

GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Serving secondary school administrators across Georgia
Weekly Legislative Update-April 2, 2009



THIS WEEK

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First of Two

No, you are not going insane—this is Thursday. Today's newsletter will attempt to give you a glimpse of the State of the State going into Sine Die Day—Day 40 and the Day Last. This has been a wild and whacky week. As expected, numerous attempts have been made to attach defeated and held legislation to bills that have passed the other chamber with most of such action occurring in the Senate. GASSP will send you an update early next week to let you know what did and did not survive Sine Die, including the FY10 Budget.

Riding a Good Horse

On Monday the Senate took up HB 193, the bill to give local systems maximum flexibility in scheduling by changing the 180 day requirement to 1440 hours, a bill opposed by very few legislators. Knowing that it would pass overwhelmingly, three Senators attempted to hang amendments on the bill. One amendment

would have required school systems to begin each school year no earlier than the third Monday in August. Fortunately it was voted down 45-9, preserving local control over school calendars. A second amendment sought to make Veteran's Day a holiday for all school systems. (The same bill died in the House.) Members of the Senate Education committee offered an amendment to the amendment that changed *shall* to *may* and made a Veteran's Day holiday optional. The *may* version passed on a voice vote. The third amendment which was adopted by voice vote clarifies existing laws with regard to disrupting a public school or a school bus. Please see the action report on HB 278 and SB 178 to see how insane this process can become. It is not fair to the citizens of Georgia that legislation that has not passed either chamber is attached to a viable bill and then goes to the other chamber where they can be no debate on the bill—it just ain't right!

The Voucher Express DANGER! DANGER! DANGER!

As we described last week, Sen. Eric Johnson's attempt to salvage some of his voucher legislation resulted in adding district to district choice with local funds following the student to the bill which permits inter-district transfer if space is available. Following spirited debate on the floor of the Senate, the bill containing the Johnson amendment passed 29-21 and thus returns to the House for an agree/disagree vote. House education moved to remove the transfer of local funds provision of the bill and the 135-27 vote to remove the funds transfer was a stinging rebuke to Rep. Alisha Morgan, Sen. Eric Johnson, and the Senate. The amended bill was adopted 142-21. The bill will now go to Conference Committee, assuming Senate disagrees. The conference committee will have to be appointed on Friday, then meet, reach an agreement, and then report back for passage to both chambers—not an easy task. Rep. Morgan's collusion with Sen. Johnson may have cost her the passage of her bill.

National Certification: It Ain't Over Till Its Over

On Monday the Senate debated the National Certification bill at length. An amendment was offered and accepted that sets the 10% supplement at 10% of a beginning teacher's salary. When the vote was called, it was 28-23, ONE vote short of the required constitutional majority—a mild surprise for education observers. BUT—the Senate immediately voted to reconsider and that vote passed so the bill as amended by the Senate went back to the Rules Committee destined to return on Day 39. On Day 39, after spirited debate, HB 243 received 31 yea votes, enough for passage. Now it goes back to the House to approve/disapprove the Senate amendment. *It ain't over till its over!*

Budget News reported by Skip Yow

The Senate introduced its version of HB 119, the FY10 budget on Wednesday and it went immediately to the House where the House insisted on its position leading to the appointment of a Conference Committee. The Conference Committee will meet today and report to their respective chambers on Friday. It is anyone's guess what the compromise position will be—and the Conference Committee is NOT limited to just the items on which the House and Senate disagree, *anything* in the budget is fair game.

