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Subject: FW: Education Roundup 2-07-12

FYI – have a great afternoon!

Sincerely,

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From: Mongiovi, Jamie
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 8:20 AM
Subject: Education Roundup 2-07-12

Florida Department of Education



[School board to explore corporate sponsors](#)
(Bradenton Herald © 02/07/2012)

chawes@bradenton.com MANATEE – Google, Lowe's, Nike and other national corporate names may soon be present on ballfields, websites, brochures and other items representing Manatee County's public schools. The school board informally agreed at a workshop Monday to explore a program that would match public schools with national brand-name corporations seeking to advertise through...

[Survey: States predict more dollars for education](#)
(Bradenton Herald © 02/07/2012)

The Associated Press The Center on Education Policy says after last school year's rough budget cuts for schools, states are predicting a brighter outlook on spending for K-12 this school year. The advocacy group bases that assessment on a survey of state education officials in 37 states and the District of Columbia. Diane Stark Rentner is the advocacy group's interim director. She says the...

[Coach suspended over confrontation with unruly student](#)

(Citrus County Chronicle © 02/07/2012)

Mike Wright Staff Writer INVERNESS — Lecanto High School football coach McKinley Rolle received a 10-day suspension in January for shoving a student against a wall in the cafeteria during a confrontation, according to documents released Monday. Rolle, a first-year physical education teacher who had no full-time teaching or coaching experience prior to his hiring in summer 2011, rece...

[Safety issue looms larger after latest accidents](#)

(Daytona Beach News-Journal © 02/07/2012)

The deaths of two students from Volusia County Schools gives urgency to discussions of how to improve traffic safety around schools. A rash of school-related accidents raises a multitude of issues — from sidewalks to crossing guards. But perhaps the most important discussion should be between parents and students. Parents need to take their children aside and talk with them about the 17 acc...

[Florida Morning: Charter school bill gets committee OK: questions remain over private prisons](#)

(Florida Times-Union © 02/07/2012)

By: Matt Dixon (matt.dixon@jacksonville.com, @Mdixon55) Florida Morning appears every weekday. Subscribe via e-mail. PRIVATE PRISONS: As state lawmakers consider a massive expansion of prison privatization, one number dominates the debate: 7 percent. Tampa Bay Times <http://bit.ly/xuuJmC> 7,500 VOLUNTEERS: They won't get inside for the nominee's acceptance spe...

[Teachers find aid online](#)

(Lehigh News Star © 02/07/2012)

Research shows that students' reading skills deteriorate over summer vacation, so Lehigh Acres Elementary teacher Jennifer Moskall wanted to do something to keep her kids interested in academics. She just didn't have the funding. With the Lee County School District facing annual budget cuts from the state and her school's funding down, Moskall turned to an unlikely source to get supplies ? the I...

[School district reports finding no more rats at Panther Run Elementary](#)

(Palm Beach Post © 02/07/2012)

After catching 18 rats in Panther Run Elementary near Wellington this weekend, this morning school district spokesman Nat Harrington proudly informed the media that no rodents were found in those traps overnight, and that "technicians believe all have been eradicated." Palm Beach County School District staff worked fast to eradicate the infestation following media attention on the unwante...

[Letters: Prayer in school? Do as Jesus taught: Pray in private](#)

(Palm Beach Post © 02/07/2012)

The move to allow student-led prayer in public schools is so disingenuous as to be outright dishonest ("Senate OKs prayers led by students.") The issue never has been prayer or religion, since those who espouse prayer and religion in the public schools rarely are willing to include the prayers or religions of Mormons, Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, Muslims, Hindus, Bud...

[Coach Chad Lashley leaving his second job in two months](#)

For the second time in two months, Chad Lashley has turned in his resignation. On Dec. 9, Lashley left Navarre High School, where he was the head football coach for four seasons. Monday, Lashley walked away from the offensive coordinator position at Fort Walton Beach High. Both moves were to improve the amount of time he is able to spend with his family. His last day at Fort Walton Beach is toda...

[Charter schools could get cash cut](#)

(St. Augustine Record © 02/07/2012)

February 6, 2012 - 09:53pm Charter schools could get cash cut Record News Services Local property taxes could go to construction cost TALLAHASSEE — A sweeping charter school measure passed through the Senate Education Committee on Monday after a heated debate over a provision that would require school districts to give some construction money to public charter schools. The measure (...)

