



SREB

Legislative Report

Final legislative and budget actions

Alabama (<http://www.legislature.state.al.us/>)

For 2019-20, the Education Trust Fund budget, which supports educational and other programs in the state, rises 7.4% above the budgeted 2018-19 level to \$7.1 billion. Funding for K-12 education programs rises 7% to nearly \$4.9 billion, including \$3.9 billion for the K-12 Foundation Program, a 5% increase. This includes funding for the 4% teacher raise enacted with the passage of Senate Bill 192.

K-12 education funding to the state Department of Education rises 13.6% to \$251.7 million. This includes increases for the Alabama Reading Initiative (up 12.7% to \$51.3 million), career and technical education (up 32.7% to \$8.1 million), distance learning (up 9.9% to \$20.2 million), and the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (up 4.1% to \$30.3 million). The Department of Early Childhood Education receives \$127.3 million, up 22.2%.

Community colleges receive \$416.3 million, a 9.1% increase, including \$7.2 million for industry certification initiatives (up 18.1%) and \$13.9 million for dual enrollment (up 18.5%). University funding rises 7% to \$1.2 billion. Student financial aid provided through the Commission on Higher Education is up 20.3% to \$17.8 million. The State General Fund, which supports non-education government functions, is up 2.1% to nearly \$2.2 billion.

The Legislature established the Alabama Literacy Act with the passage of House Bill 388. Beginning with the 2021-22 school year, a student is required to demonstrate sufficient reading proficiency for promotion from grade three to grade four. The bill requires the State Superintendent of Education to convene a task force that will recommend core reading and reading intervention programs for students and a science of reading teacher development program for elementary-grade teachers, and will approve reading assessments and assessment systems for use by schools.

A student in kindergarten through grade three who exhibits reading deficiencies will be provided reading intervention services to address the deficiency.

The Alabama Literacy Act specifies uses for Alabama Reading Initiative funding, including: regional literacy specialists and local and regional reading specialists; reading teacher development for elementary grades teachers; screening and diagnostic reading assessments; implementing scientifically based reading instruction; and providing need-based differentiated instruction and intervention. Regional reading specialists and literacy specialists will provide intensive support to elementary grades schools whose reading assessment scores are among in the lowest 5% statewide. The legislation establishes the Alabama Summer Achievement Program, funded through the Alabama Reading Initiative, which will be available to all students in kindergarten through grade three at the lowest-performing 5% of all elementary grades schools.

Legislators approved House Bill 216 to phase computer science courses into the statewide curriculum. Each high school is required to offer at least one computer science course beginning in 2020-21; each middle grades school is required to offer computer science instruction beginning in 2021-22, and each elementary school is required to offer such instruction beginning in 2022-23. Completion of a computer science course will be a high school graduation requirement beginning with students graduating in 2021. The bill adds the teaching field of computer science to the subject areas eligible for the Alabama Math and Science Teacher Education Loan Repayment Program.

House Bill 209 specifies that a school resource officer is a certified law enforcement officer in good standing and has the power of arrest.

Legislators moved to protect the free speech rights of students, faculty and staff at state colleges and universities with the passage of House Bill 498. The board of trustees for each public college and university in the state is required to adopt a policy on free expression. The policies must state that institutions will strive to ensure intellectual freedom and free expression, that students, faculty and staff are free to engage in constitutionally protected speech, that the institutions will be open to speakers invited by faculty or student organizations, and that members of the campus community are prohibited from disrupting or infringing upon others' constitutionally protected expression. The bill requires annual reports from each institution on violations of the free speech policy for the preceding 12 months, as well as any difficulties, controversies or successes in maintaining institutional neutrality toward protected expression.

Other legislation

HB 21 permits a teacher to receive, at the time he or she retires, a lump sum payment of up to 24 months of retirement payments in exchange for reduced monthly retirement payments.

HB 32, the Kyle Graddy Act, allows a school student to possess and self-administer single dose, auto-injectable epinephrine.

HB 385 requires a local board of education to incorporate four alert levels, along with set plans of notification, action, and procedures for school personnel to follow in each circumstance, in its required school Emergency Operations Plan: Heightened Awareness; Secure Your Area of Responsibility; Secure Perimeter; and Lockdown.

HB 506 extends, from one to two years, the maximum term of an emergency teaching certificate, and permits the State Superintendent of Education to renew an emergency certificate once (for a total term of four years).

SB 195, the Alabama Industry Recognized and Registered Apprenticeship Program Act, establishes the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship within the state Department of Commerce. The office will register and regulate apprenticeship programs according to federal and state apprenticeship laws.

Arkansas (<http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/>)

Before adjourning, the Arkansas Legislature passed the Revenue Stabilization Act that implements the budget for the 2019-21 biennium. Statewide general funds total \$5.6 billion in 2019-20, up 2.5% from the enacted 2018-19 total. Funding to support the operation of elementary and secondary schools rises to \$2.2 billion (up 1.7%). General funds to support the state Department of Education, the schools for the deaf and the blind, the Department of Career Education, rehabilitative services, and technical and vocational institutes increase to \$109 million, up 3.1%, including \$41.8 million for the state share of school construction projects. Arkansas's two technical institutes, which work to increase the employability of students, will operate with level funding of \$5.4 million in 2019-20.

Funding for postsecondary institutions rises to \$745.6 million in 2019-20, up 1.3%. This includes \$595.1 million for four-year colleges and universities, \$117 million for two-year colleges and \$33.6 million for two-year technical colleges.

Legislators passed House Bill 1145, the Teacher Salary Enhancement Act, enacting the governor's proposal to annually increase the minimum salary of teachers over the next four years. House Bill 1485 permits school districts to spend funds allocated for public education on dyslexia programs and interventions, and efforts to recruit and retrain effective teachers.

Senate Bill 153, School Level Improvement Plans and Right to Read Act, requires the state Department of Education to create an approved list of materials, resources, and curricula supported by the science of reading, and requires licensed teachers to obtain an awareness credential in scientific reading instruction. The bill also requires, beginning in 2020-21, the department to place on probationary status those public schools and open-enrollment public charter schools that do not provide professional development in scientific reading instruction, and to inform parents that the district has not met the professional development requirement. Senate Bill 603 requires the state Department of Education to provide additional support to school districts in which 40% or more of the students received an "in need of support" reading assessment score.

To provide an avenue for students to report incidents that cause or have the potential to cause physical, mental, or emotional damage to students, legislators passed House Bill 1963, which creates a school safety and crisis line known as ARSafeSchools. The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Psychiatric Research Institute is required to establish and operate the pilot school safety and crisis program. ARSafeSchools will be accessible by telephone, text message, and a smartphone application, will allow students to report incidents anonymously, and will provide crisis intervention services including suicide prevention.

Another school safety-related measure, House Bill 1437, requires teachers, school counselors and school officials to notify law enforcement if they believe there is a serious and imminent threat of violence in, or targeted at, a school and that threat has been communicated to the person in the course of his or her professional duties. House Bill 1398 repeals the School Discipline Act and School Dismissal Act and requires the state Department of Education to establish rules (previously, guidelines) on school district student discipline policies and data. Under the bill, such policies may include alternative means to continue student engagement and access to education during periods of student suspension or expulsion. House Bill 1790 requires a school to offer digital learning courses or other alternative means of earning academic credit to an expelled student.

The Legislature approved the Arkansas Concurrent Challenge Scholarship Program with the passage of Senate Bill 343. The program will provide scholarships to high school students in grades 11 and 12 to attend concurrent enrollment courses or certificate programs at a college or university that provides at least a 50% discount on tuition and fees for those courses. Senate Bill 140 requires the Department of Education to develop and implement work-based learning programs in high-skill and high-wage industries and occupations, as selected by the State Apprenticeship Coordination Steering Committee.

Other legislation

HB 1175 permits a student, if their parent or guardian is an active-duty member of the military who has been transferred to and resides on a military base, to transfer between public school districts at any time during the year.

HB 1296, the Keep Arkansas Working Act of 2019, prohibits any state authority from suspending or revoking an individual's license based on being in default or delinquent on student loans or the requirements or conditions of a scholarship.

HB 1356, the Hunger-Free Students' Bill of Rights Act, requires public schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program to provide a meal or snack to all students, regardless of existing debt or their ability to pay for the meal.

HB 1400 requires the House and Senate Committees on Education to conduct a biennial study of the Succeed Scholarship Program.

HB 1413 prohibits a school from charging tuition to a private or home school student for a concurrent enrollment course unless the school also charges its students for such courses.

HB 1419 requires all public schools to allow private or home school students living within the school district to enroll in academic courses; previously, schools were permitted, but not required, to do so.

HB 1467 and SB 490 extend eligibility for the Succeed Scholarship Program — which provides financial aid for students in foster care or with disabilities to attend private schools — to students with an individualized service plan under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

HB 1600 specifies that individuals who earn a teaching license after completing an alternative educator preparation program are eligible for student loan repayment under the State Teacher Education Program.

HB 1901 establishes the Academic Support Scholarship to provide awards of up to \$250 for tutoring, assessment fees, educational materials and technology fees for students 18 years of age or younger who graduated high school with a GPA of at least 2.0.

