

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Serving secondary school administrators across Georgia
Weekly Legislative Update-March 6, 2009



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If It Weren't For Bad Luck, We'd Have No Luck At All

On Tuesday afternoon, Governor Sonny Perdue announced his **reduction** of the revenue estimate for FY10 by **\$1.6 Billion** (many observers point with interest that is almost to the dollar the amount of unrestricted Federal Stimulus money). Analysis of the revised budget proposal indicates that the Federal Stimulus money was used to plug the hole left by the reduction, meaning that the \$275 Million in FY10 austerity cuts remains at that level. It does spell problems for the significant holes in FY09, the current year. The FY09 supplemental budget is headed for conference committee and its anyone's guess as to how it will come out and what the Governor will do with.

The National Board Certification Mess

House Education Committee has cleared a substitute bill that grandfathers in those teachers that have or are in the

process of receiving National Board Certification pending funding by the Legislature but denies any salary supplement for those gaining national certification that were not in process by March 1, 2009. Governor Perdue has asked that all funding for National Board Certification be eliminated. It will be interesting how this matter is resolved. The Governor may veto the bill and/or line item veto any and all funds for National Board Certification.

The Benefit of Political Connection

On Wednesday afternoon the Senate Education and Youth Committee gave a DO PASS to SB 160, making Veteran's Day a school holiday (a similar bill was held in the House Veterans Committee). Despite convincing testimony by GASSP and GSBA, the bill passed out 10-2. Later in the meeting, SB 210 giving home schooler's the opportunity to apply for Governor's Honors, was passed without dissent. SB 210 was authored by Sen. Eric Johnson of Savannah (an announced candidate for Lt. Governor). Most bills rest on the Chairman of Education and Youth Dan Weber's desk for weeks before being brought before the committee—but not with Sen. Johnson's bill. The bill was dropped on Thursday of last week and brought for committee action less than a week later. If only the rest of the Senate and the House could be so efficient in dealing with legislation!!!

The Ghost of Voucher Passed

Sen. Eric Johnson and his voucher bill, SB 90, continues to roam the halls of the Senate looking for a House bill to swallow. While SB 90 passed out of the Senate Education Committee, it appears to be headed for rough going in the Senate and even rougher going in the House. One of the old time tricks is to attach an undesirable bill to a bill that has already passed the other chamber in hopes of "sliding it through". The likely candidate appears to be HB 251, the school choice within district bill, authored by Alisha Morgan of Cobb County, a Democrat. There are reports floating

around the Capitol that Eric Johnson contributed to the reelection campaign of Rep. Morgan and to the campaign of her husband who was elected to the Cobb Board of Education. Rep. Morgan has publicly stated that she does not want HB 251 changed but she fears that she protesteth too much! Politics sometimes makes for strange alliances—or something like that.

Crossover Day

Thursday, March 12, 2009, is *Crossover Day* for the 2009 Legislative Session. Bills that have not passed out of their house of origin by that date are considered dead for the session. The schedule for next week calls for the Legislature to be in session on Monday and Tuesday followed by recess on Wednesday and then *Crossover Day* on Thursday. The purpose of the recess day is to allow committees to meet and vote on legislation that is ready to move to the chamber floor on Thursday. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday promise to be some of the most active days of the session with the exception of the final day.

Action on Education Bills

The House Education Committee gave a DO Pass to the following bills this week:

HB 243 Grandfathers National Board Certified teachers certified or beginning the certification process before March 1, 2009, *pending funding by legislature.*

Eliminates from funding those teachers leaving teaching and going into administration or some other area effective July 1, 2009.

HB 455 Extends mandatory contract/renewal notification date to May 15 for 2009

HB 547 Requires that DOE make the PLAN (ACT) available to students if the PSAT (SAT) is made available.

