



September 27, 2017

Introduction

The first year of the 2017-2018 legislative session ended on Friday, September 15, 2017. The governor has until October 15, 2017 to sign or veto bills that were passed by the legislature and sent to him for his signature. The California Federation of Teachers was successful in moving several sponsored and priority bills to the governor's desk. Below is a summary of the status of CFT priority legislation as well as a description of several budget victories.

CFT SPONSORED BILLS

School Employee Housing Assistance Program: Assembly Bill 45 (Thurmond) would require the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) to administer the California School Employee Housing Assistance Program, a pre-development grant and loan program, to fund the creation of affordable housing for school district certificated and classified employees.

AB 45 passed out of the Senate Education Committee on July 12, 2017 on a 5-2 vote. AB 45 passed off of the Senate Floor on a 27-12-1 vote on September 13, 2017. Subsequently, it passed off of the Assembly Floor on a 56-23 concurrence vote on September 14, 2017. AB 45 is now on the governor's desk awaiting his signature.

For-Profit Charter Schools: Assembly Bill 406 (McCarty) would, on or after January 1, 2019, prohibit a petitioner that submits a charter school petition for the establishment of a charter school, or a charter school that submits a charter renewal or material revision application, from operating as, or being operated by, a for-profit corporation, a for-profit Education Management Organization (EMO) or a for-profit Charter Management Organization (CMO).

AB 406 passed off of the Assembly Floor on May 31, 2017 on a 50-24-6 vote. The bill was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee on July 12, 2017 but was pulled by the author. It will now become a two-year bill.

Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program: Assembly Bill 410 (Cervantes) would prohibit local education agencies (LEAs) from charging new teachers for their participation in the mandatory Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program. Currently, according to a survey conducted by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, at least 12% of providers of the BTSA Program charge new teachers upwards of \$3,350 to participate in this program.

AB 410 passed out of the Senate Education Committee on June 28, 2017 on a unanimous vote (7-0). The bill was placed on the Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File on July 10, 2017. AB 410 was held on the Senate Appropriations Suspense File on September 1, 2017.

Paid Pregnancy Disability Leave for School Employees: Assembly Bill 568 (Gonzalez Fletcher) would require certificated and classified school employees to be provided a paid leave when an employee is required to be absent a length of time to be determined by the employee and their doctor or a minimum of six weeks for pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth and recovery.

AB 568 passed out of the Senate Education Committee on June 21, 2017 with a vote of 4-1-2. The bill was placed on the Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File on July 10, 2017. AB 568 passed off of the Senate Floor on a 31-8-1 vote on September 6, 2017. Subsequently, AB 568 passed off of the Assembly Floor on a 63-13-3 concurrence vote. AB 568 is now on the governor's desk awaiting his signature.

School Safety: Assembly Bill 1029 (Weber) would add one or more individuals with expertise in the social-emotional health of children and youth, including, but not limited to, restorative justice practitioners, community school coordinators or mental health professionals to school safety planning committees. In addition, AB 1029 would require the comprehensive school safety plan to be aligned with the school climate state priority and the local control accountability plan. The bill would also require the Department of Education to post on its website models of best practices. Finally, AB 1029 would require the Department of Education to provide technical assistance and professional development to educators and administrators in these practices.

AB 1029 passed out of the Senate Education Committee on June 28, 2017 on a unanimous vote (7-0). The bill was placed on the Senate Appropriations Committee Suspense File on July 10, 2017. AB 1029 passed off of the Senate Floor on September 11, 2017 on a 40-0 vote. AB 1029 is now on the governor's desk awaiting his signature.

Charter School Pupil Admissions, Suspensions and Expulsions: Assembly Bill 1360 (Bonta) would require that charter school petitions contain a comprehensive description of procedures by which a pupil can be suspended, expelled or otherwise involuntarily removed, dismissed, transferred or terminated from the charter school that includes an explanation of how the charter school will comply with specified federal and state constitutional due process requirements. In addition, AB 1360 would authorize a charter school to encourage parental involvement, but would require the charter school to notify the parents and guardians of applicant students and currently enrolled students that parental involvement is not a requirement for acceptance to, or continued enrollment at, the charter school.