SB 199 repeals the Public School Student Services Act and enacts the School Counseling Improvement Act of 2019, which requires each school district to implement a comprehensive school counseling program. The bill requires a school counselor to spend at least 90% of their working time providing services to students.

SB 381 prohibits the use of corporal punishment on a child who is intellectually disabled, non-ambulatory, nonverbal, or autistic.

Delaware (<http://legis.delaware.gov/>)

The Delaware General Assembly approved a \$4.5 billion budget for 2019-20, up 4.2% over 2018-19; this is a greater increase than proposed by the governor, due to growth in revenue projections. The Delaware Department of Education receives nearly \$1.6 billion, up 6.1%, of which school districts and charter schools receive \$1.5 billion, up 5.8%. This includes a 2% pay increase for educators, \$700,000 for the High Needs Educator Student Loan Repayment Program, up 250%, and \$1 million to establish a yearlong residency program for incoming teachers. Legislators also approved \$1.6 million for math coaches, up 56%, and \$36.2 million for early childhood initiatives under the Stars for Early Success early learning quality rating and improvement program, up 22.8%.

Funding for postsecondary institutions rises to \$247.1 million in 2019-20, up 4.1%. This includes \$125.3 million for University of Delaware, \$36.5 million for Delaware State University, and \$84.9 million for Delaware Technical Community College.

In addition to the operating budget, for one-time operating expenditures in 2019-20 lawmakers approved House Bill 226, a supplemental spending bill appropriating additional general funds of nearly \$62 million. This includes \$12.5 million for each year over a three-year period to the Opportunity Fund, which will provide additional funding for English Learner and low-income students.

To prevent and mitigate the negative impact of childhood exposure to trauma the legislators passed House Bill 74, which allows police officers and emergency-care providers to transmit the name of a child who was present at the scene of a traumatic event to the child's school district or charter school to ensure the child is handled in a trauma-informed way.

Senate Bill 148 replaces the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission with the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity, which will monitor educational progress and outcomes for students in the city of Wilmington and for all low-income, English learner and at-risk students across northern New Castle County and recommend to the governor and General Assembly policies and actions to support continuous educational improvement in those areas. Under House Bill 222, the State Board of Education must base any plan to change or alter the boundaries of school districts in that area on the recommendations of the consortium, and must include in its redistricting plan directives for improving the education options available to students as well as an assessment of the educational needs of students and the resources required to meet those needs.

Senate Bill 187 requires that the Department of Education ensure the standards of the Delaware Stars for Early Success system are consistent with the regulations of the Office of Child Care Licensing. It also moves the Office of Child Care Licensing from the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families to the Delaware Department of Education to facilitate that consistency.

Following a review by the Joint Legislative Oversight and Sunset Committee of the Delaware Advisory Council on Career and Technical Education (DACCTE), legislators passed Senate Bill 138. In addition to changes in Council membership, the legislation requires DACCTE to establish a schedule for monitoring career and technical education programs, including on-site monitoring, and to produce an annual report that includes all advocacy efforts made on behalf of career and technical education students and reports from all on-site monitoring visits.

Other legislation

HB 92 creates, within the existing Interagency Resource Management Committee, the Expanded Learning Opportunities Subcommittee to provide research, coordination, and recommendations regarding before and after school programs and summer learning opportunities for school-age children.

HB 128 extends the time period for which a member of the Delaware National Guard may receive funding for certain postsecondary education tuition and fees from 10 years to 15 years.

SB 50 gives the Delaware Community College Board of trustees the authority to issue bonds to finance capital improvements, maintenance, and the acquisition of equipment and technology, and establishes the Community College Infrastructure Fund for repayment of the bonds.

SB 78 requires each school district and each charter school that serves students in any grade from seven to 12 to provide, beginning in 2020-21, age-appropriate instruction on consent and respecting others' physical boundaries.

SB 175 allows a student receiving a merit-based SEED award who completes an associate degree in fewer than 6 semesters (the maximum number of semesters for which a student may receive SEED) to apply the remaining semesters of the award toward a bachelor's degree at either the University of Delaware or Delaware Technical and Community College.

Florida (<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/>)

Legislators approved a \$34 billion general fund budget for 2019-20, a 5.1% increase over the prior year. K-12 general funds are up 5.2% to \$12.4 billion, including \$8.8 billion (up 10%) in Florida Education Finance Program formula funding to schools and a level \$2.9 billion in class size reduction funding. Lottery funds for FEFP are down 31.9% to \$353.4 million while lottery funds for class size reduction and the School Recognition Program are level at \$103.8 million and \$134.6 million, respectively.

Within the FEFP appropriations, \$180 million in combined lottery and general funds (up 11.1%) were directed to districts to support student discipline and school safety while \$75 million in combined funds (up 8.3%) were provided for school-based mental health care and for mental health training for educators and school staff. Legislators also allocated \$284.5 million in combined general and lottery funds (up 21.6%) under FEFP for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Scholarship programs, which provide financial awards to effective teachers and principals.

The Gardiner Scholarship Program for K-12 students with disabilities receives \$147.9 million in general funds, a 15.2% increase. The voluntary prekindergarten program for children age 4 receives \$402.3 million, up 1%.

State colleges receive \$1.1 billion in general funds, up 15.6%. This includes \$14 million (up 40%) in performance-based incentives for college students who earn industry certifications, as well as new funding of \$20 million to support colleges' efforts to increase the number of students who earn associate degrees and transfer to four-year degree programs and \$10 million to support colleges' efforts to align career education programs with workforce demands.

General funds for universities are down 0.7% to \$2.8 billion. General funds for student financial aid is up 4.7% to \$260.8 million, including \$21.4 million (up 35.2%) for the Benacquisto Scholarship program for National Merit Scholars. Lottery funding for the merit-based Bright Futures scholarship

program is up 49.8% to \$595.1 million. Combined general and lottery funding for the need-based Florida Student Assistance Grant program for students at public colleges and universities is up 4.7% to \$169.3 million.

Legislators approved Senate Bill 7030 to enact recommendations of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission. It identifies four safe-school officer options — school resource officer, school safety officer, school guardian, and school security guard — and requires sheriff's offices to assist school boards in complying with the requirements for each type of safe-school officer. The bill requires each school board to adopt an active assailant response plan and ensure that all school personnel receive annual training on that plan, requires them to define criteria for reporting an act that poses a threat to school safety to local law enforcement, and requires them to use the Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool for school security assessments. A school district threat assessment team is required to use the threat assessment instrument developed by the state Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools, while the office is required to annually publish information on the number of safe-school officers in the state and disciplinary incidents involving those officers.

Senate Bill 7070 addresses several K-12 education issues, including school choice, improvement and accountability, and teacher preparation, certification, recruitment and retention. It establishes the Family Empowerment Scholarship program, which will provide scholarships for children in kindergarten through grade 12 to attend private schools. To be eligible a child's family must have an income of less than 300% of the federal poverty level; the state Department of Education is required to give priority to children whose family income is 185% of the federal poverty level or lower. The amount of each award is 95% of the per-student FEFP formula funding amount, plus the per-student amount for most categorical funding; the legislation also modifies awards provided under the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship and Hope Scholarship programs so they are the same as Family Empowerment Scholarship awards. The bill expands eligibility for where a charter school may be established under the Schools of Hope program to include population census tracts that have been designated by the federal Treasury Department as Qualified Opportunity Zones.

Senate Bill 7070 modifies the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship program by eliminating SAT or ACT performance as an eligibility factor, and creates three types of awards — one-time recruitment awards for new teachers who are content experts, retention awards for teachers who have been at an improving school for at least two years, and recognition awards for instructional personnel rated as effective or highly effective. It modifies the Best and Brightest Principal Scholarship by replacing the eligibility criteria that required a certain proportion of teachers at a principal's school to receive Best and Brightest awards with requirements that a principal serves at their school for at least four years and that the school demonstrate a certain amount of academic improvement over the prior three years.

The legislation establishes an FEFP allocation for public schools that are in or exiting turnaround status to offer wraparound services to students and their families. It establishes the Community School Grant Program (which received \$7.4 million in general funds) which will provide funds for the planning and implementation of community school agreements between school districts, community organizations, colleges or universities and health care providers for programs to provide for student, family and community needs during and outside of the school day.

Senate Bill 7071 addresses workforce education, including establishing a career and technical education pathway for students to earn a standard high school diploma and permitting a student to substitute a computer science credit for a mathematics or science credit to meet high school graduation requirements. It requires each middle grades student to complete a course in career and education prior to promotion to high school.

The legislation establishes the Strengthening Alignment between Industry and Learning (SAIL) to 60 Initiative, with a goal of raising by 2030 the percentage of working-age adults who hold a post-secondary certificate or degree or high-value training experience to 60%, and also establishes the Last Mile Scholarship Program, which will provide awards that cover the tuition and fees for in-state resident students at state colleges who are 12 or fewer credit hours from completing their first associate or bachelor's degree. The bill creates the Florida Pathways to Career Opportunities grant program, which provides funding for educational institutions including schools, state colleges and school district career centers to create or expand apprenticeship programs; legislators appropriated \$10 million for the program. It also reconstitutes the Higher Education Coordinating Council as the Florida Talent Development Council; the council will develop a data-driven statewide approach to workforce development.

