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Serving the Education Community of Collier County

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HB 7055 IN A NUTSHELL

The conservative Republican leader of the state House of Representatives Richard Corcoran wants this bill to become law so badly, he tied it to billions of dollars in public school funding. In fact, during his first address to the House this year, Speaker Corcoran referred to the FEA as “evil” for challenging the constitutionality of a piece of recently passed voucher legislation. The Democrats in his chamber call HB 7055 an unprecedented attack on public education.

MAJOR PROVISIONS WORTH WATCHING:

A target on teachers’ unions: Under the bill, collective bargaining units that represent instructional personnel (i.e. teachers’ unions) would be decertified if fewer than half of eligible teachers were dues-paying members. These unions would then have to reapply for certification — endangering their chances of retaining the rights to represent those teachers. If unions don’t comply with the requirement, their certification would be revoked automatically. **The price tag:** None.

The “Hope Scholarship”: Creates a new tax-credit voucher for students who are bullied, covering transportation to other public schools or tuition at private schools. To pay for this, motorists would have the option to donate \$105 to a scholarship-funding organization that would dole out the awards to students rather than pay taxes to the state. **The price tag:** At least \$41.5 million in forfeited tax revenue plus \$2 million for the state Department of Education to implement it.

Reading scholarship accounts: Creates new state-funded educational accounts for third, fourth and fifth graders who have failed state literacy exams. The bill says the amounts of the scholarships would be specified in the budget. **The price tag:** \$9.7 million, plus a \$300,000 administrative fee for the scholarship-funding organizations (the primary one is Step Up For Students). (Cont. on Page 2)

I NEED A HERO

Teachers are heroes, but do we treat them or pay them like it?

No. The Florida Legislature has done their best to exclude teachers from the hero category. By separating our pay, our pensions, and our benefits and by doing their best to take away the one thing we have to protect us, our union!

The first responders to the Broward tragedy that happened last week were not police officers or SWAT team members; they were teachers. They protected the children with whatever they could, some even giving their life. The elected officials in Florida have a bill in front of them to strip instructional unions of their right to union representation. They don’t see the need to do this to police, firefighters, or correctional officers because they are “first responders.” We call BS. In every school shooting in this country, the real first responders have always been the teachers.

The general public might not realize that teacher pay is tied directly to how well students do on a state mandated test. What kind of scores do you think the Broward students will have after this horrific tragedy? Florida needs to do more for its teachers. Pay them more. Honor them more. But most importantly, give them more respect for the true heroes they are.

Carlene Grossi (PCR)
Laura Marzano (PRM)

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THE CCEA OFFICE WILL BE OPEN REGULAR HOURS DURING SPRING BREAK
MONDAY - FRIDAY 8:30AM - 4:30PM

HB 7055

(Cont. from Page 1)

A risky compromise for charter school construction funding: Creates a new formula for funding construction and facilities maintenance at charter schools, and eliminates the recent requirement that school districts share local construction dollars with charters, at least in the short term. **The price tag:** The policy would cost nothing to implement. Its effect on the budget would vary every year.

New, streamlined accountability standards for private schools receiving vouchers: Creates a single set of accountability standards for private schools participating in state-sponsored voucher programs. **The price tag:** \$950,000 to support the department's greater oversight requirements, plus \$250,000 for a study of voucher recipients' performance on national norm-referenced tests.

Further limits on the power of school boards:

- Allows for the establishment of "district-independent autonomous schools."
- Empowers superintendents to establish schools that are governed by "independent governing boards"
- Empowers individual school board members in the local budget-making process.

