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2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Session Week 1 | January 12 – 16

House PreK-12 Budget Subcommittee – 1/13/2026

HB 129 The Florida Virtual School by Representative Smith

Meeting Summary

Representative Smith presented the bill; HB 129 removes the priority admissions requirements, revise board powers and reporting obligations, and expand funding opportunities for the Florida Virtual School.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Gantt asked if the FLVS would be beholden to the same regulations and statutory guidelines as regular public schools or universities under this bill/in statute.*
 - *Representative Smith responded yes.*
- *Representative Gantt asked if this language is clarifying whether FLVS, since they are a public school district, has the same reporting guidelines as brick-and-mortar public schools.*
 - *Representative Smith responded yes, but they have an additional layer because they report with their annual report to the speaker, the Senate President, and the Governor.*
- *Representative Daniels and Trabulsy stated their support for the bill.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

13 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Daniels, Edmonds, Gantt, López, Brackett, Gerwig, McFarland, Michael, Nix, Jr., Overdorf, Persons-Mulicka, Rizo, Trabulsy

Senate Education Pre-K – 12 – 1/13/2026

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SB 206 Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder by Senator Harrell

Meeting Summary

Senator Harrell presented the bill; SB 206 requires completion of an autism micro-credential and provide expanded incentives for teachers of students with autism spectrum disorder.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Senator Berman asked if there would be a Senate bill this session that updates the definition of autism to match the latest diagnostic manual.*
 - *Senator Harrell responded that language was originally included as a courtesy to a House sponsor and that she was unsure if a separate Senate bill would be filed.*
- *Senator Davis asked about the timeframe for current Exceptional Student Education (ESE) teachers to obtain an endorsement or micro credential in autism. She inquired about the possibility of a two-year window to complete the process.*
 - *Senator Harrell indicated flexibility on timelines, noting that August 1, 2027, was the key date for certain requirements, and she would verify details for current educators.*
- *Senator Osgood noted the original bill addressed educators who already had at least three years' experience teaching students with autism. She asked how that changed with the new version.*
 - *Senator Harrell clarified that teachers must now earn at least the autism micro credential, and that she would further review dates and requirements to accommodate those already in the classroom.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

6 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Berman, Davis, Osgood, Calatayud, Simon, Yarborough

SB 420 Patriotic Displays in Classrooms by Senator Burgess

Meeting Summary

Senator Burgess presented the bill; SB 420 requires each district school board to display portraits of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln in specified classrooms.

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Member Debate & Questions

- *Senator Davis asked who would select the portraits and questioned whether focusing on only George Washington and Abraham Lincoln could be seen as excluding other historic figures.*
 - *Senator Burgess responded that the Department of Education would choose the portraits. He emphasized that Washington and Lincoln were “giants from our past” and that the bill would not exclude additional displays.*
- *Senator Davis expressed concern that requiring these portraits might shift decision-making authority away from districts*
- *Senator Osgood cited Harriet Tubman as a patriotic figure and asked if the bill would prohibit displays of other leaders.*
 - *Senator Burgess clarified the bill would not prevent teachers from including additional figures, stating, “This bill is prescribing what we want to have in a classroom, [...] this in no way shape or form would prevent that discussion or display.”*
- *Senator Osgood asked the sponsor to be sensitive to student diversity when proposing legislation requiring certain images.*
 - *Senator Burgess affirmed a willingness to work with her and learn more about those concerns.*
- *Senator Burgess and Osgood stated their support for the bill while Senator Davis voiced concern that mandating only two portraits might set a precedent for future legislation.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

6 Yeas; 1 Nays

Yeas: Berman, Osgood, Burgess, Calatayud, Simon, Yarborough

Nays: Davis

SB 556 Requirements for a Standard High School Diploma by Senator Berman

Meeting Summary

Senator Berman presented the bill; SB 556 allows students to substitute marching band experience for both the physical education and performing arts requirements, and permits



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students with disabilities to meet the physical education requirement by participating in the Special Olympics.