In addition, Senate Bill 7071 permits a school district to issue a three-year, nonrenewable adjunct teaching certificate for full-time employment (previously such certificates were limited to part-time).

House Bill 1027 requires the Office of Early Learning to establish professional development standards and career pathways for early childhood teachers and school readiness program providers.

Under Senate Bill 190, a student is eligible to receive a Bright Futures scholarship for five years after graduating from high school (previously, two years) and may now receive an award for more than 45 credit hours in a year. For students who enter state universities in summer 2019 and beyond, the cap on program credit hours that a student may earn before being subject to a tuition surcharge is 120% of degree requirements (previously, 110%). The legislation establishes the 2+2 targeted pathway program; each state college and state university is required to execute at least one articulation agreement under the program that provides a college student who graduates from that college with an associate degree guaranteed access to the bachelor's degree program at the university. The bill also eliminates the \$15 million annual cap on the amount that may be appropriated for performance funding to state colleges and to school district workforce education programs for students who earn industry certifications.

Other legislation

HB 593 permits a state college whose enrollment decreases by more than 10% due to a hurricane to waive out-of-state fees for a period of up to three years.

HB 741 adds to provisions that prohibit discrimination in the K-20 education system against students and employees to also prohibit discrimination based on religion.

HB 807 requires the Commissioner of Education to review all state-adopted civics course instructional materials and the statewide civics end-of-course assessment and make recommendations for improvement by the end of 2019; the state Department of Education must review civics education course standards by the end of 2020.

HB 7123 requires any tax levy for a school district's operations that is approved after June 30, 2019, to be shared with each charter school within that district proportional with the school's enrollment.

SB 1080, Andrew's Law, provides an individual immunity from prosecution for an act of college hazing if they were present at an act of hazing, were the first person to report the hazing victim's need of immediate medical attention to 911 or campus security, and remained on the scene until the arrival of, and cooperated with, medical or law enforcement personnel.

Georgia (<http://www.legis.ga.us>)

Georgia legislators ended their session on April 2 having passed the amended 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 budgets. The amended 2018-19 budget sets state general funds at \$26.9 billion, an increase of 1.6%. This includes \$129.9 million for the state Department of Education to provide for midterm enrollment growth and additional funds for charter system grants and State Charter Schools Commission supplements. Also included was \$69.4 million to provide school security grants of \$30,000 each for educational facilities including charter schools, college and career academies, Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support facilities, and three state schools. The amended budget also increases funding in the Governor's Office of Student Achievement for Advanced Placement Exams, bringing the total appropriation to \$3.7 million for 53,000 exams.

The approved 2019-20 general fund budget grew 5.2% over the originally approved prior-year budget to \$23.7 billion.

K-12 funding rose 7.1% to \$10.6 billion, including an increase of 6.4% for Quality Basic Education formula funding. This includes funding for a \$3,000 pay raise for certified teachers and certified personnel, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, special education specialists, speech and language pathologists, media specialists, and technology specialists, starting July 1, 2019. The budget also includes \$2.8 million to provide bus drivers, lunch-room workers, and school nurses a 2% pay raise.

The budget provides \$47.8 million for growth in charter system grants and State Commission Charter School supplements. House Bill 31 includes an additional \$2 million, combined with \$1.5 million in existing funds, to provide facilities grants for local charter schools of up to \$100,000 per school. The Curriculum Development Program in the Department of Education includes \$750,000 for grants to professional development programs for teachers providing instruction in computer science, as well as \$100,000 for a pilot program to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness of early reading assistance programs for students with risk factors for dyslexia.

The Department of Early Care and Learning budget includes \$15 million in lottery funds for the \$3,000 pay raise for certified teachers and \$1.5 million for a 2% salary increase for assistant teachers in Georgia's Pre-Kindergarten Program.

Funding for the University System of Georgia is \$2.5 billion, a 6.2% increase. The Technical College System of Georgia receives \$368.6 million, an increase of 1.4%. The Georgia Student Finance Commission receives \$142.3 million in general funds, unchanged from the original 2018-19 budget. Lottery funding for HOPE scholarships at public universities rises 10.3% to \$701.1 million, and lottery funds for prekindergarten rise 3.1% to \$378.7 million.

Senate Bill 48 builds on the work of the Senate Study Committee on Dyslexia. It requires the State Board of Education to develop policies for referring K-3 students for dyslexia screening if they have been identified through the Response to Intervention (RTI) process as having characteristics of dyslexia, aphasia, dyscalculia or dysgraphia. The state Department of Education is required to make available a dyslexia informational handbook that includes guidance, technical assistance, and training to assist schools and districts in implementing evidence-based practices for instructing students with characteristics of dyslexia. The department is also required to collaborate with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to improve and update dyslexia professional development opportunities for teachers.

The bill also requires the State School Superintendent to establish a three-year pilot program in at least three local school systems beginning in the 2020-21 school year to evaluate the effectiveness of early reading assistance programs for students with risk factors for dyslexia. The pilot must include universal dyslexia screening of all K-3 students. Beginning in 2024-2025, all local school systems are required to screen all kindergarten students for characteristics of dyslexia and continue screening students in grades 1-3 who are identified through RTI.

The legislation requires the Georgia Professional Standards Commission to create a dyslexia endorsement for teachers. The commission must include in its standards for teacher preparation programs instruction in dyslexia, including the characteristics of dyslexia, evidence-based interventions and accommodations for students with characteristics of dyslexia, and general instruction on RTI.

House Bill 68 prohibits any entity that operates, owns or is affiliated with, or is a subsidiary of an association, organization or other entity that provides accreditation of elementary or secondary schools, from acting as a student scholarship organization under the Georgia Tax Credit Program. The program provides tax credits to individuals and corporations that make donations to organizations providing scholarships for students to attend private schools.

Other legislation

HB 12 requires that every public school post the toll-free telephone number provided by the Division of Family and Children's Services of the Department of Human Services to receive reports of child abuse or neglect.

HB 59 allows children of members of the military to enroll in public elementary and secondary schools based on the receipt of official military orders prior to physically establishing residency.

HB 218 clarifies that students receiving the HOPE Scholarship for the first time between July 1, 2011, and June 30, 2019 have eligibility for HOPE for seven years from high school graduation while students receiving the HOPE Scholarship for the first time from July 1, 2019 are eligible for ten years from high school graduation. Active duty military service does not count against the time a student is eligible to receive the scholarship.

SB 83 codifies the Realizing Educational Attainment Can Happen (REACH) Scholarship program — a needs-based mentorship and scholarship program administered by the Georgia Student Finance Authority.

SB 108 requires courses in computer science in middle grades and high school. The provision is phased in and includes provisions for professional development for teachers.

Kentucky (<https://legislature.ky.gov>)

During its 2019 regular legislative session the Kentucky Legislature passed House Bill 268, which amends the 2018-20 biennial budget but did not change any education appropriations for 2019-20. The bill permits general fund appropriations for the Kentucky DataSeam Initiative (intended to improve education technology in school districts) in all school districts, rather than only in coal-producing counties. The bill also eliminates general funds for the Office of Professional Education Preparation Programs at the Council on Postsecondary Education.

Kentucky's 2019-20 general fund totals \$11.8 billion, up 2.3% from the first year of the biennium; much of the increase is due to increased appropriations for health and family services and to budget reserve funds. General funds for the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System decline 13.1% to \$719.4 million in 2019-20. Statewide general funds for K-12 education decline 0.1% to \$4.1 billion, including \$3 billion for SEEK formula funding to schools (down 0.3%). Funding for education and workforce development rises to \$53.7 million (up 1.1%).

General funds to four-year colleges and universities rise slightly to \$862.9 million (up 0.1%), while community and technical college system funding declines to \$166 million (down 1%). Legislators allocated \$38.7 million, up 24.7%, to the Postsecondary Education Performance Fund. The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) receives \$239.1 million (up 3%). This includes \$2.5 million (unchanged from the prior year) for the last-dollar Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship — established with the passage of Senate Bill 98 — which permits students to attend Kentucky Community and Technical College System institutions at no cost.

House Bill 61 extends eligibility for the merit-based Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) to students in registered apprenticeship programs or qualified workforce training programs.

To help professionals retain their occupational licenses while paying off student loan debt, House Bill 118 prohibits a licensing authority from suspending or revoking an individual's license solely on the basis of that individual being in default or delinquent on a student loan or work-conditional scholarship.

Senate Bill 1 specifies that the Center for School Safety serves as the central point for data analysis, research, dissemination of information about successful school safety and school security programs, best practices, training standards, and new programs. It also establishes the office of the state school security marshal within the Department of Criminal Justice Training to monitor school safety and security initiatives, develop safety training guidelines, and ensure compliance with state school safety provisions. The school security marshal is required to develop a school security risk assessment tool in collaboration with the Center for School Safety and KDE to identify threats, vulnerabilities, and appropriate safety controls for each school within the district.

The bill requires each school district to appoint a district-level school safety coordinator and requires districts and law enforcement agencies to assign at least one certified school resource officer to each school as funds and qualified officers become available. In addition, the state is required to provide an anonymous reporting tool to districts for students, parents and community members to provide information on unsafe and potentially harmful activities and threats.

