



special district, at which official acts are to be taken or at which public business of such body is to be transacted or discussed, to be open and noticed to the public.<sup>1</sup>

#### Sunshine Law

The Sunshine Law requires all meetings of any board or commission of any state agency or authority or of any agency or authority of any county, municipal corporation, or political subdivision, at which official acts are to be taken, to be open to the public at all times.<sup>2</sup> For each such public meeting, a board or commission must:

- Provide reasonable notice of the meeting;<sup>3</sup> and
- Promptly record minutes of the meeting.<sup>4</sup>

### **District School Boards**

#### Generally

The Florida Constitution requires that each county form a school district, and that each school district be governed by a school board composed of five or more members.<sup>5</sup> Each school board is responsible for the operation, control, and supervision of all free public schools within the school district.<sup>6</sup>

#### Meeting Requirements

In addition to general access and notice requirements, meetings of district school boards are subject to more specific provisions, including frequency requirements. Each district school board must:

- Hold at least one regular meeting each month for the transaction of business according to a schedule arranged by the district school board.
- Convene in special sessions when called by the district school superintendent or by the district school superintendent on request of the chair of the district school board, or on request of a majority of the members of the school board. If the district school superintendent fails to call a special meeting when requested to do so, such a meeting may be called by the chair of the district school board or by a majority of the members of the district school board by giving 2 days' written notice of the time and purpose of the meeting to all members and to the district school superintendent.

Times of day for district school board meetings, however, are not currently specified in law.

### **III. Effect of Proposed Changes:**

The bill requires each district school board to convene at least one regular meeting each quarter within a school year during the evening hours. The bill does not define “each quarter within a school year” or “evening hours;” rather, it requires each district school board to create written criteria for deciding when to convene a quarterly meeting during the evening hours.

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<sup>1</sup> FLA. CONST., art. I, s. 24(b).

<sup>2</sup> Section 286.011(1), F.S.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Section 286.011(2), F.S.

<sup>5</sup> FLA. CONST., art. IX, s. 4(a).

<sup>6</sup> FLA. CONST., art. IX, s. 4(b).

The bill also reorganizes and makes clarifying, non-substantive drafting changes to the provisions governing the convening of special sessions.

The bill's effective date is July 1, 2013.

**IV. Constitutional Issues:**

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

Not applicable. This bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

**V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

District school boards that do not already hold at least one evening meeting a quarter may incur indeterminate costs as a result of the bill.

**VI. Technical Deficiencies:**

None.

**VII. Related Issues:**

None.

**VIII. Additional Information:**

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

**CS by Education on February 19, 2013:**

The CS differs from the original bill in that it:

- Provides that the district school board must “convene” the meeting instead of “conduct” it to clarify the time period during which the meeting must begin.
- Does not allow such meeting to be convened either “after school hours” or “during the evening hours;” instead, the meeting may only be convened “during the evening hours.”

**B. Amendments:**

None.

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This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill’s introducer or the Florida Senate.

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