Member Debate & Questions

No committee members asked questions.

Senator Berman, Yarborough and Simon all stated their support for the bill.

Vote

Reported Favorably with Committee Substitute

6 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Berman, Davis, Osgood, Calatayud, Simon, Yarborough

Government Operations Subcommittee

HB 111 Antisemitism Task Force by Representative Gottlieb

Meeting Summary

Representative Gottlieb presented the bill; HB 111 allows students to substitute marching band experience for both the physical education and performing arts requirements, and permits students with disabilities to meet the physical education requirement by participating in the Special Olympics.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Valdés asked whether the task force would look at other forms of hate in addition to antisemitism.*
 - *Representative Gottlieb (D) responded “...the answer would be yes because you can’t have one metric, one data point... You’re going to compare it to other hates... other types of prejudice and racism... So I think the answer is absolutely yes.”*
- *Representative Rosenwald, Chaney, and Gottlieb expressed their support for the bill.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

15 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Alvarez, J., Aristide, Campbell, Rosenwald, Young, Basabe, Chaney, Conerly, Greco, Griffiths Jr., Holcomb, Plasencia, Stark, Valdés, Weinberger

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HB 535 Candidate Qualifying by Representative Benarroch

Meeting Summary

Representative Benarroch presented the bill; HB 535 requires candidates to disclose dual citizenship when qualifying for public office.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Young asked what issue is being solved or what is the intent behind the bill.*
 - *Representative Griffitt responded, presenting on behalf of Representative Benarroch: “It just is another checkbox ... so it’s just clarification.”*
- *Representative Campbell asked if this would allow for targeting candidates if they happen to have a dual citizenship with a country that is controversial in the minds of some?*
 - *Representative Griffiths responded “I think it’s just more information or education for the constituents ... if they [a candidate] hold citizenship in two countries, they ought to be proud of that ... so that people can know.”*
- *Representative Holcomb and Griffiths expressed their support for this bill while Representative Young and Campbell expressed concerns that the disclosure may be too narrow and have possible negative implications.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

14 Yeas; 3 Nays

14 Yeas: Alvarez, J., Rosenwald, Basabe, Chaney, Conerly, Gentry, Greco, Griffiths Jr., Holcomb, Plasencia, Sapp, Stark, Valdés, Weinberger

3 Nays: Artside, Campbell, and Young

House Student Academic Success Subcommittee – 1/13/2026

HB 453 Requirements for Standard High School Diploma by Representative Gossett-Seidman

Meeting Summary



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Representative Gossett-Seidman presented the bill; HB 453 Expand the ways students can satisfy physical education and performing arts requirements for a standard high school diploma.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Hinson asked if every school has Special Olympics, or if this will be just schools that do hold Special Olympics. She also asked how is that going to work.*
 - *Representative Gossett Seidman answered “It would be the Special Olympics held in their municipality or county...They would have forms completely authorized and signed by the parents, the Special Olympics staff. It would be very much overseen.”*
- *Representative Hinson followed up briefly about how participation would be documented for course credit, noting the idea was beneficial for students with disabilities.*
- *Representative Blanco and Gossett-Seidman both expressed their support for the bill.*

Vote

Reported Favorably with Committee Substitute

16 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Antone, Dunkley, Hinson, López, Tendrich, Bankson, Berfield, Blanco, Gerwig, Hodgers, McFarland, Michael, Oliver, Owen, Rizo, Yarkosky

HB 731 Interscholastic or Intrасcholastic Extracurricular Activities by Representative Abbott

Meeting Summary

Representative Abbott explained the bill; HB 731 authorizes the use of booster club funds to pay coaches or sponsors, revise student transfer eligibility rules for extracurricular activities, and allow certain athletic administrators to negotiate higher compensation.



