

SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL
BOARDS ASSOCIATION

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



DEBBIE ELMORE

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



SCSBA legislative priorities

1. Education funding reform

SCSBA supports legislation to reform the state's education funding structure.

So far, there is no appetite by the General Assembly to take up education funding reform or restructure. SCSBA requested consideration of its funding restructuring plan this past fall to a House Tax Reform Study Committee, a House Education Funding Reform Study Committee and to a Senate Equity Study Committee. But with a projection of only about \$292 million more in general fund revenues and an estimated \$39 million growth in Education Improvement Act (EIA) funds, the prospect of tackling funding reform is dim.

Legislation already filed

There are two Senate bills supported by SCSBA that have not moved but would address funding issues impacting K12 as follows:

- Senate bill 829 would create a study committee to review the effects of Act 388 on various classes of property, the impact on school district funding and on property taxpayers.
- Senate bill 830 would, in general, prohibit allocating any K12 funding for new programs until the General Assembly fully funds the Education Finance Act (EFA).

State budget underway

Meanwhile the House Ways and Means K12 Subcommittee has been working since early January on the state budget with a series of hearings with various education agencies and special schools. This past week, the subcommittee finalized K12 budget provisos that direct how funding is to be allocated. The amount of funding for most of the provisos, including the Education Finance Act (EFA) funding which sets the Base

Student Cost (BSC), has not been set. State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman has requested a \$125 per student increase in the BSC (from \$2,425 to \$2,550). Gov. Henry McMaster, in his budget proposal, included a BSC increase of \$10 per student. The full Ways and Means Committee is scheduled to take up the budget the week of February 20. Highlights of the subcommittee actions on provisos are as follows:

- Amended the Education Finance Act Formula/ Base Student Cost Inflation Factor proviso to define students in poverty weighting as those who qualify for Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or students who are homeless, transient or in foster care and to direct school districts to reimburse costs for students in dual enrollment courses.
- Amended the School Districts and Special Schools Flexibility proviso to exclude funding appropriated for the purchase of technology upgrades, related interior and exterior switches and connections from the funding that may be flexed.
- Amended the Professional Development proviso to allocate \$485,000 for professional development for the Youth Learning Institute and a pilot initiative in middle schools to assist educators in teaching students how to become self-regulated and self-directed learners.
- Amended a John de la Howe School proviso to transfer \$417,734 of the school's funds that were used to pay for teachers to McCormick County schools for educational services to the school's students.
- Amended the 4K proviso to require that by August 1, the Department of Education and the Office of First Steps must collect the documented waiting lists and determine a process to notify parents of eligible students of available slots in all approved public and private 4K providers.



legislative priority #1

education funding reform

scsba supports legislation
to reform the state's
education funding structure



no appetite for reform

- modest growth projections for revenue
- despite tax and funding study committees
- election year



legislation filed

- Senate bill 829 – impact of act 388 study committee.
- Senate bill 830 – no new programs or mandates until EFA fully funded



state budget underway

- k12 budget provisos finalized
- no funding amounts set
- provisos of interest
- set to be completed by house week of March 12 (2DAC March 8)



advocacy actions

- urge support state superintendent recommendation \$120 increase to BSC
- support \$5 million recurring funding for school bus purchase, lease
- continue to fund pension employer contribution increase
- no unfunded mandates



legislative priority #2

retired teacher salary cap

SCSBA supports legislation
to eliminate the salary cap
for retired classroom teachers



no movement

- cannot single out certain group for exemptions
- state board authority to expand critical needs subjects, areas?
- budget proviso run around
- contract teacher run around



legislation filed

- Senate bill 822 & House bill 4930 exempts certified educators, police officers from earnings cap
- Senate bill 828 authorize State Board of Education to define critical subject, areas



other

- Senate bill 888 in Senate authorizes, upon approval of local board, districts to pay unused sick, annual leave above 90 days



advocacy actions

- need to determine number of actual teachers in your district
- continue expressing concerns to lawmakers about need to address teacher shortage, TERI crisis
- need a fix by June 30



legislative priority #3

school bus safety

scsba supports legislation
to reform the state's
education funding structure



legislation filed

- Senate bill 199 passed Senate, resides in House Judiciary Committee



advocacy actions

- contact your House member and urge their support to move Senate bill 199 through the House for passage
- contact House Judiciary Committee members and urge them to move Senate bill 199 through the process



legislative priority #4

school safety

scsba supports the allocation of state aid for school safety efforts in all South Carolina public school districts and legislation to allow school districts to freely negotiate the financing of school resource officers with local governments



legislation filed

- House bill 4810 creates the school metal detector study committee
- working on draft amendment on clarification language SRO salary



advocacy actions

- urge support of governor's school safety grants program \$5 million



legislative priority #5

school start date

scsba supports amending state law regarding when public schools may start the school year to give districts the flexibility of setting their own start date



legislation filed

- Senate bill 826 authorizes local school boards to set the start date for the school districts.
- Senate bill 823 provides school boards the option of beginning the 2018- 2019 school year as early as the second Monday in August.



advocacy actions

- scsba email to board chairs, superintendent surveying legislators' support
- contact senators urge support of governor's school safety grants program \$5 million