Strengthens charter schools:

- Makes it harder to close a charter school.
- Empowers judges, rather than school boards, in hearings over closing charters
- Lengthens charter schools' initial contracts.
- Changes standards for designation of "high-performing charter schools."
- Rolls over funding under last year's "schools of hope" law

THE BEST OF THE REST:

- Requires districts to create a fiscal transparency tool
- Creates new procedures for dealing with school districts in financial emergencies
- Allocates \$5.6 million to pay for paper, rather than computer-based, state testing for seventh and eighth graders.
- Allocates \$550,000 to pay for homeschool students' instructional materials.
- Expands the approved uses of Gardiner Scholarships, vouchers for students with disabilities.
- Expands how districts can use federal Title I money.

TRANSFER FAIR

It's time again for the annual CCPS Transfer Fair. This year it will be held at Gulf Coast High on April 19 from 5:00 to 8:30 PM in the school's gym. Registration is currently open and will close on April 6th at 5 PM. All current teachers in CCPS are eligible to attend except those on extended DROP. Make sure you have completed the Instructional Application online and click Job number 621, Instructional Transfer Fair.

Please come by CCEA and check the Principal Assessment Surveys after March 9th if you are thinking of transferring and see how teachers at each school rank their administration.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

3/1	TIGER Exec Board Mtg	4:30pm	CCEA
3/6	School Board Mtg	4:30pm	Ad Ctr
3/12-16	SPRING BREAK		
3/20	CCEA Exec Board Mtg	4:30pm	CCEA
3/21	TIGER Rountable Guest - Dr. Patton	4:30pm	CCEA
3/27	CCEA Rep Council	4:30pm	CCEA

MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS

CCEA would like put together a list of contact information of businesses/trades that are owned or operated by our own members or members of their families. We would like to get a complete list out to members in the May edition of the Pelican Post for your reference over the summer.

If you have projects around the house or other needs over the summer, it is our hope that you will help out your fellow CCEA members and try to utilize their services if possible. They, in turn, will offer a discount for CCEA members. It seems like a win/win to us, but we need your information!

Please send the following information to

rhonda.shimel@floridaea.org:

Name / Description of the Business

Location / Website info

Contact Telephone/Email

Discount to Members

Name of Member / School

TESTING

FEA LEGAL'S SUGGESTIONS TO PROTECT YOURSELF

BEFORE TESTING BEGINS:

- * **DO NOT** sign security agreements acknowledging training received if you have not received the training. **DO NOT** back-date such agreements.
- * Be mindful of all IEP accommodations for testing.
- * **DO NOT open the tests.** Sometimes they are not sealed (e.g. prompts for writing test).



DURING TESTING:

- * **DO NOT** say anything during the test other than reading the script provided.
- * **DO NOT** make any gestures or even cough during the test, as it could be construed as hinting.
- * **DO NOT** allow students to move about the testing room, even if they finish early. Maintain the exact amount of testing time with all students in their seats for the entire time. Be cautious. Even encouraging students to review their work could be considered inappropriate hinting.
- * **DO NOT** allow students to jump ahead or take tests out of the prescribed sequential order.
- * Unless required as an accommodation for a student with an IEP or 504 Plan, **DO NOT** provide scratch paper to a student other than the official paper provided with the administration materials;
- * If a student needs “comforting” or becomes ill during the test session, notify the school testing coordinator.
- * **DO NOT** let students keep writing after test time is up.
- * **DO NOT** leave out extra erasers or the children may tend to make lots of erasures. You should not have a lot of erasure marks on your test answer sheets.
- * **DO NOT** write, grade papers, look at your cell phone or computer or do anything that could be construed as taking notes during testing.
- * **NEVER** help a child during the test even if you do NOT give any hints or guidance. **DO NOT** even say, “Remember the strategies we learned in class.” This can be construed as impermissible hinting.
- * **DO NOT** leave the testing room. Make sure ALL adults sign the administration log if they enter the room.