Another school safety bill, Senate Bill 162, requires a Kentucky State Police School Resource Officer to possess sworn law enforcement authority and be trained in school-based policing and crisis response.

Senate Bill 175 modifies the school accountability system to require the state Department of Education to provide targeted support and improvement services to a school that is in the lowest performing 10% of all schools at the same level, and that has at least one student subgroup whose performance is at or below the performance of students in the lowest-performing 5% of all schools for three consecutive years. The state Department of Education is required to report to the Interim Joint Committee on Education by December of 2019 and 2020 on the assessment required for graduation for students graduating from high school in 2023 and beyond, including information on and options for students who do not meet the required assessment score and the expected impact of enacting the requirement.

Other legislation

HB 22 changes a local board of education vacancy from being appointed by the chief state school officer to being appointed by a majority vote of the local board.

HB 250 specifies that the period of time in which a prepaid tuition contract under the state prepaid tuition program may be used begins with a student's projected college entrance year and continues for eight years.

HB 328 specifies that a non-student adult is not guilty of unlawful possession of a firearm on school property if the weapon is contained in and remains in that adult's vehicle.

HB 356 permits an armed forces service member or their spouse or dependent to retain in-state residency status at state colleges or universities if the service member is transferred on military orders after they (or their spouse or dependent) have been accepted for enrollment.

HB 399 allows a child of a military family to pre-enroll or participate in pre-admission in a school district with official documentation if the parent or guardian of the child is transferred to or is pending transfer to a military installation within the state while on active military duty pursuant to an official military order.

HB 444 allows the Department of Education to continue to distribute state supplemental funds for a locally operated technology center to a district when the district enters a collaborative project agreement between two or more school districts and moves the center as part of the agreement.

Louisiana (<http://www.legis.la.gov>)

After considerable debate during the legislative session over revisions to general fund forecasts for the state, the Louisiana General Assembly adopted a general fund budget of just under \$9 billion for 2019-20, up 1.6% over the existing 2018-19 operating budget. The forecast revisions provided legislators with \$119 million more to budget than originally expected.

General funds for K-12 education rise to \$3.8 billion, up 3.7%. That amount includes a total of \$3.5 billion for Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula funding to school districts, up 2.7%. The MFP formula funding includes \$101.3 million to provide the \$1,000 pay raise for public school teachers and \$500 pay raise for support personnel approved in Senate Concurrent Resolution 3. K-12 general funds also include level funding of \$35.2 million for the LA 4 Early Childhood Program and \$6.9 million for the Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development Program. The LA 4 Early Childhood Program and Nonpublic Schools Early Childhood Development programs provide early childhood education and services to low-income families. The Student Scholarships for Educational Excellence Program, which provides funds for students at poor-performing public schools to attend nonpublic schools, is also level funded at \$41.9 million.

General funds to higher education institutions rise to \$1.1 billion in 2019-20, up 4.7%. This includes \$251.9 million for merit-based TOPS scholarships that fully cover the 2020 tuition amount for the recipients, and \$61.2 million for need-based GO Grants. Two-year and four-year institutions receive \$121.9 million (up 2%) and \$381.6 million (3.1%) respectively.

As a means to remove barriers to work for people who are delinquent or in default on student loans, legislators approved House Bill 423, which repeals the law that previously permitted a professional board or commission to suspend or revoke a professional or occupational license or deny an

application for one if an individual was delinquent or in default on their student loans. The bill further expressly prohibits such suspensions, revocations or denials.

Previously, state law required that grants from the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund be awarded through the Child Care Assistance Program. House Bill 395 specifies that funds are instead to be used to provide services to program-eligible families. In addition, the legislation reduces, from 2-to-1 to 1-to-1, the rate at which nonstate funds must be matched to grant funds; it also specifies that recipients must establish eligibility criteria for grant funded programs, including that children in such a program come from economically disadvantaged families.

Senate Bill 243 establishes a statewide dual enrollment framework task force. The task force will make recommendations to the Legislature by October 1, 2020 for a statewide dual enrollment framework that is designed to provide universal access to dual enrollment courses to all qualified public high school juniors and seniors.

To increase community support and collaboration with regard to special education in public schools, Senate Bill 158 requires each school district and charter school to create an advisory council to provide advice and feedback regarding special education policies, procedures, and resources.

House Resolution 222 and Senate Resolution 182 request the state Department of Education to establish the Louisiana Early Literacy Commission to make recommendations for the state to develop and implement an effective, evidence-based reading instruction system for children from birth through grade three, and to make recommendations that will improve the reading proficiency of students in grade three.

Other legislation

HB 239 requires the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to provide personal financial management instruction for public school students regarding student loan borrowing to fund postsecondary education.

HB 321 authorizes a local school board or chartering authority to adopt policies that define student attendance at virtual school for the purpose of complying with state laws that address excessive student absences (including required parental notification and referral to truancy officers and family and juvenile courts).

HB 482 requires a public school that is required to develop an academic improvement plan to consult with parents in developing the plan.

HCR 96 requests the Board of Regents to conduct a study of student debt relief measures, nationally and statewide, and to make recommendations for legislation to address debt as a barrier to reenrollment for those who have some postsecondary education, as well as recommendations for establishing a tuition relief and engagement program.

HR 210 and SR 206 request that the Louisiana Community and Technical College System continue a pilot program to provide public post-secondary education scholarships in programs that lead to high-demand, high-paying occupations for adult students who have earned an alternative high school diploma.

HR 228 requests the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to study the challenges faced by rural school systems impacted by economic downturns resulting in decreased revenues and declining student populations, and to submit recommendations to the House Committee on Education.

SCR 57 requests the Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to work with the governor and legislators to develop a ten-year plan to increase teacher salaries and make Louisiana's average teacher salary the highest in the nation.

Maryland (<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/>)

Statewide general fund appropriations total \$19.4 billion in 2019-20 — up 8.4% over the 2018-19 budget. General funds for state universities and programs at the Maryland Higher Education Commission are up 3.2% to \$1.5 billion while general funds for community colleges rise 2.9% to \$331.7 million. State general fund aid to education (including library funding) is up 5.8% to \$6.4 billion.

The General Assembly approved Senate Bill 1030, The Blueprint for Maryland's Future, to transform the state's education system and to enact the interim recommendations of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, known as the Kirwan Commission. The principles of the Blueprint are setting instruction and expected student skills to international standards, providing all students with access to educational opportunities beginning in early childhood so they will be ready for college and careers, and eliminating opportunity and achievement gaps. It calls for early educational support and intervention for students, diverse and high-quality teachers and school leaders, setting college and career readiness standards to guarantee success in a student's first year of post-secondary education, additional resources and services for students who require them to meet the career- and college-ready standard, and a strong accountability system to ensure the success of all students.

The legislation provides \$255.7 million in additional education funding in 2019-20 from non-general funds. Uses for the funding include teacher salary incentive grants (\$75 million), educating student with disabilities (\$65.5 million), grants to schools with concentrated poverty (\$54.6 million), expanding full-day prekindergarten (\$31.7 million), grants for school districts to provide additional academic supports for struggling learners (\$23 million), and funding for each school district to hire a full-time mental health services coordinator (\$2 million) as required by the 2018 Maryland Safe to Learn Act. In addition, the legislation extends the commission's term through the end of 2019.

House Bill 1301 and Senate Bill 728 specify that, for revenue collected from the sales and use tax on certain marketplace facilitators and sellers, any revenues in a fiscal year that exceed \$100 million must be distributed to the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education Fund.

To help schools intervene with students at risk for poor learning outcomes, legislators passed House Bill 734, which requires each local board of education to implement, beginning with the 2020-21 school year, screening that can identify students with potential reading difficulties. Boards are required to provide these students with supplemental, evidence-based reading instruction.

Senate Bill 661 permits the establishment of community schools, which are public schools that establish partnerships with other community organizations to provide education integrated with health and social services, youth and community development, and family and community engagement. Under the legislation, a community school is required to provide educational opportunities for adults and family members of students, support programs that address out-of-school learning barriers, and provide expanded learning time opportunities.

Other legislation

HB 440 restricts to three the number of planning grants that may be awarded in 2019-20 to establish Pathways in Technology Early High (P-TECH) schools.

HB 725 requires the state Board of Education to provide technical assistance and training to school districts on the use of restorative student discipline, which is preventative and proactive, emphasizes strong relationships and setting clear behavioral expectations, and focuses on accountability for harm caused by problem behavior as well as ways to repair relationships affected by that behavior.

HB 1019 requires that before the state Board of Education may require a student to achieve a passing score on a newly implemented standardized assessment for that student to be evaluated for high school graduation, the state Department of Education must field test and pilot the assessment for at least one year.

HB 1113 and SB 640 establish the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability in the state Department of Legislative Services; local school systems are among the entities subject to performance evaluations by the office.

SB 128, the Community Control of School Calendars Act, repeals all provisions requiring schools to begin a school year after or end a school year by a certain date and requires each local board of education to establish the start and end dates of the school year.

SB 260 expands eligibility for the Maryland Community College Promise Scholarship to an individual enrolled at a community college in a sequence of courses that lead to licensure or certification, or in a registered apprenticeship program.