HB 555 Gives charter schools access to state facility funds and requires that unused property be made available to local charter schools (excludes state and commission charter schools)

The House of Representatives gave a PASS to the following bills this week:

HB 278 Suspends expenditure controls in instruction, media, professional development, and extra days of instruction

HB 280 Creates extra supplements for new math and science teachers

The Senate Education and Youth gave a DO pass to the following bills this week:

HB 229 NEW Shape bill

SB 160 Makes Veteran's Day a school holiday (same bill did pass out of House Veterans Committee)

SB 210 Permits home school students to apply for the Governor's Honors Program.

SB 239 Requires parents moving to a new school district to enroll their students within 10 days of moving to the district. (Similar to HB 576)

SR 465 Cites partnership efforts between higher education and public education in Georgia.

SR 466 Calls for a committee to create a Performance Based Principal Certificate

The Senate gave a PASS to the following bills this week:

SB 178 Extends capital outlay grants and exceptional growth grants through 2011.

FY09 Supplemental budget passed on Thursday. It now goes to a conference committee.

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Education Legislation introduced this week
Reported by Skip Yow

For more information on the following bills, go to <http://www.legis.state.ga.us/>

- House Bill 565** **Creates Georgia Commission for the Blind**
- House Bill 566** **Requires Braille instruction for all legally blind students**
- House Bill 573** **Provides punishment for individuals that *unintentionally* carries a weapon into a school zone.**
- House Bill 576** **Requires, under penalty of law, a new resident of school district to enroll school age children in school within 30 days of moving to the district.**
- House Bill 634** **Raises compulsory attendance age to 17**
- House Bill 649** **Requires that QBE be fully funded before any voucher, school choice, or scholarship program is implemented**
- House Bill 650** **Permits retired speech language pathologists to return to work full time and draw full retirement**
- House Bill 651** **Provide access to the Sexual Offender Registry through the DOE**
- House Bill 668** **Authorizes local board of education to reassign a bullying student to another school and requires immediate notification of law enforcement when a student commits an alleged physical assault on a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel. Permits a hearing officer, tribunal panel, superintendent, or board of education to reassign a student who has committed certain acts to another school or to separate the student from his or her victim.**
- House Bill 680** **Requires DOE to produce a model program in performing arts for the 2010-2011 school year**
- House Resolution 567** **Prevents discrimination against faith based organizations receiving state grant funds (subject to statewide referendum)**
- Senate Bill 210** **Permits home school students to apply for the Governor's Honors Program**
- Senate Bill 219** **Denies salary increment for teachers holding leadership certificate that do not hold an administrative position (grandfathers current teachers holding leadership certificates)**

Senate Bill 231 Creates the Promise III teacher's scholarship under the HOPE program

Senate Bill 239 Requires, under penalty of law, a new resident of school district to enroll school age children in school within 10 days of moving to the district.

Senate Bill 242 Prohibits public agencies from making campaign contributions and from withholding dues that will be used to make campaign contributions

Senate Bill 250 Revises conditions relating to the unlawful disruption of or interference with the operation of public schools

Senate Resolution 406 Encourages accrediting organizations to provide opportunities for schools and systems to submit documentation in a timely fashion.

Senate Resolution 464 Urges University System and private colleges to meet the need for K-12 teachers

Senate Resolution 465 Urges University System, Georgia's private colleges, the DOE, the PSC, and local systems to establish partnerships

Senate Resolution 466 Urges the establishment of the Performance Based Principal Certificate

Hot Buttons—bills which if enacted into law will give high school principals major headaches

- 1. HB 33, mandating religious freedom via student speakers at all school events in which students speak, saw no movement this week.**
- 2. HB 103/SB 27 which establishes a Confederate Heritage and History Month will without doubt bring considerable response from minority groups saw no movement this week.**
- 3. SB 90, the Voucher Bill, waits in the full Senate. During this week, three key House members, all very**

influential in House Education have indicated their opposition to the bill.

- 4. HB 215 moves Georgia back to 1990 with the return to a three diploma program, each of which does not prepare students for admission to the University System or Technical College System, sits in waiting in the House Education Committee.**

- 5. HB 281 Permits home school students to participate in public high school extracurricular activities was tabled by Academic Achievement on Wednesday and may be dead for the session.**

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