



members matter

THE SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



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Member Matters is a newsletter from The South Carolina Education Association (The SCEA) designed to provide supporters of public education with timely updates on issues that impact our lives. For more information on The SCEA, visit our website at <http://www.thescea.org/>.

Legislative Update –Week 5, February 8-10, 2011

State Superintendent of Education Mick Zais testified before the Senate Education Committee this week. During his testimony, Dr. Zais emphasized his commitment to put parents and students first, to control spending and to allow parents a choice in selecting the right educational environment for their child (homeschooling, magnet programs, virtual, private, alternative options, etc.). He also stated that education reform is not a partisan issue, citing reform success in Minnesota, Florida and Washington, DC. In addition, Dr. Zais said authority must come with accountability and teacher, as well as principal rewards should include objective measures (i.e. NAEP test scores) and subjective reviews.

Jackie B. Hicks, The SCEA President responded to the pay for performance comment by saying, "South Carolina Superintendent of Education Zais could not be more wrong when he proposes basing teacher salaries on students' test scores. Zais is part of a political movement whose real agenda is to perpetuate our system of inequality and unstable funding of our public schools. They repeat several big lies over and over: Our students are far behind those in other countries. Our schools are failing. Bad teachers are responsible. Teacher unions protect those bad teachers and hence are responsible for failing schools. They hold up Finland, which has dramatically improved its national student achievement scores, as an example of how a nation can come from behind." Click [here](#) to read President Hicks entire statement.

Committee Reports

Senate Medical affairs subcommittee

S.445 (Hutto-Orangeburg) Schools and Health Records-Favorable

S.445 would eliminate the need for health departments to report positive HIV test results to school districts with the intent of increasing the number of teenagers taking the test

House Ways and Means General Government, Personal and Benefits subcommittee

H.3404 (Cooper-Anderson) Index of Taxpaying Ability (ITA)-Favorable

H.3404 is a two year joint resolution that would revise the ITA for school districts to include all property classes. The ITA determines the local school district's portion of student funding. (S.410 comparable bill)

Bills introduced this week...

S.521 (Sheheen-Kershaw) requires the General Assembly to provide enough funding to avoid

teacher dismissals

S.547 (Leventis-Sumter) provides voter registration requirement for 17 year old school students

H.3642 (Cooper-Anderson) maintains teacher pay at the 2010-11 level

H.3643 (Cooper-Anderson) designates May 15 as the date for issuing teacher contracts

H.3658 (Clemmons-Horry) eliminates the requirement for S.C. employers to post National Labor Relations Act notices on employee rights

Remember to use <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/> for more information on a bill.

EDUCATION FACT OF THE WEEK*

South Carolina ranks **seventh** in the nation when it comes to sending high school grads to college. Seventy-one percent of recent South Carolina high school graduates were enrolled in college in 2008, compared to the national average of 63 percent)

* Provided to members of the S.C. General Assembly by The SCEA

ACTION FOR THIS WEEK...

South Carolina depends on federal funding to achieve its educational goals. The week of February 14 will be critical. President Obama will release his budget proposal for the next fiscal year (FY 2012). At the same time, the House of Representatives will consider funding levels for the current fiscal year (FY 2011). This is necessary as the last Congress never completed action on a funding bill for this fiscal year and the current "continuing resolution" which temporarily continued program funding is set to expire on March 4.

House Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan has already proposed deep cuts, including to education programs. Now is the time to make your voice heard!

Tell Congress to reject education funding cuts and to invest in education for our state's future by clicking [here](#).

To find out more about The SCEA or join our efforts to protect children and public education, visit our website at www.thescea.org

The SCEA-Protecting and defending children and public education in South Carolina

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