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Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Yarkosky asked about the feasibility of “taking a percentage of all NIL that comes into high school and allotting that to paying for coaching.”*
 - *Sponsors noted that they had considered the idea.*
- *Representative Yarkosky humorously inquired, “Would this have any effect on the University of Miami winning the national championship on Monday?”*
 - *The sponsors replied the bill would have no bearing on that situation.*
- *Representative Yarkosky asked about potentially speaking to colleges and universities about creating programs to educate coaches*
 - *Sponsors said they had not, but that the idea would be a great opportunity.*
- *Representative Hinson questioned how designating coach–teachers as administrative personnel would work.*
 - *Sponsors stated it is optional for local districts: 95% of coaches also teach, and teachers who coach can remain in the classroom unless a superintendent designates otherwise.*
- *Representative Hinson clarified that she was fearful this would pull teachers out of the classroom.*
 - *Sponsors alleviated some concerns, saying that coaches who are teachers would still be required to teach*
- *Representative Hinson asked about who would have jurisdiction over transfer regulations.*
 - *Sponsors answered that it would be the governing body of the sports, such as the FHSAA and the SSAA.*
- *Representative Hinson asked for clarification about bodies other than the FHSAA.*
 - *Sponsors answered that the SSAA is another governing body for high school sports.*
- *Representative Hinson asked if these salaries would be union-negotiated.*
 - *Sponsors clarified it would be considered an individual administrative contract, outside of collective bargaining.*
- *Representative Gerwig asked if permitting booster clubs to contribute funds to pay coaches “makes sports more fair.”*
 - *The sponsor replied that open access to this option applies to all districts and can also benefit extracurriculars like debate and robotics.*
- *Representative Gerwig inquired if transfer rules are “making it easier or more difficult for a student to transfer.”*



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- *Sponsors explained the rules become more uniform and slightly more stringent, ensuring transfers occur for valid educational reasons.*
- *Representative McFarland asked about the problem of frequent midyear transfers.*
 - *Sponsors noted students move schools just to follow certain sports programs, causing instability.*
- *Representative McFarland sought details on coaches' current compensation, typically negotiated as stipends through collective bargaining.*
 - *Sponsors confirmed the bill gives districts more flexibility, either via booster support or by designating coaches as administrative personnel.*
- *Representative López asked how a non-teacher could qualify as an administrator.*
 - *Sponsors responded there is no new restriction on hiring, but standard certification and background rules remain.*
- *Representative López asked about background checks as a requirement.*
 - *Sponsors confirmed background check requirements remain the same.*
- *Ranking Member Antone asked whether the bill transfers jurisdiction to the FHSAA, and what the need for that is.*
 - *Sponsors confirmed the bill transfers eligibility determinations from local schools to a governing organization such as FHSAA. Sponsors noted that disputes end up there anyway, so it streamlines the process.*
- *Representative Gerwig, Bankson, McFarland, López, Blanco, Antone, Hinson, Michael all expressed their support for the bill and some acknowledged concerns over potentially high administrative salaries.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

16 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Antone, Dunkley, Hinson, López, Tendrich, Bankson, Berfield, Blanco, Gerwig, Hodgers, McFarland, Michael, Oliver, Owen, Rizo, Yarkosky

Senate Ethics and Elections – 1/13/2026

Senate Confirmation Hearing

Meeting Summary

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A public hearing was held for consideration of the below-named executive appointments to the offices indicated.

Board of Directors, Florida High School Athletic Association – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**
Cervera, Adam () 08/21/2026

Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority
Barrow, Bennett H. (Tampa) 07/01/2027 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**
Cassidy, Vincent J. (Tampa) 07/01/2028 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**
Nandam, Lakshmikanth (Valrico) 07/01/2029 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**

Commission for Independent Education
Litvack, Steven B. (Delray Beach) 06/30/2027 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**

Tampa Port Authority
Allman, Patrick H. III (Tampa) 02/06/2026 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**
Harrod, Chadwick William () 11/14/2026 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**
Kaplan, Mark (Tampa) 02/06/2028 – **VOTE: 8 Yeas; 0 Nays**

SB 0572 Ethics for Public Employees by Senator Harrell

Meeting Summary

Senator Harrell presented the bill; SB 572 expand the definition of a public employee's "relative" to include legally recognized foster parents and foster children.

