

## **HB 7069 Education Bill: Key Provisions**

The most controversial education bill to pass the 2017 Florida legislature was [HB 7069](#), a 274 page “train” bill that includes portions of 30 other bills and addresses myriad K-12 issues, including:

- Reduces state K-12 **student testing** requirements;
- Extends the **Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship** Program and establishes the **Best and Brightest Principal Scholarship Program** (\$233,950,000) ;
- Establishes the **Schools of Hope** program to encourage traditional public schools within the state and charter operators throughout the country with a proven track record of student success in low-income areas to replicate their model and serve students from persistently low-performing schools (\$140 million);
- Revises the **Standard Student Attire Incentive Program** to allow plaids, stripes, or other multi-color options by removing the specific requirement of solid-colored clothing and fabrics for pants, skirts, shorts, or similar clothing and short- or long-sleeved shirts with collars;
- Creates the **Schools of Excellence** program, providing administrative flexibilities to certain schools;
- Limits the time frame for **VPK providers** to amend prior fiscal year student enrollments no later than September 30 of the subsequent fiscal year; and
- Increases **teacher training**, certification, and endorsements in reading; and
- Requires Title 1 funds to be shared with charter schools.

The bill also:

- Fosters development **civic literacy** throughout the K-20 education system by
  - authorizing the Governor to designate the month of September as “American Founder’s Month”;
  - establishing civic literacy as a priority of the K-20 education system;
  - requiring the Just Read, Florida! Office to develop curricular programming to help build student background civic knowledge and literacy skills;
  - requiring public postsecondary students to demonstrate civic literacy; and
  - requiring that, beginning with the 2018-2019 school year, students who enter a Florida college or university for the first time demonstrate competency in civic literacy.
- Authorizes students to possess and use **sunscreen** on campus without a prescription;
- Provides for permitted **absences for treatment of autism** spectrum disorder;

- Revises provisions for identifying and supporting students with a substantial **reading deficiency** by, among others;
  - requiring district school boards, when allocating remedial and supplemental instruction resources, to give the highest priority to students in kindergarten through grade 3 who have a substantial reading deficiency, instead of just those students in grade 3;
  - requiring that students in kindergarten through grade 3 who are identified as having a substantial reading deficiency be provided an individual progress monitoring plan, a federal plan (such as an IEP), or both if necessary;
  - requiring that students must be provided intensive, explicit, systematic, and multisensory reading interventions immediately following identification of the substantial deficiency; and
  - requiring that the interventions school districts provide to students who are retained in 3rd grade include evidence-based, explicit, systematic, and multisensory instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Expands the intensive acceleration course currently provided to **retained 3rd graders** to also include students who were previously retained in kindergarten, 1st grade, or 2nd grade. The intensive acceleration reading course must include:
  - uninterrupted reading instruction for the majority of the school contact time each day and opportunity to master the grade 4 NGSSS in other core subject areas through content-rich texts;
  - small group instruction;
  - reduced teacher-student ratios;
  - use of explicit, systematic, and multisensory reading interventions, including intensive language and vocabulary instruction and use of a speech-language therapist if necessary, that has proven results in accelerating student reading achievement within the same school year; and
  - a read at home plan.
- Extends **early warning system** coverage - used to identify students who need additional support to improve their academic performance - to include students in kindergarten through grade 8;
- Requires K through 5 students at traditional public schools to be provided at least 100 minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess each week so that there are at least 20 consecutive minutes of free-play per day;
- Establishes provisions related to shared use agreements for **public school playground** facilities;

- Creates the **Committee on Early Childhood Development** to design and develop a proposal for implementing a coordinated child assessment approach across multiple funding streams for the School Readiness, Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program, and Kindergarten Readiness Assessment that will allow:
  - policy makers and funders to evaluate the impact of different initiatives using consistent, developmentally appropriate measures;
  - collection of the same data across programs to enable teachers to differentiate instruction for children and share data (with appropriate parental permission) as children transition to new programs; and
  - allow initiatives to share aggregated data across funding streams to inform broader program and policy decisions and opportunities for improved coordination and children's success in early grades.