SB 653 permits two county boards of education to establish innovative regional schools that offer special courses or curricula.

Mississippi (<https://www.legislature.ms.gov>)

Legislators passed a \$6.3 billion state-funded budget for 2019-20, 3.8% above the original 2018-19 appropriation. State funds for K-12 education rise 3.3% to nearly \$2.6 billion; this includes over \$2.2 billion for Mississippi Adequate Education Program formula funding to school districts, up 1%, to cover increased employee retirement contributions and health insurance costs.

As in several other states, legislators moved to increase teacher salaries. Senate Bill 2770 increases the minimum teacher salary by \$1,500. The bill provides the same increase to the minimum salary of assistant teachers at elementary schools, bringing it to \$14,000 annually. Legislators included \$58.4 million in the budget to cover the salary increases.

State general support for public universities totals just under \$376 million, up 5.3%, while financial aid for university students receives \$41.7 million, up 5.2%. The community and junior college system receives \$251.8 million, up 6%.

Following a common theme among legislatures nationwide, the legislators approved a school safety measure — House Bill 1283, the Mississippi School Safety Act of 2019 — which requires schools to conduct an active shooter drill every semester, requires all school district employees to attend active shooter training annually, and requires school employees to complete training or professional development on mental health and suicide prevention every two years. The state Department of

Education is required to establish evidence-based pilot stress and anxiety management programs for students in kindergarten through grade five in six school districts, while the state Office of Homeland Security is required to establish a training program for school threat assessment officers under the School Crisis Management Program. The legislation requires the Mississippi Department of Mental Health to provide mental health services and training to school districts.

House Bill 1322 establishes the Mississippi Better Sight for Better Learning Program, under which the state Department of Education is permitted to make available, for students in kindergarten through grade 12, vision screening services that can detect vision problems which can lead to academic difficulties. The legislation specifies that the services are to be screening in nature, and not diagnostic services.

To assist former members of the military in their college educations, Senate Bill 2053 requires the governing bodies of state colleges and universities, and community and junior colleges, to adopt policies no later than the 2020-21 academic year to award credit based on a student's military training or service.

Legislators passed Senate Bill 2447 to establish career and technical education incentive grants. Beginning in 2019-20, schools will receive a grant of up to \$600 for each student who earns an industry certification in certain well-paying occupations, as designated by the State Workforce Investment Board. The grants are intended to cover industry certification exam fees, professional development for teachers in career and technology education, or student instructional support in programs that lead to industry certification.

House Bill 150 expands eligibility for two forgivable loan programs for educators. Awards under the Mississippi Dyslexia Education Forgivable Loan Program may be provided to individuals who obtain licensure and serve in a clinical capacity as dyslexia therapists in public school districts — previously, awards were only provided for individuals to enter service as licensed teachers of dyslexia therapy. The bill also expands the William F. Winter Teacher Forgivable Loan Program to nontraditional licensed teachers with a documented need for student loan repayment who are employed in a district or subject area designated by the state Board of Education as having a critical shortage of teachers.

Senate Bill 2449 specifies that for a student in youth detention facilities, the school district in which the student was enrolled prior to detention is responsible for ensuring that any student with an individualized education program is provided with all services identified in the IEP, and requires all school districts to enact policies to ensure they transmit a detained student's records to the school district providing that student with educational services. The legislation also requires juvenile detention facilities to provide detainees with a high school equivalency diploma with remedial math and language arts instruction as well as career counseling opportunities, and to provide a six-week summer enrichment program to all student detainees.

Other legislation

HB 578 requires the state Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development to deny an application for teacher or administrator licensure and to immediately revoke current licensure for any individual who is on probation or post-release supervision for a sex offense conviction, who has had any type of sexual involvement with a student, or who failed to report sexual involvement of a school employee with a student as required by law.

HB 1182 prohibits the use of corporal punishment on a disabled student by teachers or school staff.

HB 1247 removes the requirement that a county superintendent of education be automatically placed on the board of trustees of the community college district in that county.

SB 2049 expands the eligibility for in-state tuition at state colleges and universities provided to children of active duty members of the military stationed within the state to active duty military members' spouses, and specifies that the eligibility for in-state tuition for children and spouses of military members continues as long as a child or spouse maintains continuous enrollment at a state college or university.

SB 2050 requires a school district to accept the enrollment and course registration of a student whose parent is transferred to a military installation within the state; a parent of the student is required to provide proof of residence within the district within 10 days of the officially documented arrival date.

SB 2524 permits the expansion of the Mississippi Rural Physicians Scholarship Program to medical students who demonstrate a desire to practice psychiatry in rural Mississippi.

North Carolina (<https://www.ncleg.gov/>)

During the 2019 regular session, the full appropriations measure for the 2019-21 biennium did not pass into law following the governor's June veto of House Bill 966, the 2019 Appropriations Act. While legislators passed some smaller appropriations measures, some of those were subsequently also vetoed by the governor.

Legislators did approve, and the governor signed, House Bill 111 to provide base budget appropriations for the 2019-21 biennium. General funds for K-12 education to the Department of Public Instruction in 2019-20 rise 1.1% over the originally approved 2018-19 amount, to just under \$9.6 billion, and rise 0.6% in 2020-21 to over \$9.6 billion. Community colleges receive \$1.2 billion in the first year, up 4.4%, with a 1.9% increase in the second year to \$1.3 billion (this includes funding included in House Bill 226 and Senate Bill 61). The University of North Carolina System receives \$3.1 billion in each year of the biennium; each system unit receives flat funding over the biennium except for two universities and the system administration.

With the passage and gubernatorial signature of House Bill 377, the state provides \$16.3 million in general funds in each year of the biennium to fund experience-based salary step increases for teachers and school personnel. In addition, the funding provided in the bill is directed to provide highly qualified teacher preparation program graduates with salary supplements. Highly qualified graduates who work at low-performing schools receive the same salary as a teacher with three years of experience; highly qualified graduates teaching special education, science, technology, engineering or mathematics receive the same salary as a teacher with two years of experience; all other highly qualified teaching graduates will receive the same salary as a teacher with one year of experience. The legislation also establishes a principal recruitment supplement, which will provide a salary supplement of \$30,000 annually, for up to three years, to high performing principals who contract to work at low-performing schools.

Senate Bill 219 creates a non-renewable, three-year limited teacher's license for teachers who obtain their initial professional license but do not meet licensure exam requirements and for teachers who are licensed in and have been teaching in another state for at least three years and are being sought for employment by a local school district. Military spouses who hold a current out-of-state teaching license are also eligible for a limited license. The bill also shortens the length of service required to earn a lifetime teaching license (which does not require renewal) from 50 years to 30 years.

In response to ongoing school safety and student mental health concerns, legislators approved House Bill 75 to establish a school resource officer grant program, under which the state superintendent of education will provide grants to elementary and middle grades schools to hire school resource officers. Every two dollars of state grant money awarded under the program must be matched with one dollar of non-state funds; the bill provides \$3 million in 2019-20 and \$6 million in 2020-21 for the grants. In addition to the \$20 million in 2019-20 and \$23 million in 2020-21 the bill provides to fund instructional support personnel (such as counselors, nurses, psychologists and social workers), it provides one-time funds in 2019-20 for school safety equipment grants (\$6.1 million), school safety training grants (\$4.5 million) and grants for schools to contract with community partners to provide crisis services to students (\$4.5 million). The legislation requires the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the Center for Safer Schools to develop a recommended program for the temporary transfer of school mental health support personnel from one school or district to another during or after a crisis, and requires each school district superintendent in the state to annually report the total number in each category of school mental health support personnel employed by the district as well as any changes in the number employed in each category.

In order to reduce the amount of testing administered to students in public schools, legislators approved Senate Bill 621 which eliminates, after the 2019-20 school year, the NC Final Exam that is used to assess teacher performance and professional growth. It also requires each local board of education to review in every even-numbered year the amount of testing administered to students and, if the amount of time spent on testing in that district exceeds the state average, to develop a plan to reduce the testing burden on students. The legislation states the General Assembly's intent to move toward multiple short assessments in each grade throughout the year and away from a single long assessment at the end of each grade or school year. DPI is required to determine whether the end-of-grade English language arts assessment administered to students in grade three should be modified to better meet the goals of the statewide Read to Achieve K-3 literacy program, while the state Board of Education is required to determine and recommend by May 15, 2020 the steps necessary to transition to a statewide competency-based assessment and teaching model.

In the wake of disaster-related damages, losses and expenses in the state over the prior year, legislators approved House Bill 922 to require each local board of education to maintain fire and casualty insurance for its buildings at a level of at least 80% of the value of those buildings and also to maintain insurance on the equipment and contents of those buildings. Local boards of education also are required to maintain flood insurance for buildings located in certain flood-prone areas as identified on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rate Map. The bill specifies that the board of trustees for each community college is required to maintain similar levels of fire and casualty insurance and requires them to maintain flood insurance on buildings on the same basis as local boards of education. The legislation transfers, from the DPI to the Department of Insurance, responsibility for maintaining and administering the state's system of insurance for public education property.