AB 1360 passed out of the Senate Education Committee on July 3, 2017 on a unanimous vote (7-0). AB 1360 passed off of the Senate Floor on a 34-6 vote on September 13, 2017. Subsequently, AB 1360 passed off of the Assembly Floor on a 70-1-8 concurrence vote. AB 1360 is now on the governor's desk awaiting his signature.

Education Technology: Senate Concurrent Resolution 30 (Pan) resolves that the legislature recognizes the need for improving the ongoing implementation and use of technology in educational institutions and identifying best practices for technology equipment upgrades.

SCR 30 passed out of the Assembly Education Committee on a consent vote on June 21, 2017. It then passed off of the Assembly Floor on June 26, 2017 on a consent vote.

CFT BUDGET PRIORITIES

The California Federation of Teachers secured major budget victories in the 2017-2018 annual Budget Act. Due to the outstanding lobbying efforts of leadership, members and staff, the CFT was able to secure millions of dollars in appropriations that will benefit CFT members and their students. Significant appropriations in the areas of early childhood education, TK-12 education and community colleges were signed into law by Governor Brown on June 27, 2017. Below are brief descriptions of those appropriations.

Early Childhood Education

In January 2017, the governor proposed to “pause” the 2016-2017 budget agreement that increased the number of full-day state preschool slots by 2,959 and increased the reimbursement rate for providers by 10%. The CFT, in conjunction with numerous education organizations, opposed this proposal. Subsequently, both the Assembly and Senate opposed the governor’s proposal as well. Consequently, the governor removed the proposed “pause” in the May Revision of the budget proposal. The final budget bill signed by the governor restored the additional 2,959 full-day state preschool slots and increased the reimbursement rate by 10% for state preschool and center-based child care providers.

In addition, based upon input from the CFT Early Childhood Committee and ongoing lobbying by the CFT and other education groups, the 2017-2018 budget includes a provision to update the State Median Income (SMI) eligibility requirements for subsidized child care and preschool. The budget also includes a provision to allow parents to remain eligible for subsidized child care and preschool until they reach 85% of SMI.

Finally, the 2017-2018 budget also includes a provision that provides 12-month eligibility, allowing families to receive subsidized care for not less than 12 months prior to having their eligibility re-determined.

Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program

In 2016, the CFT co-sponsored legislation to establish the Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program that was signed into law as part of the annual Budget Act. The 2016-2017 annual Budget Act passed by the legislature and signed by the governor included an appropriation of \$20 million to fund the program. The appropriation is currently providing grants to county offices of education and school districts to provide incentives of up to \$4,000 per year to classified public school employees to obtain their Bachelor’s degree and their teaching credential.

Due to the overwhelming demand for participation in this program and CFT’s advocacy for it, the legislature approved, and the governor signed into law, a \$25 million increase to fund the program. This brings the total allocation for the program to \$45 million and represents the largest investment by the state of California to address the severe teacher shortage.

Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours

Existing law established the Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program, contingent upon annual Budget Act funding, for the purpose of providing community college students with access to academic advice and assistance and to encourage districts to provide opportunities to compensate those who hold office hours related to their teaching load. The governing board of each district that establishes such a program is required to negotiate with the exclusive bargaining representative (or, if none exists, with the faculty) to establish the program. Participating districts are required to inform the Chancellor's office of the total cost of part-time faculty office hours compensation paid, and the Chancellor's office is required to apportion up to 50% of these costs, to be distributed proportionally based upon each district's total cost and the total amount provided in the annual Budget Act.

The legislature approved a \$5 million augmentation of on-going funds for the Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours program. This appropriation went into effect on July 1, 2017.

