

# 2026

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## LEGISLATIVE SESSION SUMMARY COMPILATION

Session Statistics & Policy Summaries



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# SESSION STATS 2026

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**GOVERNOR**  
RON DESANTIS (R)

**1926**

TOTAL BILLS FILED  
ACROSS REGULAR  
SESSION AND SPECIAL  
SESSIONS D, E, & F

## SENATE

PRESIDENT  
BEN ALBRITTON (R)

27 REPUBLICANS  
12 DEMOCRATS  
1 UNAFFILIATED  
0 VACANCIES

**251**

BILLS PASSED  
BOTH CHAMBERS

**228**

BILLS SIGNED INTO LAW

## HOUSE

SPEAKER  
DANIEL PEREZ (R)

84 REPUBLICANS  
34 DEMOCRATS  
2 VACANCIES

**\$117.6 B**

TOTAL BUDGET



**FSBA**



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*Thank you to the Florida Education Legislative Liaisons and school board members statewide for your insight and efforts throughout the legislative session.*



# Florida School Boards Association

## 2026 LEGISLATIVE REPORT CARD

FSBA, in partnership with parents, families, students and staff, supports the following legislative recommendations for increased student success.

### 1 Increase the Base Student Allocation by at least 5% and provide additional flexibility for school districts.

The Base Student Allocation should reflect the increased costs associated with educating students in Florida. Our proposed increase would ensure school districts' ability to address those costs, allowing for innovative academic strategies, teacher recruitment and retention, adequate insurance, and protect against cybersecurity threats.

#### RESULTS —

**The Legislature raised the Base Student Allocation by \$85.00 per student, or 1.58%.**

### 2 Increase Funding for Allocations and Cost Factors

***Ensure the true cost of Transportation Services is provided.***

School districts spend more than the amount allocated in the Transportation categorical to cover this critical service for our students. Increasing this categorical would ensure all students have access to safe and reliable transportation.

***Fully Fund the Safe Schools Allocation.***

In order for school districts to use the latest proven school safety resources, including armed School Resource Officers at every school, school districts are forced to utilize district funds for safety measures that would otherwise have funded student educational needs. Districts report the actual cost of a certified equipped law enforcement officer cost between \$80,000 and \$140,000, while the per school allocation is between \$35,000 and \$50,000. Adequate funding of all school safety measures is crucial.

***Adjust the program cost for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) to align with the actual costs.***

Increasingly complex student needs and the specialized services required to support students with disabilities effectively has dramatically increased since the pandemic. The formula used to fund ESE programs does not reflect the true costs spent by school districts. Districts need realistic funding to adequately address the needs of our ESE populations so that they can excel in life.

#### RESULTS —

**Safe schools, mental health, transportation and ESE allocations were maintained at their current funding levels and not cut.**

### 3 Reform Schools of Hope or any Co-Location Requirements to Protect School District Resources and Local Governance

Amend the Schools of Hope statute to:

Ensure co-location requirements neither jeopardize safety and security nor create unfunded operational or administrative burdens for school districts.

- Refine eligibility criteria, so they accurately identify underperforming schools;
- Update facility utilization metrics to reflect current classroom and building use, instructional models, and student enrollment patterns;
- Preserve the authority of locally elected school boards to manage district property and resources in fulfilling their constitutional responsibilities; and
- Clarify statutory definitions to provide consistent guidance for both districts and charter operators.

#### RESULTS ✓

**Schools of Hope were amended via administrative rulemaking promulgated on March 26, 2026.  
See Rule: 6A-1.0998271, FAC.**



# Florida School Boards Association

## 2026 LEGISLATIVE REPORT CARD

FSBA, in partnership with parents, families, students and staff, supports the following legislative recommendations for increased student success.

### 4 Implement an Enhanced Student Attendance Strategy

Students will not achieve academic excellence unless they are in school daily. Chronic absenteeism has become one of the greatest obstacles faced by school administrators. We ask that the legislature amend Florida Statute 1003.26(1)(b) to allow school districts to initiate chronic absenteeism strategies immediately upon the 5th unexcused student absence. Currently, districts are limited to initiating intervention processes only after 10 unexcused absences occur within a 90-day period. Earlier intervention will lead to more successful student outcomes.

#### RESULTS —

**This issue had traction and was featured in two separate bills that ultimately did not cross the finish line.**

### 5 Allow Flexible Graduation Requirements for Career and Technical (CTE) Diploma Students

School districts need increased flexibility for students pursuing technical college and/or career opportunities through the CTE Diploma. Allow flexibility for students pursuing the CTE Diploma by permitting successful completion of alternate tests or industry certifications to replace the requirement of a passing score on the Algebra I End of Course Exam (EOC) and 10th-grade English Language Arts (ELA) EOC.

#### RESULTS —

**HB 453 and HB 1279 added physical education and performing arts flexibility. The Algebra I and ELA EOC substitutions were not adopted.**

### 6 Require Kindergarten for All Students

To better prepare our youngest learners for the rigorous B.E.S.T. kindergarten standards, we recommend compulsory kindergarten for all students in Florida before enrolling in first grade. By amending Florida Statute 1003.21 to require kindergarten for all students, we will be giving our students in Florida a pathway to educational success.