AFTER TESTING:

- * **DO NOT** pick the tests up early unless specifically directed by your school procedures. You must avoid any possibility of being alone and with access to the testing materials.
- * **DO NOT** allow yourself to be alone with the answer sheets after collecting them.
- * **DO NOT** leave the testing materials at a collection site without having the testing coordinator or designee verify that all materials have been returned.
- * **DO NOT** make erasures on the test answer sheets, even if the children have made stray marks.
- * **DO NOT** retain copies of test materials, or practice test materials, or make notes about your observations for later use in guiding your students.
- * **DO NOT** create practice tests consisting of old test questions.
- * **DO NOT** hold debriefing sessions after testing.



2017 CCEA Dues \$659

FEA's 1968 WALKOUT: FIRST IN THE NATION

In February 1968 the state teachers' union, the Florida Education Association (FEA), staged the first statewide teachers strike in the country when half of the state's teacher workforce went on strike for better wages and increased education funds. The strike occurred in response to Governor Claude Kirk's refusal to meet FEA demands on salary and school budget increases during the 1967 legislative session. Kirk's subsequent budget line item veto of a \$150 million education appropriation spurred the FEA into action. Backed by the National Education Association, the FEA began organizing that summer to focus more attention on education. Their efforts intensified throughout the fall of 1967. In January 1968 the governor called a special session of the legislature to address the education crisis. The Senate drafted a bill that met FEA demands, but the House scaled down the proposal and a joint committee passed a bill considered unacceptable to teachers. In response, 35,000 Florida public school teachers and administrators walked out of their classrooms beginning on February 19, 1968. Most of the schools remained open, however, and Florida Commissioner of Education Floyd T. Christian used substitute teachers to staff the schools. On March 8 the FEA and the State Board of Education came to agreement, which included \$10.2 million in education spending. The FEA ended the strike the next day and teachers returned to work, though some had to negotiate reinstatement with their districts. No striking language was added to the Florida constitution in 1968.

The strike was the nation's first statewide teachers' strike, keeping more than 40 percent of Florida teachers at home. Education funding rose significantly, but the organization felt that it did not rise enough to meet the needs identified by the teachers. From this perspective, the strike was not a success. However, FEA did obtain much higher funding for education and convinced Gov. Kirk to break his no-new-taxes pledge.

The strike had a profound effect on the national NEA. Following the 1968 Florida strike, delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly (the organization's national governing body) approved a resolution which—for the first time—sanctioned teacher strikes (calling them "withdrawal of services") and denouncing state attempts to ban them. The resolution was a direct outcome of the statewide Florida strike.

A longer-term effect of the strike was to dramatically improve the outlook for teachers' unions in Florida. FEA members were radicalized by the strike and the statewide federation later won significant court and legislative victories which legalized and promoted the formation of teacher and education unions in the state. Although the 1968 strike would lead to the fragmentation of the FEA in 1974, education unions merged back into one organization in 2000, and as of 2006 unions were recognized in school districts covering 90 percent of the state's education workers. FEA is now one of Florida's largest unions, and the second-largest in the [Florida AFL-CIO](#).

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION: MARCH IN MARCH

Three good School Board candidates have reached out to CCEA to help rally teacher support in the upcoming St. Patrick's Day parade. Jory Westbury (District 1), Jen Mitchell (District 2), and Roy Terry (District 5) have all committed to serve traditional public schools and teachers in the 2018 School Board Election. There are other candidates and potential candidates who do not value traditional public schools and teachers the way these three candidates have demonstrated. They are all putting themselves on the line for us and our students.

We are asking you to join in and show your support for these candidates by walking in one of our fun local traditions, the annual St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday, March 17th.

This is open to you, your family and friends – the more the merrier as we send a clear message of how much we appreciate the efforts of the candidates. Your commitment is simple, just email jonathan.tuttle@floridaea.org from your non-work email, or call 592-7773 with the names and shirt sizes of your friends and family. Then, show up for the parade at 9:00am on the day of the parade and take a walk around the block. The candidates will provide the rest. Strollers are welcome!

Collier TIGER has not yet endorsed in any School Board race.

Happy St. Patrick's Day