

advocate for SCHOOLS



TO SEE A LIST OF BILLS BEING TRACKED BY AASB DURING THE 2019 REGULAR SESSION, CLICK BELOW.



Again? Repeal Effort

Thanks to the many who responded to the call and contacted Senators to oppose a bill to repeal Alabama's K-12 standards. Your efforts helped get an amendment added before the Senate quickly passed the bill. The bill remains problematic and triggers unintended consequences. S.119 is now in the House. Contact your representatives and urge they OPPOSE S.119.

Advocacy Days

Spend a day in Montgomery with AASB staff to learn and experience the legislative process, interact with lawmakers and earn two training hours.

[Register today.](#)

April 2 - D4, D5, D6
April 16 - D1, D2, D3
April 30 - D7, D8, D9
May 21 & 22 - all districts

2019 Regular Legislative Session

26

days remaining

Next week the Legislature will be on Spring Break.

The session resumes
Tuesday, April 2.

Standards Repeal Whooshes through Senate in Full Court Press

In its first full week of the 2019 Regular Legislative Session, the Senate made a fast break to repeal Alabama's K-12 standards. S.119

(Marsh) was introduced, approved by committee and passed on the Senate floor within 48 hours. The bill caught education advocates by surprise as it travelled half the legislative process.

S.119 hit the Senate floor ready to mandate a return to 2011 Math standards and 2012 English Language Arts standards and demand new ones be ready to roll in 2021. Its language would have prohibited Advanced Placement courses, national board teacher certification, workforce skill assessments and more.

Kudos to senators for adding an amendment to remove several significant conflicts after school leaders, educators and the business community made urgent calls to oppose the bill. While the amendment makes the bill less bad, S.119 would derail almost a decade of investments Alabama has made to raise expectations for students to become competitive in the U.S. and world stage.

"Let's not cause disruption and chaos," said Executive Director Sally Smith explaining AASB's opposition to the Senate Education Policy Committee Wednesday. **Sen. Vivian Davis Figures** called foul when opponents had no time to call a public hearing and requested comments from the education community. Smith said there is a process to make sure standards are changed in a sound way. Smith said she wanted to work with the sponsor to discuss critical

problems with the legislation. The state Department of Education and School Superintendents Association also voiced their concerns to the committee. Before the floor vote, senators had a deluge of calls and emails from educators, school leaders, Chambers of Commerce and education policy groups to register opposition to the bill. But the play was set with 22 bill co-sponsors and the bill passed 23-7.

AASB prefers no bill, but if the bill must pass, it must change. The bill would still prohibit participation in NAEP, the nation's report card. It could jeopardize federal funding for schools and could give legislative council oversight of education standards. That is the role of the state Board of Education which is currently revising the Math and English Language Art standards.

The legislative Spring Break next week gives educators and school leaders a home field advantage with lawmakers in their districts. The amended S.119 is now in the House and assigned to the **House Education Policy Committee**. It is your opportunity to contact House members to explain this critical issue.

Why is there an effort to repeal K-12 standards? The bill sponsor says he pivoted from his prior stand to protect the standards because Alabama student scores remain too low. However, repeal of Alabama's College and Career Standards is a misfit solution to a much broader goal of improving student achievement. The state adopted the standards in 2010 to pur-



posefully set Alabama's expectations for student achievement higher than ever before. School leaders knew our students could perform as well or better than their peers nationwide.

What is needed to improve student achievement?

Raising the scores from a bar set too low takes a tremendous effort that needs investment in teacher colleges, professional development, courses of study development, assessments and more. Those efforts have been ongoing for almost a decade. The FY20 ETF budget is an opportunity to make these investments in the classroom.

Who supports Alabama's Career and College Readiness Standards?

Parents, educators, school leaders, PTA members, business and industry representatives, chambers of commerce, military and state and local officials have consistently fought to protect Alabama education standards. These advocates had no knowledge of the proposed legislation and are now alerted.

The bill to repeal standards would endanger Alabama's workforce development efforts. Its broad language would isolate the state's education efforts at a time when industry recruitment is paramount. To abandon the standards alarms those working hard to create high expectations and move Alabama forward. Contact your House members and explain the danger of repealing the standards and encourage them to oppose S.119.