Senate Bill 230, the NC Military and Veteran Act of 2019, requires state colleges and universities to charge in-state tuition rates to a military veteran entitled to certain federal education benefits, regardless of whether that veteran has resided in the state for 12 months, as required by federal law. The bill provides a minimum of two excused absences per academic year for a student whose parent or guardian is deployed for service in a combat zone, unless that student is at risk of academic failure due to unexcused absences, and requires the General Assembly's Program Evaluation Division to study whether current law has improved the ability of those with military training and military spouses to obtain occupational licensing in the state.

Other legislation

HB 57 codified into state statute the North Carolina Virtual Education Program, previously established in appropriations legislation.

HB 107 removes the quality of entering students from the performance standards for educator preparation programs and instead requires that measure in each program's annual performance report. It also requires the state Board of Education, in consultation with DPI and the Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission, to develop a model to compare the programs' performance to one another.

HB 362 permanently changes the school performance grade scale from a 10-point scale to a 15-point scale (done annually, on a one-year basis, since 2014) and requires the state Board of Education to study weighting school achievement and school growth scores to best reflect schools' performance and progress.

HB 411 requires the state Board of Education to include on the school report card for each high school the percentage of students who achieve the minimum score on a nationally normed college readiness test required for admission to a state university or who are enrolled in career and technical education courses and achieve certain scores on a nationally normed test of workplace readiness.

HB 664 creates a statewide postsecondary attainment goal, requiring the state to make significant efforts to increase access to learning so that a least 2 million state residents between the ages of 25 and 44 obtain a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree. The myFutureNC Commission will report annually on state progress toward achieving this goal.

HB 924 specifies that, for purposes of teacher eligibility for an employment contract of more than one year (which requires the teacher to have been employed as a full-time teacher for at least three years), a year must consist of at least 120 workdays as a full-time teacher in a permanent position. The bill also requires a student who enters grade nine in 2020-21 to pass a course on economics and personal finance to graduate from high school.

SB 199 requires each entity that employs school personnel to implement a child sexual abuse and sex trafficking training program for school personnel who work directly with students in grades kindergarten through 12.

SB 225 repeals the tuition surcharge imposed on university students who take more than 140 credit hours to complete a four-year baccalaureate program or who take more than 110% of the credit hours necessary to complete a five-year baccalaureate program.

SB 366 expands the career and technical education pathway currently available to students in grades nine and 10 to include construction and business technologies courses, and allows academically gifted students in grade 10 to enter the college transfer pathway which will allow them to take community college courses.

SB 399 permits a teacher who retired by February 1, 2019 and who meets age and creditable teaching service requirements to be re-employed as a teacher at a high-need school (a Title I school or a school with a performance grade of D or F) while continuing to receive retirement benefits.

SB 500 requires school districts to offer advanced mathematics learning opportunities (previously, advanced courses) in grades three through five as practicable, and requires DPI to annually report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the number and demographics of students in grades six and above who are eligible for advanced mathematics courses and who were eligible but not placed into such courses.

SB 600 allows a recipient of a state postsecondary scholarship for the child of a military member who was killed, captured or listed as missing during wartime or who received a disability as a result of wartime service to use that scholarship for the cost of short-term workforce training that leads to industry credentials.

Oklahoma (<http://www.oklegislature.gov/>)

Before the Legislature adjourned on May 23, legislators approved a state budget of \$7.9 billion for 2019-20, up 4.6% over 2018-19. Of that amount, \$4 billion was appropriated for education and workforce, a 5.4% increase.

Funding for K-12 programs through the State Department of Education increases to over \$3 billion, a 5.4% increase. This includes \$58.9 million in new funding for a second teacher pay increase of \$1,220, on top of the \$6,100 average raise for the 2018-19 school year. The increased appropriation also includes \$5.5 million more for the Reading Sufficiency Act which supports students in kindergarten through grade three, an additional \$19 million for teacher benefit costs, and a \$74 million increase to the school funding formula.

Career and technical education receives \$142.9 million, a 15% increase. This includes funding for an increase in teacher pay and to expand programs to increase statewide educational attainment. Higher education funding increases 3.3% to \$802.1 million. That amount includes funding for a 3.5% faculty pay raise, and \$3.3 million for concurrent enrollment. The budget also directs \$200 million, more than one third of the total budget increase, into the Revenue Stabilization Fund. Oklahoma's reserves, including the Rainy Day Fund, are expected to grow to more than \$800 million by the end of the fiscal year.

In the 2018-19 school year, 92 school districts in Oklahoma operated on a four-day instructional week. Senate Bill 441, concerning minimum instructional time requirements, provides schools districts with three options to meet the minimum requirements, beginning in 2020-21: 180 days of classroom time; 1,080 hours with a minimum of 165 days of classroom time; or 1,080 hours with no minimum of days of classroom time if districts are granted an exemption. To be granted an exemption, a district would be required to meet state Board of Education guidelines for school performance and cost savings.

Senate Bill 92 requires the state Board of Education to evaluate each public school once every four years to determine whether the school meets state accreditation standards. Schools receiving a deficiency in accreditation will be evaluated annually until they have received no deficiencies for two consecutive years, at which point they will return to being evaluated once every four years. The board will evaluate each school annually to determine if they meet standards tied to federal funding, health and safety, and certification requirements for teachers, principals, and superintendents.

House Bill 1364 directs the state Department of Commerce to approve career-readiness assessments and credentials based on those assessments that measure and document foundational workplace skills. The department is required, beginning with the 2019-20 school year, to make the assessments available to all public school districts; assessments will be administered to students at the discretion of each district.

To serve as a guide for schools in implementing quality computer science programs, legislators approved Senate Bill 593 to require the State Department of Education to develop a rubric for computer science programs in elementary, middle grades and high schools. The rubric must recommend that no less than one computer science course be taught by a teacher with a computer science certification at each school site, and that each course is aligned to the Oklahoma Academic Standards for

Computer Science and current research-based instructional practices. The bill also authorizes a grant program for professional development opportunities in computer science content.

House Bill 2520 requires the state Board of Education to implement a statewide alternative education system with the 2020-21 school year. The legislation also requires a school district to pay a certified alternative education teacher 5% above that teacher's designated salary step in the district's teacher salary schedule.

Other legislation

HB 1228 requires each school district, beginning in 2020-21, to include in its annual professional development programs training on dyslexia awareness, effective classroom instruction for students with dyslexia, and dyslexia resources for teachers, students and parents.

HB 1395 requires a virtual charter school to be subject to the same financial reporting and audit requirements as school districts.

SB 193 specifies that exemptions for school districts from certain state accreditation requirements and financial penalties do not apply if the Legislature appropriates funds for education that meet certain amounts.

SB 575 specifies that if a school district obtains parental consent for a medical professional to treat and evaluate a student, that consent is effective for one year and must be renewed each subsequent year. A medical professional performing evaluation or treatment through telemedicine subsequent to parental consent is not required to verify the parent is on site.

South Carolina (<https://www.scstatehouse.gov/>)

Concluding the regular session in May, legislators approved an \$8.7 billion general fund budget for 2019-20, up 6.3% over the original 2018-19 appropriation. This includes nearly \$3.3 billion in general funds for K-12 education, a 7.4% increase, with \$3.1 billion of that for aid to school districts, a 7.8% increase. The funding for aid to school districts includes funds sufficient to cover teacher salary increases of 4% for teachers with five or more years of experience, 6.1% to 10.6% for those with less than five years of experience, and 9.4% for starting teachers.

Education Improvement Act funding, from an earmarked 1% sales tax, is projected to rise 2.9% to \$861.2 million. This includes increases of 11.2% for the statewide Public Charter School District, to \$126.5 million, 12.1% for teacher benefit supplemental funding, to \$39.5 million, and 20.7% for full-day prekindergarten for at-risk students, to \$41.4 million.

University funding is up 11.6% to \$490 million; technical and comprehensive education funding rises 5.3% to \$162.6 million. The Higher Education Grants Commission receives \$27.9 million, up 6.1%.

Lottery funding for the merit-based LIFE and Palmetto Fellows scholarship programs is up 4.4% and 11.6% to \$240.1 million and \$61.8 million, respectively; the HOPE scholarship program receives \$14.6 million, a 6.5% decrease. Lottery funding remains unchanged at \$51.1 million for technical and comprehensive education tuition assistance, \$20 million for need-based grants and \$10 million for tuition grants to students at private colleges and universities.

Legislators also appropriated \$17 million in lottery funds to establish the South Carolina Workforce Industry Needs Scholarship. The program will provide awards to students enrolled in critical workforce areas, as well as students from low-income families, at technical colleges.

Other legislation

HJR 3929 permitted local school districts to waive, during the 2018-19 school year, additional makeup days required due to snow, extreme weather conditions or other disruptions.

SB 168 requires the State Department of Education to make recommendations to reduce the amount of required paperwork for teachers, schools, and school districts.

Tennessee (<http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/>)

The 2019-20 budget provides \$18.9 billion in state funds, up 5.8% from the originally approved 2018-19 budget. This includes \$9.2 billion in general funds, a 5.7% increase; the education fund, mostly consisting of sales and use tax receipts, is up 4.8% to \$5.7 billion.

