

Florida Juvenile Justice Association

Legislative

Update

Legislative Session Begins

Week One: March 8, 2013

Committee Meeting Highlights

Committees continued to review agency budgets and agency recommendations for reductions. Discussions have focused on around successful outcome data.

This week the Senate Criminal Justice Committee passed SB676, the first stop for this bill, which reconfigures the local juvenile justice boards and councils for efficiency. FJJA was on hand to support this bill. The Senate Criminal Justice Appropriations Committee also heard a presentation from Secretary Walters updating members on the *Roadmap to System Excellence* Town Hall meeting tour.

In her remarks, Secretary Walters shared that public input has indicated a strong desire for DJJ to partner with the educational system; that barriers to employment must be reduced through civil citation, vocational training, and transitional services; that DJJ engage more with families to prevent youth from cycling in and out of social service systems; that lack of services for children in rural communities, or with disabilities exist; that the need for better approaches to address (DMC) Disproportionate Minority Contact and better communication with stakeholders is needed. To read Senate presentation, [click here](#).

FJJA's Juvenile Justice Education Bill Now Filed in the Senate

Bill highlights include enhancing transition services and career and technical training, providing a GED to Post Secondary pathway, enhancing virtual education, instituting a better accountability system and requiring state and federal education dollars to follow the youth that generate them. For briefing points on HB441 and SB1406, [click here](#).

Medicaid Expansion in Doubt with House Looking at Other Options

Since the recent Supreme Court's decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act, Florida is taking steps to implement this new law. Florida is playing catch up to meet deadlines. This year, the Legislature must decide to support or reject Governor Scott's recommendation for a three year Medicaid expansion paid for by the Feds. The Senate appears to be amenable, but the House and Cabinet are not yet supportive. . Currently Medicaid covers only those who live at or below the poverty level; expansion would cover individuals at 138% of the poverty level. Florida would draw \$26 billion in federal funds to pay in full for the first 3 years.

Budget Allocations Coming Soon

Senate Appropriations chair, Joe Negron, R-Stuart, informed budget chairs to expect their allocations next week. No word yet on when the House budget chairs will see theirs. There will be much to contend with relating to budget to include the effects of sequestration, Medicaid expansion, state pension and increasing teacher salaries and overall education investment.



2013 Legislative Agenda

The Road to Success: A Comprehensive Educational System

ENSURE that meaningful educational and vocational opportunities are available to all youth served in DJJ programs, including youth in residential settings and small juvenile justice schools.

SUPPORT- Juvenile Justice Education HB441- SB1406

*Invest in Proven Programs with a ROI:
Prevention, Intervention, Diversion Services*

ENSURE that prevention efforts are evidence and research based, include universal and targeted services, the use of civil citation programs, the expansion and enhancement of Juvenile Assessment Centers (JACs) and other existing intervention services, incorporate gender responsive services and the use of arbitration, mediation and Teen Court.

*Keep the Public Safe and Youth
Accountable: Community-Based Residential*

ENSURE that Florida's juvenile justice continuum includes an appropriate amount and variety of residential commitment services, the use of evidence-based risk and criminogenic assessments, and specialized residential services that include mental health and substance abuse treatment. **SUPPORT** adequate funding of evidence-based services for specialized populations which produce positive outcomes and reduce recidivism.

Aftercare/Continuing Care

ENSURE that comprehensive aftercare services begin at initial identification by the juvenile justice system and follow youth throughout their continuing care. **EXPAND** and **ENHANCE** existing aftercare/continuing care services, and **SUPPORT** adequate levels of funding for transitional housing and independent living services in the community.