DIFFERENCES IN HOUSE AND SENATE 2010 BUDGET

Central Office

Reduce funds from operations Governor - (\$1,623,764)
House - (\$2,523,764) Senate - (\$1,623,764)

Charter Schools

Reduce funds from planning grants Governor - (\$25,000)
House (\$45,000) Senate - (\$0.00)
Eliminate funds for implementation grants Governor - (\$625,000)
House - (\$500,000) Senate - (\$625,000)

Communities in Schools

Reduce funds by 10% Governor – (\$132,062)
 House – (\$39,619) Senate – (\$132,062)

Curriculum Development

Reduce funds from contracts and operations Governor - \$0.00
 House – (\$378,447) Senate - \$0.00

Dropout Prevention

Transfer all funds for Graduation Coaches to QBE Governor – (\$49,225,901)
 House - \$0.00 Senate – (\$49,225,901)

Georgia Youth Science and Technology

Eliminate funds Governor – (\$250,000)
 House and Senate - \$0.00

Governor’s Honor Program

Reduce funds from contracts Governor -(\$75,000)
 House - \$0.00 Senate – (\$75,000)

Reduce funds to reflect the charge of a \$250.00 fee Governor - \$0.00

House - \$0.00 Senate – (\$172,000)

Information Technology Services

Transfer funds for ETCs (\$2,752,130) and GA Virtual school program (\$930,180) to QBE (S: Eliminate funds and initiate new technology support programs through RESAs and/or technical schools

Governor – (\$3,682,310)
 House - \$0.00 Senate
 – (\$3,682,310)

National Board Certification

Eliminate funds Governor – (\$12,294,628)
 House - \$1,450,000 Senate – (\$5,085,142) (Senate sets 10% at level of beginning teacher)

National Science Center and Foundation

Eliminate funds Governor – (\$750,000)
 House – (\$250,000) Senate – (\$750,000)

Non QBE Formula Grants

Reduce funds to Residential Treatment Centers Governor – (\$120,337)
 House – (\$120,337) Senate - \$0.00

Increase funds for Special Needs Scholarships Governor - \$0.00
 House and Senate - \$5,978,162

Nutrition

Reduce funds by 3% Governor - \$0.00
 House and Senate – (\$1,194,697)

Preschool Handicapped

Reduce funds base on a projected change in FTE Governor – (\$470,178)
 House and Senate – (\$729,432)

Pupil Transportation

Reduce funds by 3% Governor - \$0.00
 House \$0.00 Senate – (\$5,128,292)

QBE Program

Increase funds for dual enrollment courses	Governor - \$1,390,960
House - \$761,613 Senate - \$1,390,960	
 (H: Reduce dual enrollment administration from \$161.44 per segment to \$88.40 per segment)	
ARRA of 2009 for FY10 (Stimulus funds used)	Governor - \$319,175,639
House - \$400,000,000 Senate - \$334,581,87	
Increase funds for charter systems grants	Governor - \$0.00
House and Senate - \$1,757,611	
Transfer Graduation Coaches., Classroom Supply Cards	Governor - \$60,699,627
House - \$0.00 Senate - \$49,225,901	
Transfer ETCs and RESAs program to QBE	Governor - \$15,219,551
House and Senate - \$0.00	
RESAs	
Reduce funds by 3%	Governor - \$0.00
House and Senate – (\$374,022)	
Increase educational technology training funds	Governor -\$0.00
House - \$0.00 Senate - \$1,773,022	
Transfer RESA funds to the QBE Program	Governor - (\$12,467,421)
House and Senate - \$0.00	
School Nurses	
Eliminate funds (H and S: Reduce funds by 3%)	Governor – (\$30,000,000)
House and Senate – (\$900,000)	
State Interagency Transfers	
	Governor - \$0.00
House - \$450,000 Senate - \$450,000	
Technology\Career Education	
Reduce funds to reflect the revised revenue estimate	Governor – (\$503,909)
House (\$503,909) Senate: Operations (\$503,909) and Vocational Supervisors (\$350,000)	
Testing	
Reduce funds from A P tests for private schools	Governor – \$0.00
House and Senate – (\$354,075)	
 CAPITAL OUTLAY (Senate used lower bond rates)	
Capital Outlay-Regular for local 20 year bonds	
House - \$9,552,614 Senate - \$9,005,548	Governor - \$9,552,614
Capital Outlay– Exceptional Growth- 20 year bonds	
House - \$10,106,948 Senate - \$9,528,136	Governor - \$10,106,948)
Capital Outlay-Regular Advance for local- 20 years bonds	
House - \$7,145.052 Senate - \$6,735,864	Governor - \$7,145,052
Capital Outlay Program-Low Wealth for local 20 year bonds	
House - \$183,416 Senate - \$172,912	Governor -\$1,089,600
Purchase vocational equipment – 5 year bonds	
House - \$1,628,200 Senate - \$1,617,000	Governor - \$1,628,200
Facility repairs, improvements at state schools. 5 year bonds	
House - \$928,074 Senate - \$921,690	Governor - \$928,074

