which were eliminated in 2017, with some modifications.

It requires district school boards to declare a "College and Career Decision Day" to recognize high school seniors and encourage them to prepare for college and pursue advanced career pathways. The bill also requires DOE to provide assistance to specified entities in notifying students, parents, and members of the community about apprenticeship and preapprenticeship opportunities. Much of the language in **SB 770** can be found in **HB 7055** and **HB 7071**.

SB 770 was passed as HB 7071 and is awaiting the Governor's signature. Should the Governor approve the legislation, the effective date is July 1, 2019.

[Workforce Education continued...](#)

HB 7055: Career Education

Sponsors: PreK-12 Innovation Subcommittee; Rep. Wyman Duggan; and Rep. Ralph Massullo, Jr.

According to legislative staff, HB 7055 was crafted in order to help meet growing workforce demand and provide students flexibility and options to pursue advanced career pathways.

On April 16, the House Education Committee heard and passed by a unanimous vote a strike-all amendment along with two additional amendments. **House Bill 7055, however, was not brought up for consideration by the full House and died, but numerous provisions in the bill can be found in HB 7071.**

In addition to secondary education changes to career education courses, HB 7055 would require academic advising, which would include information on the opportunities to enroll in career education programs for students whose GPA drops below a 2.0 in high schools. The bill specifies that, for purposes of school grades, the acceleration component may include the completion of career dual enrollment courses totaling at least 450 hours and the completion of a registered preapprenticeship program totaling at least 300 hours. It also states that the career dual enrollment agreement between a career center and high school must determine how transportation will be provided to students who are unable to provide their own transportation. It also requires the Commissioner of Education to annually review K-12 and postsecondary career and technical education offerings and phase out programs that are not aligned to industry needs or do not provide medium- and high-wage jobs.

It is important to note that significant portions of HB 7055 were amended onto HB 7071 in the House Education Committee. A more in-depth summary can be found [here](#).

The legislation requires the Department of Education to provide assistance in increasing public awareness of apprenticeship and preapprenticeship opportunities and eliminates industry certifications that are not aligned to industry needs.

Similar to SB 770 and HB 7071, HB 7055 establishes a “College and Career Decision Day” to recognize high school seniors for their postsecondary education and career plans. It also doubles the cap on career and professional education (CAPE) Digital Tool certificates the State Board of Education may identify for weighted FTE funding and reestablishes a middle grades career planning course requirement.

HB 7071: Postsecondary Workforce Education

Sponsor: Higher Education & Career Readiness Subcommittee; Rep. Amber Mariano

House Bill 7071 promotes apprenticeships and creates the “Strengthening Alignment between Industry and Learning (SAIL) to 60” Initiative and establishing a statewide attainment goal to increase the percentage of working-age adults (ages 25-64) who hold a high-value postsecondary certificate, degree, or training experience to 60 percent by the year 2030. The legislation renames the Higher Education Coordinating Council (HECC) as the Florida Talent Development Council, revising its membership, and would require the council to develop a strategic plan for talent development in Florida.

HB 7071 continued...

The bill revises the statutory characteristics of an apprenticeable occupation and modifies the requirements for the two public members appointed to the State Apprenticeship Council by the Governor to be independent of any joint or non-joint organizations. It also redefines “journeymen” as “journeyworkers” and includes special provisions for veterans, minorities, and women in apprenticeship programs.

Additionally, statewide articulation agreements must provide for a reverse transfer agreement for FCS AA degree-seeking students who transfer to a state university prior to earning their associate in arts degree. Similar reverse transfer language is found in HB 839 and SB 770.

House Bill 7071 also requires that each career center and FCS institution with overlapping service areas execute and annually submit to DOE a career pathways agreement for each certificate program offered by the career center. The bill requires each school district and FCS institution receiving state appropriations for workforce education programs to maintain adequate and accurate records for funding and expenditures.

The bill includes the creation of a career and technical education (CTE) pathway option that would allow for eligible students to acquire a CTE diploma instead of a traditional standard high school diploma. Additionally, the legislation includes a “College and Career Decision Day” to recognize seniors in their postsecondary education plans and encourage career pathways through industry certifications.

The Commissioner of Education, under this bill, will conduct an annual review of both K-12 and postsecondary CTE offerings to determine how well the existing programs align with employer demand. Using the findings from this annual review, the Commissioner will phase out any CTE programs that are not aligned with the needs of employers or do not provide program completers with middle or high-wage occupation.

The bill allows for School Boards to authorize the use of vehicles other than school buses to be used for transportation to and from school sites for students who participate in a career education program that is not offered at the high school. Career pathways agreements between career centers and FCS institutions is also included in the bill.