K-12 education receives under \$5.3 billion in state funds, a 2% increase, including \$4.9 billion in Basic Education Program formula funding to school districts, up 2.2%; this includes \$71.3 million to increase teacher pay and \$30 million for school safety grants. With respect to teacher pay, the Legislature passed Senate Bill 802, which requires each school district, in any year they receive an increase in state funding intended for teacher salaries, to report to the state Department of Education how those funds were used.

State funds for higher education total \$2.1 billion, up 9.2%. The Tennessee Board of Regents system receives \$893 million, up 7.4%; this includes \$290.7 million for community colleges, an 8.2% increase. The University of Tennessee System receives \$643.8 million, up 7%.

Need-based Tennessee Student Assistance Awards receive \$113.3 million in state funds, up 12.2%. Lottery funds directed to scholarship programs are up 10.2% to \$368.3 million, and \$52.7 million (up 25.2%) is allocated to Tennessee Promise — a last-dollar scholarship that allows Tennessee residents to attend for no tuition or mandatory fees for up to two years at a community or technical college.

House Bill 111 requires the Tennessee Student Assistance Commission to fully fund the dual enrollment grant program before providing lottery funds for Tennessee Promise. To expand access to dual credit courses, legislators approved House Bill 1425, which permits a dual enrollment grant recipient in grade 11 or 12 who has obtained an ACT or SAT score that qualifies them for a HOPE scholarship or who has a 3.0 or higher GPA to enroll in three dual enrollment courses per semester (previously, two courses).

The Legislature approved House Bill 939 to establish the Tennessee Education Savings Account Pilot Program, which will allow a participating K-12 student to apply the state and local funds generated through Basic Education Program formula funding for that student toward the expenses of attending a private school in the state. To receive funding under the program a student must have been enrolled in a public school for the full year preceding entry into the program. The state Department of Education is required to begin enrolling students in the ESA program by 2021-22; the bill limits the maximum number of students in the program to 7,500 in the first year, 15,000 in the second, 22,500 in the third, and 30,000 in the fourth year and beyond.

Due to difficulties with administering the statewide student assessments in recent years, legislators passed House Bill 982, which requires tests under the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program to be administered in paper format in 2019-20. The Commissioner of Education will determine, based on an online verification test performed by each school district and conducted by the state Department of Education, the format for the tests in 2020-21. Senate Bill 784 specifies that

Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System student growth scores from 2017-18 may not be used in teacher evaluations for 2018-19 or 2019-20; it also allows student growth scores from TVAAS to make up a larger proportion of a teacher or principal's evaluation if it results in a higher evaluation score.

While the state Department of Education's Tennessee School Safety Center was previously permitted to provide school safety grants to help school districts develop programs for violence prevention, conflict resolution, disruptive behavior management, improved school security, peer mediation or training for school employees to identify possible perpetrators of violence, legislators approved Senate Bill 803 which requires the center to provide such grants. The center is required to reserve funds for grants to schools that did not have a full-time school resource officer in 2018-19.

Senate Bill 1238 permits a school district to establish a threat assessment team to develop intervention-based approaches for preventing violence, managing potential threat reports, and creating safe and supportive school environments. House Bill 405 requires each school district and charter school to adopt a trauma-informed discipline policy, while House Bill 664 requires a school district to assign any student who has been suspended or expelled from the regular school education program to an alternative school or program.

Other legislation

HB 209 prohibits the state Board of Education from modifying the uniform K-12 grading system more than once every two years.

HB 353 allows an individual who receives career and technical training during and after high school to apply that training as credit toward receiving a professional or occupational license.

HB 740 replaces the state Department of Economic and Community Development with the Tennessee Higher Education Commission as administrator of the Labor Education Alignment Program, which awards grants for workforce development partnerships between employers, schools and community and technical colleges.

HB 1339 requires the state Department of Education to develop a state plan for computer science in kindergarten through grade 12 that ensures high school students have access to at least one computer science course, integrates computer science into elementary education and allows completion of a computer science course to count as a core admission requirement at state colleges and universities.

SB 63 requires the state and school districts to make career and technical education accessible to all middle grades students in grades six through eight.

SB 242 requires state colleges and universities to allow the spouse or child of an active duty military member to retain in-state tuition status if that military member is transferred out of state after the spouse or child has enrolled and maintained continuous enrollment.

SB 442 allows a local school district that runs a state-approved prekindergarten program to use an alternative measure of student growth in place of the growth portfolio model approved by the state Board of Education.

SB 504 allows a school district to offer an internship program with state or local government that provides high school elective credits.

SB 790 makes several changes to special education in Tennessee, including clarifying that every child with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education in compliance with federal law and that each school district is responsible for ensuring that each child with a disability receives a special education.

SB 808, which moves the authority for administering most career and technical education programs from the state Board of Education to the state Department of Education, requires the department to administer a scholarship program for prospective educators seeking an occupational teaching license if funds are provided for that purpose.

SB 836 specifies that a chartering authority may revoke a charter school agreement if the state Department of Education identifies the school as a priority school under its school accountability system; if the authority does not revoke the charter, the school must implement a comprehensive support and improvement plan. A chartering authority is required to revoke an agreement if a school is identified as a priority school in two consecutive years.

Texas (<https://capitol.texas.gov/>)

Meeting in their biennial session, legislators confronted several education issues among other high-profile policy issues, including school safety, several aspects of the teaching profession, and school finance as well as related property tax matters. The statewide biennial general fund budget for 2020-21 (including dedicated general fund monies) totals \$125 billion, up 8.6% over the budgeted amount for the 2018-19 biennium.

State general revenues for K-12 education are up 21.7% to \$49.7 billion, while higher education receives \$18.7 billion, up 5.2%.

While general revenue funds for K-12 education fall from \$17.5 billion in the first year of the biennium to \$16.1 billion in the second, this is almost entirely due to a drop in funds from the Foundation School Fund, which declines from \$13.4 billion in the first year to \$11.9 billion in the second. The decline is the result of property tax decreases enacted in House Bill 3, a school finance measure (see below). However, the general revenue decrease is partially offset by a large increase from the Property Tax Relief Fund — which rises 9.3% from the first year of the biennium to just under \$2 billion in the second year. Most funding that goes to the districts is level or increases from the first year of the biennium to the second, with the exception of technology and instructional materials funding, which falls from \$1.1 billion to \$10 million.

House Bill 3 fully revised the state's K-12 education financing system and made a host of other changes to education. While it reduces the amount of property taxes that are directed to the Foundation School Fund and puts limits on local property tax increases, it increases the amount of state funding directed to economically disadvantaged schools (while eliminating the Cost of Education Index), expands state funding for student transportation for all school districts and for dual-credit and work-based learning, and creates a separate funding allotment for fast-growing school districts. The legislation increases the amount of the basic per-student allotment provided to districts while rolling several forms of categorical funding into that allotment, and creates per-student allotments for economically disadvantaged and limited English proficiency students in kindergarten through grade three, and for dyslexic students.

Relative to educators, House Bill 3 increased the minimum teacher salary schedule and mandated that school districts use at least 30% of any year-over-year increase in the per-student allotment for full-time employee salary increases. It creates the Teacher Incentive Allotment, under which districts will designate teachers at the Master, Exemplary or Recognized level (based on individual teacher appraisals) — the designations will allow teachers to earn incentives from \$3,000 to \$32,000 per year, based on the designation level and the economic disadvantage rating of the school in which the teacher serves, with additional weight for serving at a rural school. It also establishes a statewide teacher mentoring program with a dedicated funding allotment.

The legislation requires districts to provide full-day prekindergarten for children age four and to develop early childhood literacy and mathematics proficiency plans and goals. Districts also are required to develop college, career and military readiness plans and goals; they will receive a college, career and military readiness outcomes bonus for each graduating student who meets the goals above certain minimum thresholds. Beginning in 2022, students are required to complete the FAFSA prior to graduation from high school.

Senate Bill 11 establishes a school safety allotment in foundation program funding to districts and requires each school district to implement a trauma-informed care policy. K-12 schools are required to include in their health curriculum instruction on mental health, skills to manage emotions, and suicide prevention, and are required to provide instruction on digital citizenship — particularly with respect to cyberbullying. Each school district is required to establish a threat assessment and safe and supportive school team for each school, which will implement a program established by the Texas Education Agency to provide for student safety, crisis response and recovery, and supports for school climate and behavioral and mental health. TEA is required to develop a rubric for each regional education service center to identify student mental resources available to schools in their area.

House Bill 18 requires teacher preparation programs to include: instruction on recognition of mental health issues among students; strategies to maintain positive relationships between students including conflict resolution, preventing and responding to bullying; and information on grief-informed/trauma-informed strategies to support student success. The bill also requires at least 25% of teacher continuing education (previously, no more than 25%) to concern classroom effectiveness, digital learning, and identifying students at risk of dropping out or with special needs.

School safety legislation passed by the Legislature also includes: House Bill 1387, which lifts the cap of one school marshal per campus or per 200 students; House Bill 2195, which requires each district to enact a policy for responding to active shooter emergencies; Senate Bill 1707, which allows a school district to enter into an agreement for a local law enforcement agency to provide school resource officers; and Senate Bill 2135, which requires a law enforcement agency, when a student is arrested, to provide the student's school district with information requested for the purpose of conducting a threat assessment of or preparing a safety plan for that student.