Member Debate & Questions

No committee members asked questions.

Senator Harrell noted that SB 572 updates the definition of "relative" under ethics statutes to include foster parents and foster children.

Vote

Reported Favorably

8 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Bernard, Polsky, Rouson, Ávila, Bradley, Gaetz, García, Grall

SB 0620 Candidate Qualifying by Senator Mayfield

Meeting Summary

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Senator Mayfield presented the bill; SB 620 require candidates seeking public office to disclose if they hold dual citizenship.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Senator Rouson asked about the intent of the bill's dual citizenship disclosure requirement. He inquired, "What is the necessity of it? Is it intended to influence the vote? Is it intended to make someone disliked?" He also asked whether the requirement implicated an individual's right of association.*
 - *Senator Mayfield explained that the purpose is "nothing more than being transparent on the person that's going to be running for office," so voters know if a candidate holds citizenship in a country other than the United States.*
- *Senator Mayfield reiterated that the primary aim is to facilitate transparency for voters.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

8 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Bernard, Polsky, Rouson, Ávila, Bradley, Gaetz, García, Grall

SB 0092 Employee Protections by Senator Gaetz

Meeting Summary

Senator Gaetz presented the bill; SB 92 expands protections for employees who disclose ethics violations and strengthens penalties against officials who retaliate.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Chair Gaetz described the bill's purpose: "In 2024, the Legislature changed the law governing ethics complaints to require that a person filing a complaint must have firsthand knowledge... This bill provides that when a public employee does file a complaint...there will be protection against retaliation in the workplace."*
 - *Chair Gaetz emphasized that employees who "personally observe" ethics violations will be able to file a complaint without fear of adverse actions such as firing, demotion, or pay reductions.*



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Vote

Reported Favorably

8 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Bernard, Polsky, Rouson, Ávila, Bradley, Gaetz, García, Grall

Economic Infrastructure Subcommittee – 1/14/2026

HB 283 School Zone and Pedestrian Safety by Representative Alvarez, J.

Meeting Summary

Representative Alvarez, J. presented the bill; HB 283 requires design and construction plans for crosswalks in school zones or on public roads exceeding 35 mph to include specified traffic control devices.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Linda Chaney asked why the bill applies broadly to “any public street, roadway, or highway” over 35 mph if it is intended for school zones.*
 - *Questioned the lack of required studies, stating FDOT already has manuals to address traffic safety.*
 - *Expressed concern over whether “shall” in the bill language mandates compliance.*
 - *The sponsor replied that FDOT’s guidelines are not enforced by law. He stated, “There is no law written on it,” and explained the bill’s intent is to give local governments a clear statutory basis to install enhanced safety devices if they choose.*
- *Representative Bill Conerly asked: “Is this bill intended to compel local municipalities to adopt DOT standards...or will the city or county engineer be able to use some flexibility?”*
 - *The sponsor indicated that local governments “will have an opportunity to either opt in or opt out” based on the project’s needs.*
- *Representative Kimberly Berfield asked: “It is in the current manuals, but you’re saying municipalities do not have to adhere to the standards within the manuals? Could you clarify?”*
 - *The sponsor explained there is no statutory requirement enforcing those guidelines.*