Labor in the Schools Pilot Project

This budget proposal sought one-time funding for the Teaching about Labor, Immigrant Workers and Workplace Rights Pilot Project. The Assembly Budget Committee proposed to provide \$2.7 million for the three-year pilot program that would have provided training and other resources for lead teachers in various school districts across the state to teach the history of labor, with a focus on immigrant workers, farm labor and workers of color. The Senate had no proposal, so the Budget Conference Committee deliberated whether or not to provide \$2.7 million in one-time Proposition 98 funding for the project.

The Budget Conference Committee did not approve the \$2.7 million allocation of one-time funds for the Labor in the Schools Pilot Project.

CFT AUDIT REQUEST

The CFT was successful in securing passage of an audit request by the Joint Legislative Audit Committee (JLAC) that would require the Auditor General to conduct a review of a sample of community college districts to determine if they are engaged in long-term strategic planning for replacing and upgrading their instructional technology and support structures.

CFT PRIORITY SUPPORT BILLS

Part-Time Playground Positions: Assembly Bill 670 (Thurmond) would delete the provision in current law that exempts a person employed in a part-time playground position from the classified service, when the person is not otherwise employed in a classified position, thereby making that person part of the classified service.

AB 670 passed out of the Senate Labor Committee on July 12, 2017 on a 4-1 vote. The bill was placed on the Senate Appropriations Suspense File on August 21, 2017. AB 670 passed off of the Senate Floor on a 24-14-2 vote on September 12, 2017. AB 670 is now on the governor's desk awaiting his signature.

Golden State Reading Guarantee Grant Program: Senate Bill 494 (Hueso) would establish a grant program administered by the State Department of Education and require local educational agencies that choose to apply for a grant to submit an application to the State Department of Education. In addition, the bill would require the Department to establish a process to provide professional development training to LEAs on, among other things, the existing diagnostic, formative and interim assessment tools that are available from the state, including those that are appropriate for pupils who are English learners. Finally, SB 494 would require that implementation of the grant program be contingent upon the appropriation of funds in the annual Budget Act or other statute.

SB 494 passed off of the Assembly Floor on a 59-17-3 vote on September 12, 2017. Subsequently, SB 494 passed off of the Senate Floor on a 30-8-2 concurrence vote on September 13, 2017. It is currently on the governor's desk awaiting his signature. The author was unable to secure funding for the program in the 2017-2018 annual Budget Act but will try to secure funding for the grant program in the 2018-2019 annual Budget Act.

CFT PRIORITY OPPOSE BILLS

State Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) School: Assembly Bill 1217 (Bocanegra) would create a new “state school” managed by a private non-profit corporate board to provide STEM education to pupils within a county that has a population of over 3.5 million residents (LA). This bill would create a new hybrid state-level school that mirrors a charter school; however, the school would lack an education agency authorizer. Instead, a seven member board with three members appointed by the UC Regents, the Speaker of the Assembly and the Senate Pro Tempore would manage the charter school with some monitoring by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The rest of the board would be comprised of private individuals.

AB 1217 was a “gut and amend” bill that passed out of the Senate Education Committee on a 6-1 vote on July 12, 2017. AB 1217 was ordered to the inactive file on September 15, 2017. It will now become a two-year bill.

Teacher Probationary Period: Assembly Bill 1220 (Weber) would move the current probationary period for teachers employed by a county office of education or a school district from two years to an optional three years. In addition, AB 1220 would require a county superintendent or the governing board of a school district, if a probationary employee is offered a third complete consecutive school year of probationary employment, to develop an individualized improvement plan to assist in addressing the deficiencies identified in the probationary employee’s evaluation, to provide copies of all prior evaluations before the plan meeting and to provide individualized professional development consistent with the plan.

AB 1220 was scheduled to be heard in the Senate Education Committee on July 12, 2017 but was pulled by the author. It will now become a two-year bill.

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