



CAPITOL REPORT:

TEA concerns about Gov. Lee's primary ed initiative, Civication starts next Tuesday

(Remember to wear **RED** every Wednesday, during [Civication](#), and at the [Rally for Our Schools](#) Monday, March 16).

March 2, 2020

It was a busy week on the hill as things are in full swing and calendars have swelled. **Gov. Bill Lee unveiled his primary education initiative**, a sweeping change to the way Tennessee teachers are to teach reading in the early grades.

TEA has several concerns about the bill, and has met with administration officials and the commissioner to outline needed changes. The most pressing concern would be a lack of recurring funding for new positions to administer additional supports for students as mandated by the legislation. This would make the initiative another unfunded mandate from the state, similar to RTI a few years ago.

The bill was discussed at length in subcommittee, and ultimately a vote was not called. It will be heard again this week, and amendments based on feedback received are expected.

A bill that would have prevented teachers from serving on county commissions was defeated in House subcommittee last week, and the corporate tax cut bill received a negative recommendation from the appropriations sub in the Senate.

TEA-supported legislation requiring the release of formative test questions passed on the House floor, while another supported bill repealing the **A-F school grading system was rolled** two weeks as the fiscal note is addressed.

The deadline to run bills in Senate education has been announced as March 5, while the House subcommittees are asking bills to be on calendar by March 11. The last calendars promise to have many dozens of bill on them, and will likely take several weeks to finish.

Here is a rundown of bills of interest that will be heard this week:

Tuesday, 3/3

Senate Finance Revenue Subcommittee- Following full Finance at 8:30AM- SHRI

- SB2201/HB2268 (Johnson/Lamberth)- OPPOSE- Governor's bill to cut the privilege tax on doctors, lawyers, lobbyists, and out of state stock brokers in half from \$400 to \$200.

House CTI Sub- Noon- HHRIV

- HB2229/SB2160- AMEND- Governor's early literacy bill, discussed above.
- HB2425/SB2214 (Coley/Bowling)- SUPPORT- Permits teachers to weight the other measure component of their evaluations to 50% and eliminate TVAAS if it would increase their score.
- HB1934/SB2337 (Dunn/Gresham)- MONITOR- Requires the commissioner of education to obtain approval from the state board prior to changing performance goals and measures.
- HB1833/SB1815 (Cepicky/Hensley)- SUPPORT- Reduces the number of state-mandated TCAP tests to the federal minimum.
- HB1550/SB1787 (Mitchell/Kyle)- SUPPORT- Would repeal the voucher law.

House Civil Justice Sub- 3PM- HHRII

- HB2693/SB2437 (Baum/Powers)- MONITOR- Confers civil immunity upon a teacher, principal, or bus driver who uses reasonable force to restrain a student or prevent bodily harm or death to another person

House Property and Planning Sub- 4:30PM- HHRIV

- HB2638/SB2751 (Holt/Bell)- OPPOSE- Prohibits local governments, including special school districts, from increasing property tax by more than inflation plus two percent.

House K-12 Sub- 4:30PM- HHRIII

- HB2267/SB2200 (Lamberth/Johnson)- SUPPORT- Admin bill would require TDOE to submit a report to both chambers of the legislature every year regarding the state-funded mental and behavioral health services available to students.
- HB1648/SB1822 (Shaw/Robinson)- SUPPORT- Requires statewide pre-K for all children aged four
- HB2134/SB2252 (Cepicky/Hensley)- MONITOR- Establishes a discipline process for students who have been removed from the classroom by a teacher.
- HB1692/SB1740 (Cepicky/Hensley)- MONITOR- Mandates summer school for any student whose teacher determines that the student is not academically prepared for the next grade level.

- HB2031/SB2028 (Love/Akbari)- SUPPORT- Deletes school improvement fund created by the voucher law and creates instead a fund for teacher salaries.
- HB2869/SB2180 (Coley/Nicely)- Requires LEAs to admit students from outside the LEA if there are available seats.
- HB1966/SB1947 (Haston/Hensley)- SUPPORT- Creates at-risk rural pre-k fund.
- HB1954/SB2025- (Lamar/Akbari)- SUPPORT- Prohibits a teacher from being required to work more than one hour per week outside the workday, with extraordinary event exceptions.

Wednesday, 3/4

House Education- 9AM- HHRI

- HB1687/SB1735 (Cepicky/Hensley)- OPPOSE- As amended, directs science and social studies curriculum to be folded into literacy instruction.
- HB2002/SB2035 (Cepicky/Hensley)- SUPPORT- Outlines workload considerations for caseloads and class sizes of special education teachers.
- HB1855/SB1813 (Casada/Hensley)- AMEND- Requires LEAs to install filters on computers to block inappropriate info or websites.
- HB2051/SB2702 (Sparks/Gilmore)- SUPPORT- Changes funding ratio for social workers from 1:2,000 to 1:1,500
- HB38/SB496 (Van Huss/Bowling)- SUPPORT- Eliminates portfolio method of evaluation and prohibits state-mandated testing in grades K-2

Senate Education- 3PM- SHRI

- SB2160/HB2229 (Lamberth/Johnson)- AMEND- See above
- SB1787/HB1550 (Kyle/Mitchell)- SUPPORT- See above description
- SB2249/HB2755 (DeBerry/Robinson)- SUPPPORT- Requires one full-time nurse for every school

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