House Bill 3630 prohibits any school employee from using an aversive technique on a student — a technique or intervention that is intended to reduce the likelihood a student will repeat a negative behavior by intentionally inflicting on the student significant physical or emotional discomfort or pain. House Bill 65 requires districts to annually report to the commissioner of education on all out-of-school suspensions for the prior school year, including demographic data. House Bill 692 prohibits a district from placing a homeless student in out-of-school suspension.

House Bill 1735 requires each public and private college or university in the state to adopt a policy on sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking that applies to all students and employees at that institution. It also requires any peace officers employed by colleges or universities to complete training on trauma-informed investigation into allegations of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. Senate Bill 212 requires the employee of a postsecondary institution to report to the institution's Title IX coordinator any information about instances of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence or stalking that occur to a student or employee of that institution.

Taking action similar to other states in the region, legislators passed Senate Bill 37, which prohibits a licensing authority from taking disciplinary action against a person, including suspension of a license or denial of a license renewal, based on that person defaulting on a student loan or breaching a student aid contract.

Senate Bill 25 and Senate Bill 502 both require all public four-year institutions to report to the Higher Education Coordinating Board on lower-division courses for which transfer students are not granted academic credit, and require public junior colleges to report on all courses taken by students who earn an associate degree or transfer to a four-year institution. Senate Bill 25 additionally requires each public college and university in the state to develop a recommended course sequence for each certificate or degree program offered by that institution.

Other legislation

HB 3601 permits the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to approve competency-based education degree plans for members of the military.

HB 3652 requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to contract with an open educational resource repository to create a web portal to provide open educational resources to colleges, universities, students and others.

HB 3834 requires district employees with access to computer systems/databases to complete a cybersecurity training program.

HB 3906 eliminates the writing assessment in grades four and seven in 2021; limits state assessments in grades K-8 to three parts and imposes time limits based on grade; and requires, beginning in 2022, that assessments in grades three through eight and end-of-course assessments be 75% or less multiple-choice questions.

HB 4205 allows schools that are required to establish a turnaround plan to use, beginning in 2020-21, an Accelerated Campus Excellence plan, including final personnel decision-making authority for the principal (who must have a demonstrated history of improving student academic achievement), 60% or more teachers at the school having been rated as effective the prior year, incentives for high-performing principals and teachers to stay at the school, and policies and procedures to implement identified best practices.

HB 4390 requires anyone who manages a computer system with sensitive personally identifiable information to disclose a breach of system security within 60 days of the breach.

SB 18 requires public institutions of higher education to ensure that common outdoor areas are deemed traditional public forums and to permit anyone to engage in lawful and non-disruptive expressive activities in those areas; the bill specifies that the institution may adopt a policy that imposes reasonable restrictions on the time, place and manner of such expressive activities.

SB 820 requires every district to adopt a cybersecurity policy.

Virginia (<https://viriniageneralassembly.gov/>)

In Virginia, legislators approved amendments to the second year of the biennial budget, 2019-20, including providing \$72.8 million to enact a 2% teacher pay raise that takes effect September 1, which is in addition to the previously budgeted 3% increase that took effect July 1. Legislators also provided \$52.5 million to be allocated to state universities that do not raise tuition for 2019-20. General funds for all levels of education in 2019-20 are up 1.9% over the originally appropriated amount to under \$8.9 billion, including \$6.5 billion in direct aid to public education, up 1%. Student financial aid receives \$92.2 million, a 9.2% increase over the original amount.

In response to concerns over school safety, legislators approved House Bill 1732 and Senate Bill 1215, which require each district to provide annual training on safety procedures to all students and school faculty and staff. House Bill 1733 and Senate Bill 1214 require each school district that employs local law enforcement agency members as school resource officers to enter into a memorandum of understanding with that agency to establish the powers and duties of school resource officers. House Bill 1737 and Senate Bill 1220 require school boards to involve local public safety officials in the development of crisis and emergency response plans. House Bill 2609 and Senate Bill 1130 require the state Department of Criminal Justice Services to develop minimum training standards for school resource officer certification.

Legislators approved House Bill 1729, which requires school counselors to spend at least 80% of their time directly counseling students, while Senate Bill 1406 reduces the permitted maximum number of students per school counselor.

For a teacher seeking initial licensure, House Bill 2037 and Senate Bill 1397 permit that individual to satisfy content area and core skill proficiency requirements by meeting alternative evaluation standards in lieu of a qualifying score on professional assessments. The state Board of Education is required to issue an initial license to a teacher who has not completed the professional assessments and whose provisional license will expire within three months if they are employed by a school district, are recommended by the local superintendent for licensure and have received an evaluation rating of proficient or above.

Under House Bill 2217 and Senate Bill 1419, the state Department of Education is permitted to establish a teacher microcredential program in STEM endorsement areas. Senate Bill 1433 requires the department to report certain employment statistics of graduates of each teacher preparation program in the state.

Other legislation

HB 1656 permits private and religious schools to employ school security officers.

HB 1920 requires the State Council for Higher Education in Virginia, when awarding New Economy Workforce Credential Grants, to give priority to noncredit workforce training programs in high-demand fields in which employer demand is currently unmet.

HB 1985 and SB 1298 require the state Department of Education to annually collect and publish data on alternative education programs for students who have been suspended, expelled or otherwise precluded from school attendance.

HB 2018 and SB 1434 require the state Board of Education to review and revise the Career and Technical Education Work-Based Learning Guide.

HB 2123 allows school districts to enter into College and Career Access Pathways Partnerships with colleges and universities that offer a career and technical curriculum.

HB 2486 allows a local school board or an organization sponsored by that board to petition the state Board of Education to approve a locally-developed alternate route to teacher licensure.

HB 2662 requires, beginning with the graduating class of 2022, a high school student to complete a senior capstone project, portfolio, performance-based assessment, or structured experiment that relates to a work-based learning, service-learning, or community engagement activity to graduate.

West Virginia (<http://wvlegislature.gov/>)

Upon conclusion of the regular legislative session in early March, the Legislature immediately convened in a special session to consider legislation “improving, modifying, and making efficiencies to the state’s public education system and employee compensation” and then went into recess. While the governor subsequently amended the special session proclamation to add non-education items, the Legislature reconvened in June and before the end of the month approved House Bill 206, which allows the establishment of three pilot charter schools beginning in 2021-22; provides increased funding for small school districts; provides an average 5% teacher pay raise and \$300 annually to each teacher for supplies; provides undergraduate students who enter into agreements to teach in critical shortage areas for four years after graduation with \$10,000 forgivable student loans under the Underwood-Smith Teaching Scholars Program; requires local districts to establish policies to allow non-resident students to enroll at any school in the district; and increases, from 75% to 85%, the amount of time which a counselor must spend directly counseling students.

The 2019-20 statewide general fund budget approved during the regular session totals \$4.6 billion, up 5.7%. The budget provides just over \$2 billion for K-12 education, up 1.5%, including \$1.8 billion in state aid to schools, up 0.6%. State colleges and universities receive \$282.2 million, up 8.6%. The \$82.9 million for community and technical colleges is a 26.5% increase and includes \$10 million for the WV Invests Grant Program established by Senate Bill 1 — a last-dollar-in scholarship for in-state students at community and technical colleges and at four-year state colleges and universities that offer associate degrees.

Senate Bill 1 also establishes the Advanced Career Education Program: county boards of education, community and technical colleges, public universities, and career technical centers will form partnerships under which secondary students enter defined pathways that lead to an advanced certification or associate degree in an area of workforce need (as determined by the state Department of Commerce).

House Bill 2004 requires the state Board of Education to adopt an instructional program in general workforce and career preparedness for all students, and requires the board, with the Council for Community and Technical College Education and the state Department of Commerce, to disseminate information on the career and technical programs of study in public schools.

House Bill 2009 allows the creation of Innovation in Education schools that award credit based on demonstrated mastery of concepts and skills. The state Board of Education is permitted to approve up to 20 schools for the initial transition to mastery-based educational delivery, and may provide those schools with Innovation in Education/Mastery-Based grants to assist the transition.

Senate Bill 632 requires local boards of education to annually assess the safety of their school facilities and upgrade those facilities when necessary to ensure student safety. The bill also creates a Safe Schools Fund that, subject to appropriation, will provide the same funding amount to each local school.

Other legislation

HB 2378 specifies that a teaching certificate is automatically revoked for any teacher convicted of committing child abuse that results in injury, convicted in another state for a sexual abuse offense, or any criminal offense that involves distribution of a controlled substance or requires the teacher to register as a sex offender.

HB 2541 requires schools to provide first aid and active shooter training to all school personnel and students annually.

HB 2665 appropriates \$105 million in general funds to the Public Employees Insurance Agency Rainy Day Fund.

HB 2853 requires the State Library Commission to establish the West Virginia Program for Open Education Resources to help provide open education resource materials for elementary, secondary and postsecondary education.

HB 3139 creates the Public Employees Insurance Agency Rainy Day Fund.

SB 267 requires the state Board of Education to adopt and implement a K-12 computer science curriculum.

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