



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 smart phone 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.

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.

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 postsecondary 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.

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 \$1,200, 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.

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 nonresident 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.

Notes from other SREB states

Texas completed their regular legislative session at the end of May while Delaware completed their session at the end of June. In North Carolina, the governor vetoed the appropriations act for the 2019-21 biennium; at the time of this writing, legislators had neither overturned the veto nor come to an agreement with the governor on a new budget.

More on final actions in these and other SREB states will be featured in future editions of *Legislative Report*.

This report was prepared by Jeffrey Grove, SREB research associate (Jeffrey.Grove@SREB.org), Kimiya Munni, SREB research assistant (Kimiya.Munni@SREB.org), and Lee Posey, vice president of state services (Lee.Posey@SREB.org). All can be reached at (404) 875-9211.

(19S03)