

## **2015 Regular Session of the Kentucky General Assembly** ***Elementary and secondary education legislation filed to date.***

### **Senate Bills**

**SB 13** – Senator Schickel

#### **School Funding**

The legislation puts in statute that no mandate be placed on the public schools without provision by the General Assembly for funding ensured by the state-supported program that is adequate to carry out that mandate. Any legislation relating to the operation of the public schools that includes a fiscal note or a state mandate must include provisions for funding that is adequate for compliance with the mandate. No school district shall be compelled to comply with any enactment of the General Assembly that does not provide adequate funding as described in this section.

**SB 16** – Senator Givens

#### **Computer Programming**

Would allow computer programming language courses to be accepted as meeting foreign language requirements in the public schools. The bill defines "computer programming language" and updates statutory language to require that computer programming language courses be accepted as meeting foreign language requirements for admission to public postsecondary institutions.

**SB 19** – Senator Thomas

#### **Special Education Students**

Changes the definition of "Exceptional children and youth" to mean persons enrolled in school between the age of three (3) and inclusive through the final semester of the school year in which the student reaches his or her twenty-second birthday.

**SB 39** – Senator Thomas

#### **Safe Weather Zones**

Requires public schools to consult with local and state safety officials and National Weather Service and Federal Emergency Management Agency guiding principles when identifying the best available severe weather safe zones.

### **Student Expression of Religious or Political Viewpoints in Public Schools and Postsecondary Institutions**

Permits students to voluntarily express religious or political viewpoints in school assignments free from discrimination. Requires local boards of education to ensure that the selection of student speakers is made in a viewpoint neutral manner and that the student's prepared remarks are not reviewed, altered, or censored before delivery.

Permits religious and political organizations equal access to public forums on the same basis as nonreligious and nonpolitical organizations and that no recognized religious or political student organization is discriminated against in the ordering of its internal affairs.

The bill provides similar requirements for public postsecondary education institution governing boards.

### **Physical Privacy of Students**

Ensures that student privacy exists in school restrooms, locker rooms, and showers and requires students born male to use only those facilities designated to be used by males and students born female to use only those facilities designated to be used by females.

Includes consequences for using facilities designated for the opposite biological sex.

A student may pursue a private cause of action against the school.

Claims may be filed in the Circuit Court in whose jurisdiction the student resides or where the school is located. All claims must be initiated within four (4) years of the violation.

- A student who is aggrieved under this subsection and who prevails in a court of jurisdiction:
- May recover two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) from the offending school for each instance in which he or she encountered a person of the opposite sex while accessing a school restroom, locker room, or shower room designated for use by the biological sex of the aggrieved student.
- May recover monetary damages from the offending school for all psychological, emotional, and physical harm suffered.
- Must be entitled to recover from the offending school reasonable attorney fees and costs associated with the claim.

## **House Bills**

**HB 4** – Representative Stumbo

### **Funding for Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System**

To provide for financing and refinancing of pension obligation bonds. The bill authorizes the Kentucky Asset/Liability Commission to issue funding notes in an amount not to exceed \$3,300,000,000 in fiscal year 2015-2016. Provides that the state must pay the additional amount needed to fund KTRS' pension fund on an actuarially sound basis beginning on July 1, 2015, and continuing for each year thereafter.

**HB 18** – Representative Yonts

### **Dual Credit**

Requires the Council on Postsecondary Education to implement a dual credit course policy and requires acceptance of articulated credit courses at all public colleges and universities.

**HB 21** – Representative Lee

### **Interscholastic Extracurricular Activities**

Authorizes participation in a public school interscholastic extracurricular activity by a private school student when the private school does not offer the interscholastic extracurricular activity.

**HB 25** – Representative Steele

### **Use Tax Holidays**

Establishes a three day sales and use tax holiday the first weekend in August each year to exempt clothing, school supplies, school art supplies, computers, and school computer supplies.

**HB 30** – Representative King

### **School Notification of Persons Authorized to Contact or Remove a Child**

Requires the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), if the cabinet is granted custody of a dependent, neglected, or abused child, to notify the school in which the child is enrolled of persons authorized to contact the child or remove the child from school grounds.

[HB 33](#) – Representative Kerr

### **School Standards**

Prohibits the Kentucky Board of Education and the Kentucky Department of Education from implementing the English language arts and mathematics academic content standards developed by the Common Core State Standards Initiative and the Next Generation Science Standards.

[HB 34](#) – Representative Clark

### **Districts of Innovation**

Allows a waiver or modification of the statewide assessment system for schools participating in a district of innovation plan and allows a district of innovation to use student assessments other than those required by the state board, under specific conditions.

[HB 52](#) – Representative Carney

### **Career Readiness**

Requires the Kentucky Board of Education to identify a student who obtains a sufficient score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and signs enlistment papers for any branch of service as career-ready.

[HB 64](#) – Representative Crimm

### **Foster Care Review Boards**

Allows a local foster care review boards to have access to the educational records of children committed to the custody of the Commonwealth by requiring the Kentucky Department of Education to provide the educational records free of charge to the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

[HB 67](#) – Representative Flood

### **Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES)**

Defines the minimum number of cumulative credit hours needed to be considered "on track to graduate" at the end of each award period for KEES scholarship renewal requirements.

[HB 75](#) – Representative York

### **Teacher Leaves of Absence**

Clarifies that a board of education must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, and any other applicable federal law in placing a teacher or superintendent on leave due to a physical or mental disability.

[HB 79](#) – Representative Watkins

### **Voluntary Student Expression of Religious Viewpoints in Public Schools**

Permits students to voluntarily express religious viewpoints in school assignments free from discrimination and organize prayer groups, religious clubs, or other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other noncurricular student activities and groups and allow for expression of religious viewpoints through dress to the same extent as students are permitted to express viewpoints through nonreligious dress.

Requires each board of education to adopt and implement a policy regarding voluntary student expression of religious viewpoints and to establish a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak, including graduation.

[HB 87](#) – Representative Montell

### **Scholarships for At-Risk Children**

Establishes a scholarships for at-risk children tax credit program for scholarships for at-risk children. The bill provides a nonrefundable credit against the income tax and the limited liability entity tax imposed, for contributions made to a scholarship organization that is organized solely for the purpose of receiving and distributing cash contributions to provide educational scholarships to eligible students at qualified schools.

[HB 129](#) – Representative Couch

### **Amends the 2014-2016 Executive Branch Budget Bill**

Allows a local school district to determine salary increases for employees for the 2015-2016 fiscal year. Requires the commissioner of education to determine if salary increases for employees will cause the district budget to fall below the required minimum reserve of two percent of the total budget.

[HB 142](#) – Representative Belcher

### **Maximum Class Size**

Prohibits the number of pupils enrolled in a class on the fifteenth student instructional day from exceeding the established maximum class size.

[HB 163](#) – Representative Belcher

### **Reemployment after Retirement**

Provides that effective July 1, 2015, local school districts shall not be required to reimburse Kentucky Retirement Systems for retiree health care premiums for reemployed retirees who work less than 80 days a year.

[HB 174](#) – Representative Montell

### **Charter Schools**

Authorizes public charter schools and establishes the Kentucky Public Charter School Commission and outlines the requirements and limitations on the establishment of charter schools including identification of charter school authorizers; the application process; student eligibility and participation; and funding provisions.