[Sweeping Charter Bill Passes After Building Debate](#)

(Tallahassee-WCTV (CBS) © 02/07/2012)

Tallahassee, FL – February 6, 2012 – A sweeping charter school measure passed through the Senate Education Committee on Monday after a heated debate over a provision that would require school districts to give some construction money to public charter schools. ...

[Biden touts tuition plan](#)

(Tampa Tribune © 02/07/2012)

TALLAHASSEE – Vice President Joe Biden made a pitch Monday for the Obama administration's proposals to make college affordable, including punishing schools that fail to keep their costs down, but he said that probably won't apply to low-tuition states such as Florida. Florida State University President Eric Barron, who met privately with Biden before he addressed students and f...

Have a lovely day! Please see the articles below.

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NPR/State Impact: How Does Arne Duncan Feel About Florida's New School Ranking System?

Tampa Bay Times: Charter schools should get tax money for maintenance costs, Senate panel says

Orlando Sentinel: Seminole challenges state over charter school appeals

The Ledger Editorial: Higher-Education Funding: Florida Fails Students

NPR/State Impact

How Does Arne Duncan Feel About Florida's New School Ranking System?

BY SARAH GONZALEZ

LAURA FIGUEROA / MIAMI HERALD

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (right) visits Pembroke Pines Charter High School in Broward County with Mayor Frank Ortis.

Last month, Gov. Rick Scott told the Florida Department of Education to rank all of Florida's 3,078 schools from best to worst.

That list was released last week — to criticism that it relied mostly on FCAT scores and did not take poverty into account.

So, my colleague John O'Connor and I wondered how U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan felt about the rankings. He made a stop in South Florida last week to talk about boosting college completion rates and making college more affordable.

During a town-hall style meeting at Pembroke Pines Charter High School in Broward County, Duncan told the crowd of high school seniors and their parents something that stuck with us.

Duncan said, "The problem with No Child Left Behind is that it measured [student] success by not being called a failure."

Duncan also talked about the stigma of being called a failure. So I asked Duncan what he thought of Florida's new school ranking system that labels schools first to last. I thought he'd feel the same about the rankings as he does about NCLB. But Duncan told StateImpact Florida he thinks "it's very important that we tell the truth in education," and measure success and failure.

"We've stayed in the sideline for far too long... We have dropout rates of 40, 50, 60%. I think we need to challenge that with everything we can."

—U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan

"So if you see a school that's improving and we're rewarding that, I think that's really important. If you see a school that is flat-lining or getting worse, I think we have to challenge the status quo," he said.

Duncan said poor Florida schools can learn from the high achieving schools, and that identifying the best schools can help the state share best practices.

"We've stayed in the sideline for far too long," he said. "Where we have folks that are just not working with a sense of urgency and we have dropout rates of 40, 50, 60% ... I think we need to challenge that with everything we can."

The elementary and middle school rankings are based solely on scores from the state's standardized exam, the FCAT.

Duncan said that test alone may not be a fair way to measure growth and gains. Just like graduation rates alone wouldn't be the best way either, he said.

"You [have] to look at multiple measures... Looking at yes, results, but also graduation rates, looking at college-going rates, looking at college-perseverance rates, looking at students passing [Advanced Placement] classes. There's a whole set of things you can look at and... get a more comprehensive view of success and progress."

Some high school rankings do consider graduation rates, accelerated coursework and college or career readiness. But 37 high schools were ranked solely on the FCAT this year.

And for schools like Noah's Ark International Charter School in Riviera Beach, which came in last place among elementary schools at 1,795th place, or Broward

Community Charter School, which ranked last among middle schools at 583rd place, Duncan has some encouraging words for them.

“For me it’s not about where you are today. It’s about where you are tomorrow.”

Duncan said that if a last place school improves next year, that school should be rewarded for improving and encouraged to keep improving. And if first-place West Melbourne Elementary School for Science in Brevard County starts getting complacent, the state should recognize that and step in, he said.

Tampa Bay Times

Charter schools should get tax money for maintenance costs, Senate panel says

By Kathleen McGrory, Times/Herald Tallahassee Bureau

TALLAHASSEE — The charter school movement flexed its legislative muscle Monday, taking a big step toward winning more funding from the state.

After an hour of intense debate, the Senate Education Committee approved a controversial bill requiring local school districts to share their construction and maintenance money with charter schools.