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- *Representative Phillip “Griff” Griffiths Jr. sought confirmation on whether the bill forces specific crosswalk placements or allows engineering discretion.*
 - *The sponsor stated it preserves flexibility, letting city or county engineers choose appropriate devices.*
- *Representative Taylor Yarkosky asked for clarity on FDOT’s stance, expressing he heard inconsistent feedback.*
 - *The sponsor indicated that, to the best of his knowledge, FDOT is supportive.*
- *Representative Jervonte “Tae” Edmonds asked about the sponsor’s FDOT background and whether a specific incident prompted the bill.*
 - *The sponsor noted Florida’s high pedestrian fatality rate and his 14 years at FDOT as the motivating factors.*
- *Representative Kevin Chambliss sought a description of the types of roads targeted: “Could you describe the type of roads we’re talking about, so we can see how it makes it safer?”*
 - *The sponsor gave the example of wide, high-speed roads such as State Road 192, highlighting the danger to pedestrians.*
- *Representative Chambliss, Conerly, Abbott, Smith, Franklin II, Redondo, Skidmore and LaMarca expressed their support for the bill but some stated they would like more clarity.*
- *Representative Chaney disagreed with bill language, citing conflict with FDOT’s existing approach and uncertainty over mandates. She stated “I do not believe this is an FDOT-supported bill...I’m not hearing any flexibility...”*

Vote

Reported Favorably

12 yeas; 4 Nays

Yeas: Chambliss, Edmonds, Eskamani, Franklin II, Skidmore, Abbott, Chamberlin, Conerly, LaMarca, Persons-Mulicka, Redondo, Smith

House Careers & Workforce Subcommittee

HB 561 Educator Certifications by Representative Gerwig

Meeting Summary

Representative Gerwig presented the bill; HB 561 expands eligibility for a temporary educator certificate, revise reinstatement requirements for expired professional

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certificates, and require the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence to collaborate with the David C. Anchin Center to provide no-cost professional learning opportunities.

Member Debate & Questions

No committee members asked questions.

- *Representative Anne Gerwig explained that HB 561 “strengthens Florida’s educator workforce by reducing unnecessary certification barriers while maintaining high professional standards.”*
 - *She emphasized that under current policy, “educators seeking to reinstate an expired professional certificate must reapply and complete specific renewal requirements, which can be unclear and restrictive.”*
 - *She outlined that the bill “streamlines this process by clearly outlining reinstatement requirements, allowing educators with expired certificates to obtain a temporary certificate while completing those requirements, and providing access to no-cost state-supported professional learning.”*
- *Rep. Allison Tant praised the bill, noting that in her community, “former teachers [...] have begged for an easier road back to be able to return to the classroom.”*

Vote

Reported Favorably

15 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Daley, Rosenwald, Tant, Bankson, Cobb, Esposito, Jacques, Johnson, Kendall, Kincart Jonsson, Koster, Melo, Plakon, Plasencia, Stark

Senate Fiscal Policy

SB 320 Administrative Efficiency in Public Schools by Senator Simon

Meeting Summary

Senator Simon presented the bill; SB 320 streamlines district responsibilities and remove certain mandates to increase administrative efficiency in public schools.

Member Debate & Questions

- Senator Bracy-Davis asked whether the bill’s provision requiring charter schools to respond directly to the Department of Education included any specific consequences or remedies if a charter school fails to comply.

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- In his closing, Senator Simon responded that the bill simply creates a direct pipeline between charter schools and the DOE, removing the need to go through the district. No particular penalties or enforcement measures were described.
- Senator Rosalind Osgood praised the bill's deregulation focus, explaining that school districts often hire "two or three staff people" to manage "all the regulations." She highlighted that removing the 1% Title I cap and providing "more flexibility" will better serve schools with the most critical needs.
- Senator LaVon Bracy Davis indicated support in line with her district's stance, noting Orange County Public Schools' approval. She expressed appreciation for the transparency and efficiency the measure brings, especially for charter school spending oversight.
- Senator Corey Simon explained that the proposal eliminates unnecessary requirements so districts can focus "more time on our students and less time on administrative tasks." He emphasized accountability remains in place while "[pulling] back some of the layers" for greater administrative efficiency.