One area that had been mentioned numerous times throughout Session was assisting those students who had left the postsecondary institution just prior to completing a degree. This bill establishes the Last Mile College Completion Program. This program would assist with awarding the cost of in-state tuition and required fees of students who are Florida residents who have been enrolled in an accredited postsecondary institution within 8 years and were within 12 credit hours of completing.

HB 7071 was the workforce education vehicle. It passed both the House and Senate unanimously and is now heading to the Governor for his signature. Should the Governor approve the bill, it will take effect on July 1, 2019.

Reverse Transfer

HB 839: Higher Education

Sponsor: Rep. Ray Rodrigues

On April 9, HB 839 passed the House Education Committee by a vote of 14-1 (Rep. Valdes) with 10 amendments. In addition to some amendments to the SUS, the amended language now requires the Commissioner of Education to provide recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Legislature for future consideration on the most efficient process to achieve a complete performance-based, continuous improvement model that provides for the equitable distribution of performance funds to FCS institutions. It also requires that SUS and FCS institutions establish a “2+2” targeted pathway program. The “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement must provide students who graduate with an AA degree and who meet specified requirements guaranteed access to the state university and a baccalaureate degree program at that university. **This language can be found in SB 190.**

According to the [staff analysis](#), the bill requires the Board of Governors and the SBE to annually report on the intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity at each SUS and FCS institution by conducting a survey of students, faculty and administrators. The survey must be selected or created by the BOG and the SBE and be objective, non-partisan, and statistically valid. The survey must be used by each institution to assess the extent to which members of the state university and state college community feel comfortable expressing their beliefs and viewpoints on campus and in the classroom. The first report must be published by September 1, 2020 and annually thereafter.

This legislation requires that the statewide articulation agreement between the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors provides for a reverse transfer agreement for FCS associate in arts degree-seeking students who transfer to a state university early or prior to earning their associate in arts (AA) degree. If a student earned a majority of the credit hours toward an AA degree from an FCS institution, then the student must be awarded this degree by that FCS institution upon completion of the degree requirements at the state university. Similar reverse transfer language can also be found in [SB 1296](#) by Sen. Diaz, SB 1308, HB 1407, and HB 7071.

On April 25, HB 839 was amended on the House Floor with Anti-Semitism language, the same language that can be found in [HB 741](#). While HB 741 is awaiting the Governor’s signature, HB 839 was temporarily postponed on Third Reading in the House and died.

SB 1308 / HB 1407: Pathways to College and Career Success / Postsecondary Education

Sponsors: Sen. Keith Perry and Rep. Mel Ponder

On April 9, SB 1308 was heard in the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Education and passed as a Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) by a unanimous vote. The amended reverse transfer language allows This legislation requires the Commissioner of Education (commissioner) to conduct an annual review of career and technical education offerings in the K-12 education system, career centers, and the FCS to determine their alignment with employer demand, postsecondary degree or certificate programs, and industry certifications. As a result of the review, the commissioner must phase out programs not aligned to the needs of employers or do not provide completers with middle- or higher-wage jobs. This review will also encourage school districts and FCS

[SB 1308 / HB 1407 continued...](#)

institutions to offer new programs that are in demand by employers.

This legislation allows state university students to request an associate in arts (AA) degree if he or she has completed at least 25 percent of the credits toward an AA at the FCS institution, then the FCS institution will award the degree.

The bill also creates the “Last Mile Scholarship” program in the Department of Education (DOE) for the 2019-2020 academic year. The scholarship awards the cost of in-state tuition and fees to Florida residents who are in good standing, have earned credit at a state university or FCS institution within eight years of application, and are within 12 credit hours of completing a first associate or baccalaureate degree. A more detailed staff analysis can be found [here](#). **This language can be found in HB 7071.**

House Bill 1407 includes the provisions stated above including performance funding for dual enrollment and collegiate high school programs for FCS institutions. This funding is contingent upon a for specific appropriation in the state budget. In this bill, each FCS institution would be provided \$1,000 for each home education and private school student who completes at least one course through a dual enrollment program. Each FLCS institution would also receive \$1,000 for each student who earns an AA degree through a collegiate high school program.

House Bill 1407 has yet to be heard in any of its referred committees.

SB 1308 died in Senate Appropriations, and HB 1407 died in its first referenced committee.

[Direct Support Organizations \(DSO\)](#)

[SB 1744 / HB 7051: Higher Education](#)

Sponsors: Sen. Dennis Baxley and Rep. Cord Byrd

Senate Bill 1744 requires the State Board of Education to establish criteria for the review and approval of new facilities and programs at Florida College System institutions to ensure the well-planned development, coordination, and operation of the Florida College System and to avoid duplication of facilities or programs.

