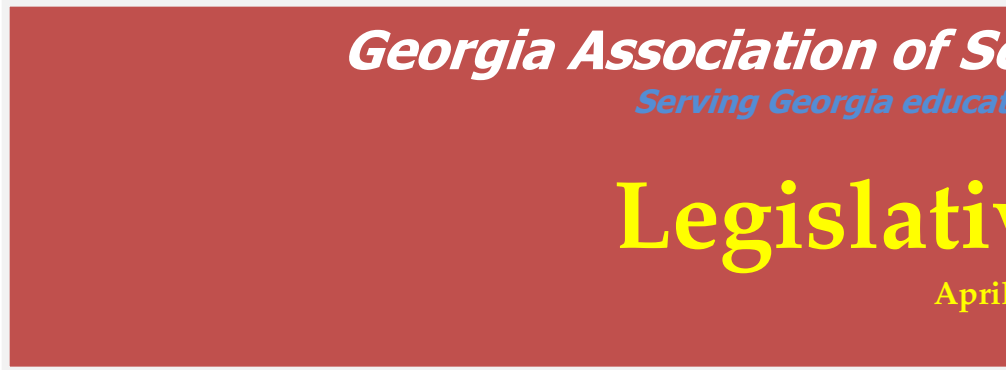


Jimmy Stokes

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From: Jimmy Stokes [stokes30650@bellsouth.net]  
Sent: Friday, April 02, 2010 9:43 AM  
To: Stokes30650@bellsouth.net  
Subject: GASSP Legislative Update--April 2, 2010



## **Others Cut But *Legislature's* Spending Up (AJC, March 28, 2010)**

When lawmakers meet on the fourth floor of the Capitol this year to negotiate the final \$17 billion state budget, there will probably be as many budget analysts as legislators in attendance.

Maybe more — the Senate, House and governor's office each usually send their own analysts.

The three sets of number-crunchers represent significant growth in one area of state government. **In fact, the budget for the Legislature itself has risen faster, percentage wise, than spending on education in the last eight years.**

Spending on agriculture, parks and natural resources and the Department of Labor have declined since fiscal 2003. But under the original budget lawmakers approved for this year, spending on the House, Senate and joint legislative operations jumped more than 20 percent from 2003.

### **NEWS**

Some of the best news coming out of the Legislature this year is the legislation that did not cross the line on Day 30. HR 1, the assessment freeze bill, HB 281 permitting non enrolled student in participate in public school extracurricular activities, and all of the pay-for-performance and school grading bills are dead for the session and will have to begin from scratch if introduced in the 2011 session.

**The House saw little action on education bills on Day 30. The Senate on the other hand pushed several bills through. *Skip Yow*, who represents Metro RESA and heads up the legendary Gold Dome Gang (the education lobbyists) reports the following bills made it past the Day 30 deadline.**

**SB 332** Requires additional reports regarding tribunals or hearings held for students bringing weapons to school

**SB 426** Prohibits per diem reimbursements, benefits, expenses, and salary for local BOE members whose system has its accreditation revoked, suspended, or placed on probation

**SB 496** Establishes and expands need based HOPE scholarship but limits it to school systems that do not set salaries of administrators based on accreditation standards

**SB 502** Repeals per diem allowances for state board members and limits them to expenses only

**SB 512** Authorizes the Commissioner of Revenue to collect sales taxes previously not being collected

**SB 515** Creates the *Educators' Salary Protect Act* that prohibits systems from furloughing teachers if they have a 6% or greater unencumbered fund balance on September 1. (This applies to few if any school systems,)

**SB 518** Requires a study of the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States and Georgia

**SB 521** Requires more reports regarding dual enrollment programs

**On Tuesday, Day 31, the House passed **SB 250** which makes it easier to charge students and adults with disruption of a school which includes bus stops. The biggest fireworks of the day came when **HB 927** which had been tabled earlier in the session was attached to SB 250. The bill with the attachment expands the bullying statute and requires notification of parents of all parties involved in a bullying incident. The bill will now have to return to the Senate to reconsider the bill. The Senate passed **HB 905** which extends Capital Outlay grants to 2015. The Senate Education and Youth had a banner day on Tuesday, giving a do pass to the following House bills:**

House Bill 651 Eliminates the SDOE from having to notify local systems regarding the list of sex offenders

House Bill 910 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE) Requires the DOE to publish an annual report regarding gender equity based on school system reports

House Bill 923 Grandfathers through July 2013 those persons in an ed leadership program that are not in ed leadership positions

House Bill 925 (AM) Permits local systems to use regular mail rather than certified mail to notify absentee offenders

House Bill 1079 Permits payments to PSC via credit card

House Bill 1086 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE) Includes private school teachers in the stipulations exempting personal information from disclosure

House Bill 1200 Permits local BOEs to solicit and accept donations for field trips (puts in law what is current practice)

**Skip Yow** reports that **Wednesday** was a quiet day for education bills. There were no education bills considered in the Senate. The House passed **SB 319** which expands the definition of textbooks to include digital materials and **SB 341** which provides that an individual must be a Georgia resident to receive the GED HOPE voucher. (GED graduates get a voucher that can be used for books, etc.—you do not have to be a Georgia resident to take the GED in Georgia.)

The **Thursday** calendar was very light. The House considered no education bills and the Senate passed **HB 908 and HB 916**. **HB 908** eliminates expenditure controls through 2013 and makes some adjustment to class size. This bill has two impacts on class size. First, systems are in compliance based on *system averages* and secondly it authorizes the SBOE to make blanket waivers due to financial exigency. The section of the bill that authorizes school systems to reduce the school year by up to 10 days, including 5 instructional days was eliminated by a floor amendment in the Senate. The bill now goes back to the House because of changes made by the Senate Education and Youth Committee. The bill does not raise class sizes above current limits but does grant the SBOE the opportunity to grant blanket waivers. **HB 916** prohibits a TRS retiree who is less than 60 years of age from returning to work, part-time or fulltime for the system from which they retired, even as an independent contractor, within **two months of retirement** and being able to continue to draw retirement. (The present rule is 30 days.)

**NEW Legislation—these bills have no chance of passage other than to be attached to a bill that has passed the House or Senate**

#### **Senate Bill 541**

By: Senators Rogers of the 21st, Murphy of the 27th, Wiles of the 37th and Hill of the 32nd  
To amend Code Section 20-2-164 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to local five mill share funds, so as to provide a cap on the amount of the local five mill share required

for local school systems; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

NEW LANGUAGE

Provided, however, that in no event shall the local five mill share for a local school system exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the most recent equalized adjusted school property tax digest for such local school system. **(Expect to see this attached to another bill before the session is over.)**