Vote

Reported Favorably

20 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Arrington, Bernard, Bracy Davis, Davis, Jones, Osgood, Ávila, Boyd, Bradley, Burton, Calatayud, Gaetz, Gruters, Leek, Mayfield, Passidomo, Rodriguez, Simon, Truenow, Yarborough

House Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee – 1/14/26

HB 4027 Hillsborough County Public Schools, Hillsborough County

Meeting Summary

Representative Owen presented the bill; HB 4027 transitions the Hillsborough County Superintendent of Schools from an appointed position to an elected, partisan position pending voter approval.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Gantt asked, "Will voters receive any type of education as far as what the qualifications [...] of a superintendent should or could be?"*

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- *Representative Owen followed up by noting that for an elected office, “you don’t have to have a college degree.” Representative Gantt inquired whether the minimum requirement for the superintendent position would be a high school diploma.*
- *Representative Owen answered that there are no current statutory qualification requirements and that local school boards may set their own standards if they choose.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

14 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Campbell, Daley, Dunkley, Black, Chamberlin, Cobb, Gerwig, Gossett-Seidman, Griffiths Jr., Hodgers, Holcomb, Jacques, Johnson, Michael

Senate Appropriations Committee on Pre-K - 12 Education – 1/14/26

Presentation on Governor's Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Recommendations: Department of Education

Meeting Summary

The Governors Office of Policy and Budget presented the Governor’s Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget Recommendations for the Department of Education.

[[Meeting Packet](#)]

Education Administration Subcommittee – 1/14/26

HB 409 Observance of Veterans' Day by K-12 Schools by Representative Giallombardo

Meeting Summary

Representative Giallombardo presented the bill; HB 409 require school districts to designate Veterans' Day as an official school holiday.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Valdés asked the sponsor if not every district honors Veterans Day.*
 - *The Sponsor stated there were 19 school districts in Florida last year that went to school on Veterans Day.*



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- *Representative Giallombardo, Nix, Holcomb, Aristide, Valdés, and Black expressed their support for the bill.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

18 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Alvarez, J., Aristide, Long, Nixon, Woodson, Albert, Basabe, Black, Boyles, Gossett-Seidman, Holcomb, Mooney, Jr., Nix, Jr., Porras, Sapp, Trabulsy, Valdés, Weinberger

HB 583 Protection of Religious Expression in Public Schools by Representative Tramont

Meeting Summary

Representative Tramont presented the bill; HB 583 prohibits discrimination in public schools based on religious expression by students or school personnel.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Representative Woodson asked why this measure is necessary if “the provisions are already in state law and also in federal law.”*
 - *Representative Tramont acknowledged that current law protects religious expression but noted statutes “can be repealed” and placing protections in the Florida Constitution would grant them “the utmost amount of protection.”*
- *Representative Nixon asked whether the measure “is inclusive of all religions,” citing examples such as Muslim, Jewish, or Ifa practice.*
 - *Representative Tramont confirmed, “The short answer is yes,” emphasizing that the text “does not mention one specific faith” and protects freedom of expression for all religions.*
- *Representative Artiside, Woodson, Alvarez and Black expressed their support of the bill and some highlighted personal experiences.*
- *Representative Nixon expressed that while the measure claims to protect freedom for all faiths, many debates in practice “push Christianity.” Also raised concern that the language regarding curriculum might affect science instruction. She ultimately stated she would not support the measure unless further clarified, observing that some groups are “still demonized or left out.”*

Vote

Reported Favorably

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17 Yeas; 1 Nays

Yeas: Alvarez, J., Aristide, Long, Nixon, Woodson, Albert, Basabe, Black, Boyles, Gossett-Seidman, Holcomb, Mooney, Jr., Nix, Jr., Porras, Sapp, Trabulsy, Valdés, Weinberger

Nays: Nixon

Senate Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice – 1/14/26

SB 0054 Use of Substances Affecting Cognitive Function by Senator Sharief

Meeting Summary

Senator Sharief presented the bill; SB 54 requires autopsies for suspected violent offenders to include toxicology screening and related information, authorize limited release of patient records for law enforcement investigations, and mandate training on the adverse effects of psychotropic drugs and intoxicating substances in schools.