This legislation also includes DSO language that would restrict the authority of our local Boards of Trustees to transfer college funds to our foundations for personal services. DSOs would also be restricted from using state funds for travel expenses. Additionally, beginning July 1, 2019, college transfers of any state appropriation to DSOs with a fund balance of greater than \$50 million may only include funds pledged for capital projects. This language is also included in HB 5501.

Additionally, the bill restricts FCS institutions and their DSOs from constructing, accepting, or purchasing property or facilities if general revenue funds will be required for operation or maintenance upon project completion or in subsequent years of operation, unless the Legislature grants approval. Also included in SB 1744 and HB 7051 is the prohibition of FCS boards of trustees to authorize the use of state funds for travel expenses by any FCS institution DSO.

There is also language that removes a current prohibition against the giving of any gift, either directly or indirectly, to a political committee by a FCS institution DSO. Similar language can be found in SB 190.

[SB 1744 / HB 7051 continued...](#)

SB 1744 would require the Commissioner of Education to report to the State Board of Education any findings by the Auditor General that a district school board or Florida College System institution is acting without statutory authority or contrary to state law. The State Board of Education shall require the district school board or Florida College System institution board of trustees to document compliance with the law.

In addition to the content contained in SB 1744, HB 7051 would require all FCS institutions to report annually to the Legislature the amount of state appropriations transferred to any DSO during the previous fiscal year, the purpose for which the funds were transferred and the remaining balance of funds transferred. A more detailed analysis on HB 7051 can be found [here](#).

SB 1744 was never heard in any committees, and while HB 7051 passed the House 114-0, it was not taken up for consideration by the Senate and both bills died.

[Articulation](#)

[SB 194: Higher Education](#)

Sponsors: Sen. Kelli Stargel

On March 19, the Senate Education Committee unanimously passed SB 194, legislation that would establish the “2+2” targeted pathway program. Specifically, the bill requires that by the 2019-2020 academic year, each college must execute at least one “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement with one or more state universities. In the same token, each state university must execute at least one “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement with one or more colleges. The legislation requires the “2+2” targeted pathway articulation agreement to provide students who graduate with an AA degree and who meet specified requirements guaranteed access to the state university and a baccalaureate degree program at that university, in accordance with the terms of the agreement.

[SB 194 died in Senate Appropriations but similar language regarding “2+2” targeted pathways can be found in SB 190.](#)

[Intercollegiate Athletics](#)

[HB 789 / SB 798: Florida College System Institutions Offering Baccalaureate Degree Programs / Baccalaureate Degree Access](#)

Sponsors: Rep. Rene Plasencia and Sen. Debbie Mayfield

HB 789 and SB 798 authorize FCS institutions that offer one or more baccalaureate degree programs the ability to participate in 4-year intercollegiate athletics. The bills would allow students enrolled in a 4-year baccalaureate program at an FCS institution to compete in their sport for 4-years without having to transfer to another institution. Additionally, under the governance of a four-year athletic governing body, a college’s athletic program could offer additional scholarships based on the governing body’s guidelines.

[Both bills died in their respective last committees of reference. No other bills consisted of similar intercollegiate athletics language.](#)

Military / Veterans

HB 217 / SB 442: Postsecondary Education for Certain Military Personnel

Sponsors: Reps. Adam Hattersley & Mel Ponder and Sen. Tom Lee

This legislation would require the Board of Governors to adopt regulations and the State Board of Education to adopt rules to create a uniform system to enable servicemembers and veterans of the United States Armed Forces to earn academic college credit at public postsecondary educational institutions for college-level training, education, and experience acquired in the military. The legislation would authorize an institution to award credit even if it is not for the purpose of earning a degree or certification.

It would also require state universities, FCS institutions, career centers operated by a school district, and charter technical centers to waive the transcript fee for active duty members and honorably discharged veterans of the United States Armed Forces, and their spouses and dependents.

Both HB 217 and SB 442 have each passed their referred committees by unanimous votes and are now ready to be brought up for consideration on each respective Chamber's Floor.

After passing all committees of reference, HB 217 was not brought up for consideration by the full House and subsequently died. Senate Bill 442 died in Messages after passing the Senate 40-0.

HB 501 / SB 1518: Alternative Treatment Options for Veterans

Sponsors: Rep. Mel Ponder and Sen. Tom Wright

This legislation permits the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) to contract with a state university or Florida College System institution to provide alternative treatment options for veterans who have been certified by the VA, or any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, as having a Traumatic Brain Injury or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Additionally, the bill requires alternative treatment services to be provided under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician, osteopathic physician, chiropractic physician, nurse, psychologist, or a clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist or mental health counselor. The alternative treatment options include: accelerated resolution therapy, equine therapy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, music therapy, and service animal training therapy.