Contact Members of the House of Representatives

Governor's Proposed \$7.1 billion ETF Budget

Gov. Kay Ivey submitted her FY20 education budget proposal to the Legislature this week: [H.141 \(Poole\)](#). While the governor's proposal outlines her priorities, it is a placeholder and will change through the legislative process. The budget will begin in the Senate this year and the Senate Finance and Taxation Education Committee will substitute its own version.

The budget proposes a [four percent pay raise](#) for educators. A detailed accounting of the budget will be provided when it begins to move in the Senate.

K-12 supplemental: \$128.7 million available

AASB urges lawmakers to prioritize passage of [H.144 \(Poole\)](#), the supplemental appropriation needed to release \$290 million for public education from the Education Advancement & Technology (EAT) Fund. The dollars can be used in the current fiscal year (FY 2019). K-12 received some \$42 million in FY18. The bill allocates the K-12 portion of \$128.7 million per school system in the legislation. The funds are authorized to be used for: repairs and deferred maintenance; classroom instructional support; insurance for facilities; transportation; acquisition/purchase of education technology or school security.

Education bill updates

[S. 8 \(Coleman-Madison\)/H. 268 \(Coleman\)](#) – **City school systems**—Increases minimum population for es-

tablishing a city board of education from 5,000 to 15,000. **Introduced.**

[S. 14 \(Melson\)/H. 62 \(Ledbetter\)](#) – **Bible electives**—Allows public schools to offer elective courses on the study of the Bible in grades 6-12. **S. 14 amended and approved by Senate committee** to ensure no local board incurs liability and is immune from liability exposure and to specify no teacher is required to teach this course, nor subject to penalties for declining to teach. **Carried over to call of the chair in Senate.**

[S. 20 \(Smitherman\)](#) – **Anti-bullying programs**—Appropriate \$14 million from ETF in order to allocate \$10k for every school to establish and maintain an anti-bullying program. **Introduced.**

[S. 60 \(Ward\)](#) – **School speed zones**—Would provide reduced school speed zones apply to every school in a county/municipality. **Approved by Senate committee.**

[S. 140 \(Whatley\)](#) – **Revise sex education** — would revise the content, materials and instruction in sex health education. **Introduced.**

[H. 1 \(Hanes\)/S. 149 \(Shelnutt\)](#) - **DROP "lite"** —Would provide a deferred retirement option - Employees Investment Retirement Plan (EIRP) for Tier I and II members. **Introduced.**

[H. 19 \(South\)](#) – **High school athletics**—Require the SBE to review and approve any rules relating to student participation eligibility before adoption by a high school athletic organization. **Introduced.**

[H. 41 \(Stringer\)](#) – **Vaping products near schools**—Prohibits alternative nicotine product retailers and manufacturers from advertising alternative nicotine products near schools. **Introduced.**

[H. 77 \(Baker\)](#) – **Tier III retirement** —Establishes a new TRS defined benefit retirement plan for on or after October 1, 2020. Also has a opt-in for current Tier II RSA Members. **Introduced.**

[H. 150 \(Garrett\)](#) – **State Board of Education term limits**—Limits service of members of the State Board of Education to two four-year terms. **Introduced.**

[H. 159 \(Lee\)](#) – **High school stadium restrooms**—Reduces the required number of restroom fixtures provided at public high school sports stadiums for each sex based on total occupancy. **Introduced.**

[H. 191 \(Fridy\)](#) – **Parental rights**—Would propose a constitutional amendment for a parental right to direct a child's upbringing, education, care and custody. **Introduced.**

[H. 209 \(Pettus\)](#) – **School resource officers**—Would authorize a federal, state or local certified law enforcement officer, retired in good standing, with at least 25 years experience and meeting other conditions, to serve as an SRO. **Introduced.**

[H. 216 \(Faulkner\)](#) – **Computer science courses**—Would phase-in the requirement that each K-12 public school offer courses in computer science. **Introduced**