Member Debate & Questions

- *No committee members asked questions on either the amendment or the bill as amended.*
- *Senator Sharief explained: This amendment makes clarifications “while maintaining the bill’s overall structure and purpose. The amendment focuses specifically on the medical records provision.” It clarifies the scope of records that may be furnished to a law enforcement agency upon request, and “it limits that information to records that may be relevant to investigating a violent offender as defined in the bill.”*
- *She further noted: “As amended, the language makes clear that any records provided are limited in the scope and related to an individual’s mental or psychological condition, including records associated with the prescription or use of psychotropic drugs or other substances that may contribute to that condition.”*

Vote

Reported Favorably with Committee Substitute

6 Yeas; 1 Nays

Yeas: Osgood, García, Martin, Simon, Wright, Yarborough

Nays: Smith

SB 0156 Criminal Offenses Against Law Enforcement Officers and Other Personnel by Senator Leek

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Meeting Summary

Senator Leek presented the bill; SB 156 strengthens criminal penalties for resisting arrest or detention and committing violent offenses against law enforcement officers by clarifying definitions, providing enhanced punishments, and updating related statutory provisions.

Member Debate & Questions

- *Senator Osgood asked if a prosecutor could charge regular manslaughter instead of DUI and get, instead of a four-year minimum mandatory, a life minimum mandatory if a police officer was killed in a DUI traffic crash?*
 - *Senator Leek responded that the legislation “deals with violence, resisting arrest with violence,” and did not deliver a definitive conclusion for the DUI scenario.*
- *Senator Wright recounted the night of Officer Raynor’s shooting, noting his phone conversation with the local sheriff and saying, “We need to protect our law enforcement officers.”*
 - *Senator Leek summarized that the proposal clarifies that a person cannot resist an officer with violence or threat of violence when an officer is engaged in the performance of his or her official duties, emphasizing the importance of closure for Officer Raynor’s family.*

Vote

Reported Favorably with Committee Substitute

6 Yeas; 1 Nays

Yeas: Osgood, García, Martin, Simon, Wright, Yarborough

Nays: Smith

Senate Session – 1/14/26

SB 250 Rural Communities by Senator Simon

Meeting Summary

SB 250 expands support for rural communities by creating new offices and programs, revising funding distributions, and enhancing infrastructure, economic, and educational initiatives.

Member Debate & Questions

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SB 250 was placed on the Special Order Calendar and two amendments were introduced by Senator Simon (Bill Sponsor) and were passed. The bill is now filed as an Engrossed text.

Amendment 655052 –

Deletes specified sections and updates the bill's title to reflect revisions to s. 420.9073, F.S.

- *Removes text in lines 2388–2644 and 3241–3266*
- *Revises the title to include language on program participation and changes to s. 420.9073, F.S.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

39 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Arrington, Berman, Bernard, Bracy Davis, Davis, Jones, Osgood, Polsky, Rouson, Sharief, Smith, Pizzo, Albritton, Ávila, Boyd, Bradley, Brodeur, Burgess, Burton, Calatayud, DiCeglie, Gaetz, García, Grall, Gruters, Harrell, Hooper, Leek, Martin, Massullo, Jr., Mayfield, McClain, Passidomo, Rodriguez, Simon, Truenow, Trumbull, Wright, Yarborough

SB 318 Educational Scholarship Programs by Senator Gaetz

Meeting Summary

SB 318 expand and streamlines educational scholarship programs by consolidating funding, revising eligibility criteria, and bolstering oversight requirements. The bill was placed on the Calendar and three amendments were introduced and adopted.

Member Debate & Questions

Amendment 713876 –

Authorize the department to stabilize school district finances and ensure scholarship funding.

- *Allows distributing funds to school districts if FEFP allocations are insufficient.*
- *Permits supplemental payments to school districts without affecting future funding calculations.*
- *Ensures additional funding for the Family Empowerment Scholarship Program if enrollment exceeds budgeted amounts.*

Amendment 629180 –

Establishes stricter documentation and verification requirements for students enrolling in nonpublic scholarship programs.