Provide additional funds to schools the meet low-wealth eligibility requirements to assist with major capital outlay projects

Governor - \$0.00	
House - \$0.00	Senate
- \$854,288	

Action on Education Bills

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

HB 280 (Agreed to Senate substitute) Places beginning science and math teachers at Step 5 of the pay scale. Goes to the Governor

SB 8 Permits students with prescriptions to carry epinephrine pens. Goes to the Governor

SB 27 Establishes Confederate Heritage Month and *encourages* schools to participate—does not require participation Goes to the Governor

SB 114 Establishes procedures to facilitate military dependent transfers to Georgia schools. Goes to the Governor

**SB 178 The Senate bill to extend the suspension of spending controls became the *Christmas Tree* of the House much like HB 278 was used in the Senate. Added to the original bill were
much of the language from HB 400, the Bridge Bill, alternative dual enrollment funding, and added bilingual certification to high school diplomas. The *Christmas Tree* will now have to return to the
Senate, probably to be amended and may end up in conference committee**

HB 251 House stripped local funds transfer from bill and passed the amendment 147-17. Assuming Senate disagrees, bill will go to Conference Committee

SB 210 Permits home school students to apply for admission to Governor's Honors Goes to the Governor

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

HB 120 Creates the Sales Tax Holiday for school supplies and computers for 2010 (July 30—August 2). Goes to the Governor

HB 193 Changes 180 day requirement to a 1440 hours/academic year requirement. Bill was amended to say that local systems MAY make November 11, Veteran's Day, a school holiday. House agrees to amendments, goes to the Governor.

HB 243 Grandfathers National Board Certified teachers and those in the pipeline by March 1, 2009, to receive the 10% supplement, contingent to funding by the Legislature. Senate amendment changed the supplement to 10% of a starting teacher's salary, not 10% of the certified teacher's salary. Returns to the House

HB 251 Permits school choice in or out of residential district with local funds following students electing out of district schools. Transportation is not provided. Contingent upon space to be determined by receiving district. Passed 29-21. Goes back to House where local funds transfer was stripped. Conference Committee will have to be appointed on Friday, reach a solution, and then report back for passage by both chambers.

HB 278 Suspends expenditure controls for two years but was amended to the hilt. Don Rooks of GSBA reports that amendments were (1) calculating funding for dual enrollment students; (2) calculation of middle school program funding to include any combination of grades 6, 7, or 8; (3) extend the capital outlay program deadline through June 30, 2011; (4) a prohibition against anyone serving as a board member or superintendent if a family member is working in the system as a building level or central office administrator; (5) a requirement that each local board of education annually disclose all expenditures, including expenditures for association dues, salaries, meetings/conferences, (and a long list of other expenditures); and (6) a prohibition against a local superintendent becoming employed by any education association, RESA or the Department of Education, or registering as a lobbyist for a period of one year after leaving office (yes, you read that one right!)
The Senate *Christmas Tree* will now have to return to the House and face probable amendment and conference committee

HB 455 Extends the contract requirement date to May 15, 2009 for this year only. Two major amendments were attached to the bill. The first amendment removes the June 30, 2009, sunset provision of the Master Teacher program. The second amendment is far more controversial. After July 1, 2010, anyone who earns a leadership certificate will not be paid for that certificate unless they are in a leadership position. Returns to the House for what may be an unpleasant reception.

HB 313 Modifies HOPE GPA calculation to meet one diploma changes Goes to Governor

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

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