HB 501 adds military sexual trauma that has led to PTSD to the list of ailments by which veterans are suffering and who could be eligible for alternative therapy treatments. SB 1518 still contains the same content as HB 501 but adds a nurse as an authorized individual to supervise the alternative treatment services.

HB 501 passed the House 114-0 on April 17. On May 1 HB 501 was substituted for SB 1518 and passed the Senate 40-0 on May 2. It is now awaiting the Governor's signature. Should the Governor sign the bill into law, it will become effective on July 1, 2019.

Charter Schools

HB 1197 / SB 1668: Charter Schools / School Choice

Sponsors: Rep. Jason Fischer and Sen. Travis Hutson

House Bill 1197 authorizes state universities and Florida College System (FCS) institutions to sponsor charter schools. Present limitations on charter schools operated by an FCS institution with a teacher preparation program are repealed. The bill provides that the board of trustees of a sponsoring state university or FCS institution is a local educational agency for the purpose of receiving federal funds and accepting responsibility for all requirements in the role.

The legislation also establishes operational funding and capital outlay funding formulas for charter schools sponsored by a state university and FCS institution. For a more detailed summary, please click [here](#).

Senate Bill 1668 was never heard in any committees and subsequently died.

House Bill 1197 passed the House 74-37 but died in Messages in the Senate.

Fee Waivers

HB 593 / SB 1164: Postsecondary Fee Waivers

Sponsors: Rep. Jay Trumbull and Sen. George Gainer

This legislation would allow FCS institutions that choose to implement the out-of-state fee waiver, may do so for a period of 3 years, beginning 180 days after the impact of the hurricane. The bills would authorize FCS institutions that serve counties directly impacted by a hurricane, and who experience an enrollment decrease by more than 10 percent as a result, to waive out-of-state fees. FCS students who qualify for the waiver are eligible to receive the waiver for up to 110 percent of the total number of credit hours required for the degree or certificate program in which the student is enrolled.

It also provides that a student only remains eligible to receive the out-of-state fee waiver if he or she does not disenroll from the institution for more than one semester, and out-of-state students enrolled under this fee waiver would not be included in the enrollment totals for these institutions by the Education Estimating Conference on Florida College System enrollment.

This legislation was drafted to assist FCS institutions serving in Hurricane Michael affected counties and are experiencing enrollment reductions as a result of the hurricane's widespread damage. The out-of-state fee waiver can assist affected FCS institutions to recruit out-of-state students to the institution.

The following Florida College System (FCS) institutions serve Hurricane Michael affected counties:

- Chipola College (Calhoun, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, and Washington counties).
- Gulf Coast State College (Bay, Franklin and Gulf counties).
- North Florida Community College (Taylor County).
- Tallahassee Community College (Gadsden, Leon, and Wakulla counties).

[HB 593 / SB 1164 continued...](#)

Of the four colleges serving Hurricane Michael impacted counties, Chipola College and Gulf Coast State College reported decreases in enrollment for Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters.

HB 593 passed the House on Wednesday, April 17, by a vote of 117-0. It was then substituted for SB 1164 and passed the Senate 38-0 on April 30. It is now awaiting the Governor's signature. Should the Governor approve the legislation, it will become effective on July 1, 2019.

[Public Records](#)

HB 7115: Public Records and Meetings/Postsecondary Education Executive Search

Sponsors: House State Affairs Committee and Rep. Blaise Ingolia

House Bill 7115 would keep from the public the names of those who would be applying for president and provost positions at state colleges and universities. Similar legislation was filed by the House in 2017 but was never considered by the Senate. The names of those who applied but did not make it for final interviews would not be made public.

The names of any applicants who become finalists must be released by the state university or FCS institution no later than 30 days before the date of the meeting at which a final action or vote is to be taken on the employment of the applicants. There were numerous members of the public, many who are faculty members, who spoke in opposition to the bill. An analysis on this bill can be found [here](#).

PCB SAC 19-02 was heard by the House State Affairs Committee on Thursday, April 4. It passed unanimously and became HB 7115. On Tuesday, April 16, HB 7115 was heard in the House Education Committee and passed by a vote of 14-3 (Reps. Antone, Hogan Johnson, and Valdes).

House Bill 7115 was never brought up for consideration by the full House and subsequently died.

[Background Check](#)

HB 7035 / SB 7014: Government Accountability

Sponsors: House Community Affairs and Governmental Oversight and Accountability and Senate Government Oversight and Accountability

This legislation fixes the background check glitch that was mentioned over the summer. It makes the SUS and FCS subject to F.S. 110.1127, which makes the institutions responsible for designating employees for either Level 1 and Level 2 Background Screening. SB 7014 passed the full House and Senate and is awaiting the Governor's signature.

The Governor signed SB 7014 into law on April 29; Chapter No. 2019-15.