Under current law, only traditional public schools can levy property taxes for building and maintenance. Charter schools — which receive tax dollars, but are run by independent governing boards — cannot.

Florida school districts fought hard to defeat the bill, saying it would all but kill their ability to pay down debt on existing construction projects. Parent groups chimed in, too, saying public dollars should not go to charter school facilities, which are often owned by private companies and are not part of the public domain.

Broward County schools lobbyist Georgia Slack called the bill "a disaster to our capital outlay program."

"This will cost us \$20 million" a year, Slack said. "We don't have it."

Sen. Bill Montford, the lone Democrat on the committee with fellow Democratic Sen. Larcenia Bullard excused, filed 13 amendments to the bill. But only one was heard because committee members limited debate to one hour.

That amendment, which would have allowed traditional public schools to keep the construction and maintenance dollars, failed.

The overall bill passed 5-1.

"If this bill is passed (without amendments), this will result in an increase of financial stress on our school districts' debt burden," said Montford, who is also the chief executive officer of the Florida Associations of District School Superintendents.

Montford noted that charter schools received \$55 million from the state's Public Education Capital Outlay fund last year, while traditional public schools received nothing.

Last week, the House removed the provision about sharing construction and maintenance money from its bill.

Orlando Sentinel

Seminole challenges state over charter school appeals

By Dave Weber

SANFORD — The Seminole County School Board is opening another front in its battle with the state over the prospect of being forced to approve charter schools that it determines are unworthy to open.

After suing the state over one aspect of the charter-school process, the district now is challenging the state's authority to even conduct the charter school appeals. One involving Seminole is scheduled Tuesday in Tallahassee.

"The School Board has said 'enough is enough'— we are going to stand tall," said School Board Attorney Ned Julian.

The board is seeking a state administrative hearing on its challenge to procedures used by the Department of Education's Charter School Appeal Commission. Julian argues that while revised state law on charter schools provides for an appeals process, the Department of Education never bothered to update rules.

The Florida Department of Education declined to comment on Seminole's latest action, saying it had not evaluated the complaint.

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Three groups applied for charters in Seminole last fall, and the School Board turned down all three, citing various shortcomings. Despite the administrative-hearing challenge, the Florida Virtual Academy's appeal is to be heard today in Tallahassee.

In December the Seminole School Board, along with Polk County's, filed suit against the state seeking clarification of a new law that gives successful charter schools broad rights to "replicate" schools in other school districts. Renaissance Charter schools out of South Florida wanted to open a branch in Seminole but were denied.

Renaissance's appeal is set to go directly to the state Board of Education under provisions of the law.

Seminole had several criticisms of Renaissance's plans, including academic goals that were below what a typical Seminole school would achieve.

The Ledger Editorial

Higher-Education Funding: Florida Fails Students

The politicians in Tallahassee are champing at the bit to "reform" higher education in Florida. More scientists and fewer anthropologists. A new online university. New medical, law and dental schools. The micromanagement keeps on happening.

All of which might be fine if the politicians in the Florida Legislature haven't been failing so miserably in their single-most-important responsibility toward higher education: funding it adequately.

Recent reports from the National Science Board and the Center for the Study of Education Policy, at Illinois State University, tell the story. Florida universities are among those nationally that have seen a steady erosion in state funding over the past several years.

"Over the past five years, state support for higher education has declined 17.5 percent," reports The Associated Press. "As the state proportion of funding has

declined, universities have relied more on tuition, now nearly 50 percent of their operating budget."

ENROLLMENT RISES, FUNDS STAGNATE

The AP report added: "Overall state funding appropriations in Florida are about the same as they were 10 years ago, after having risen leading up to 2007-2008. Meanwhile, enrollment has increased by more than 24 percent."

More students, less state funding. That's hardly a prescription for higher-education reform.

Rather, it is an indictment of the Legislature's failure to invest in Florida's intellectual infrastructure.

Gov. Rick Scott is promising an additional \$1 billion for public schools next year, and that will barely compensate for an increase in students and other costs. No investment in colleges and universities — even at that feeble level — seems in the offing. This despite the fact Scott himself says it is crucial that Florida "have the best educated workforce with the necessary skills to be competitive in our 21st century global economy."

The Florida Legislature has been marching backward when it comes to investing in the very institutions that are needed to help create and sustain the educated, skilled workforce Scott so covets.

Enough micromanaging, lawmakers. Do your jobs and fund Florida public higher education responsibly.