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- *Requires proof of full-time enrollment in home education, personalized education, or private school.*
- *Allows private schools to attest enrollment with parental authorization and creates liability for false attestations.*
- *Prohibits payments before verifying eligibility, acceptance, or public school withdrawal.*
- *Mandates organizations reimburse the state for improper fund distributions.*

Amendment 629180 –

Removes existing text and inserts a new requirement to note a student's Florida student identification number if known.

- *Deletes lines 684-703 and replaces them with new language.*
- *Requires the student's Florida student identification number, if known, to be included.*

Vote

Reported Favorably

38 Yeas; 0 Nays

Yeas: Arrington, Berman, Bernard, Bracy Davis, Davis, Jones, Osgood, Polsky, Rouson, Sharief, Smith, Pizzo, Albritton, Ávila, Boyd, Bradley, Brodeur, Burgess, Burton, Calatayud, DiCeglie, Gaetz, García, Grall, Gruters, Harrell, Hooper, Leek, Martin, Massullo, Jr., Mayfield, McClain, Passidomo, Rodriguez, Simon, Truenow, Trumbull, Wright, Yarborough

House Session – 1/15/26

HB 0145 Suits Against the Government by Representative McFarland

Meeting Summary

HB 145 increases statutory liability limits for tort claims against governmental entities, streamlines claim procedures, and adjusts statutes of limitation and insurance provisions while creating new exceptions for specific victims. The bill was placed on Special Order Calendar and passed.

Member Debate & Questions

No amendments were filed.

Vote

Reported Favorably

104 Yeas; 7 Nays

*All summaries are created with AI



ARROWGROUP

Yeas: Abbott, Albert, Alvarez, D., Anderson, Andrade, Antone, Aristide, Baker, Bankson, Barnaby, Bartleman, Basabe, Benarroch, Berfield, Black, Blanco, Booth, Borrero, Botana, Boyles, Brackett, Brannan, Buchanan, Busatta, Campbell, Canady, Cassel, Chambliss, Chaney, Cobb, Conerly, Cross, Daley, Daniels, Driskell, Duggan, Dunkley, Edmonds, Eskamani, Esposito, Franklin, Gantt, Garrison, Gentry, Gerwig, Giallombardo, Gonzalez Pittman, Gossett-Seidman, Gottlieb, Greco, Griffiths, Grow, Harris, Hart-Lowman, Hinson, Holcomb, Hunschofsky, Jacques, Johnson, Joseph, Kendall, Kincart Jonsson, Koster, LaMarca, Long, Lopez, J., Maggard, McClure, McFarland, Michael, Miller, Mooney, Nix, Nixon, Oliver, Owen, Partington, Perez, Persons-Mulicka, Plakon, Plasencia, Porras, Rayner, Redondo, Robinson, F., Robinson, W., Rosenwald, Salzman, Sapp, Shoaf, Sirois, Skidmore, Smith, Stark, Steele, Tant, Tendrich, Tomkow, Trabulsy, Tramont, Tuck, Valdes, Weinberger, Woodson, Yarkosky, Yeager, Young

Nays: Alvarez, J., Chamberlin, Fabricio, Hodgers, Maney, Melo, Overdorf

2026 Session Bill Statistics

House

General Bills:	783 Bills
Local Bills:	49 Bills
Joint Resolutions:	18 Bills

Senate

General Bills:	798 Bills
Local Bills:	0 Bills
Joint Resolutions:	12 Bills

2026 Legislative Session Dates

- Election Dates & Activities [[here](#)]
- Senate 2026 Regular Session Dates [[here](#)]
- Major Budget Events [[here](#)]
- Bill Filing and Appropriation Project Request Deadlines [[here](#)]
- Important House Legislative Dates for the 2026 Regular Session [[here](#)]

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