#### RESULTS X

**This issue did not have traction in the legislature this year.**

### 7 Fund VPK Programs in Public Schools

Fully fund Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) programs to ensure equitable access to high-quality early learning for all children.

#### RESULTS X

**This issue did not have traction in the legislature this year.**

### 8 Create a Dedicated Categorical Fund for Family Empowerment Scholarships

Separate scholarship funding from traditional public school funding to ensure transparency and accountability in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Create a dedicated funding mechanism for Family Empowerment Scholarships.

#### RESULTS —

**SB 318 successfully passed the Senate floor early in session but ultimately was not picked up in the House.**

## 2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION SUMMARY COMPILATION

Florida School Boards Association | Bill Summaries

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### HB 5001E – General Appropriations Act (FY 2026-27)

#### – Florida Education Finance Program Totals:

- Increases the Base Student Allocation from \$5,372.60 to \$5,457.60, an increase of \$85.00 (1.58%);
- Increases total funds per unweighted FTE from \$9,187.36 to \$9,337.67, an increase of \$150.31 (1.64%);
- Sets total FEFP funding at \$23,526,279,601, an increase of \$533,289,896 (2.32%) over the 2025-26 third calculation;
- Sets total state and local K-12 funding at \$30,029,304,567, an increase of \$735,893,463 (2.51%);
- Incorporates the FEFP calculations by reference in HB 5003E, which serve as the basis for Specific Appropriations 5, 6, 88, and 89;

#### – Student Enrollment Distribution:

- Sets statewide unweighted FTE at 3,215,929.85, an increase of 27,483.24 (0.86%);
- Reflects a decrease in district unweighted FTE of 33,335.01 (1.21%), to 2,722,530.60;
- Reflects an increase in Family Empowerment Scholarship unweighted FTE of 60,818.25 (14.06%), to 493,399.25;
- Sets total Family Empowerment Scholarship funding at \$4,526,653,050;

#### – Categorical and Allocation Funding:

- Maintains the Safe Schools Allocation at \$290,000,000;
- Maintains the Mental Health Assistance Allocation at \$180,000,000;
- Increases the Classroom Teacher and Other Instructional Personnel Salary Increase Allocation to \$1,557,912,987, an increase of \$201,333,880 (14.84%), included within Base FEFP funding;
- Increases the ESE Guaranteed Allocation to \$1,494,121,811, an increase of \$94,316,099 (6.74%);
- Increases the Educational Enrichment Allocation to \$844,407,663 (0.84%) and the Student Transportation Allocation to \$570,872,976 (0.86%);
- Decreases the Class Size Reduction Allocation to \$2,650,121,971, a decrease of \$35,034,911 (1.30%);
- Increases the State-Funded Discretionary Supplement to \$1,000,785,453, an increase of \$140,952,150 (16.39%);
- Provides no funding for the Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program, which received \$6,809,059 in 2025-26;

#### – Local Effort and Millage:

- Decreases the Required Local Effort millage from 3.092 to 3.057, with the 0.748 discretionary millage unchanged, for a total millage of 3.805;

- Sets school taxable value at \$3,971,866,011,512, an increase of 3.77%;
- Sets total Required Local Effort at \$11,127,838,800, an increase of \$218,459,311 (2.00%);
- Total appropriation of \$113,575,226,021; approved by the Governor with line-item vetoes; Chapter No. 2026-232, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

#### **Board Members:**

- Review district FEFP allocations against the 2025-26 third calculation, with attention to the interaction between declining district unweighted FTE and scholarship enrollment growth;
- Model the local revenue effect of the reduced Required Local Effort millage (3.092 to 3.057) against the 3.77% increase in school taxable value;
- Confirm the district's distribution plan for the Classroom Teacher and Other Instructional Personnel Salary Increase Allocation meets statutory requirements and board approval deadlines;
- Review the Class Size Reduction Allocation decrease and the elimination of Educational Enrollment Stabilization Program funding for budget planning purposes;
- Note that the Safe Schools and Mental Health Assistance Allocations are level funded, and evaluate whether district safety and mental health staffing plans can be sustained at flat funding.

#### **HB 7031E – Taxation**

- Adjusts the dates of the annual back-to-school sales tax holiday to July 20 through August 20 each year, beginning July 20, 2026;
- Revises s. 192.091, F.S., authorizing a tax collector to waive commissions paid by the board of county commissioners, including commissions on school millages, and establishing requirements and deadlines for making and rescinding such a waiver;
- Amends s. 200.065, F.S., revising the circumstances under which a specified millage rate may be adopted, with the amendment designated as remedial and clarifying in nature;
- Amends s. 193.155, F.S., conforming homestead assessment provisions to the State Constitution and aligning portability provisions, first applicable to the 2027 ad valorem tax roll;
- Amends s. 193.461, F.S., revising the agricultural classification of lands, first applicable to the 2027 property tax roll;
- Amends s. 196.193, F.S., requiring a notice of disapproval of an exemption application to be served before a specified event in certain circumstances;
- Exempts children's services councils from required sharing of tax revenue with community redevelopment agencies;
- Creates a refund method under which State University System and Florida College System institutions may receive their existing sales tax exemption on tangible personal property incorporated into public works owned by the institution, through quarterly applications to the Department of Revenue; the provision does not extend to district school boards;
- Creates a temporary sales tax exemption, administered through a refund to the property owner, for home hardening products, defined as impact-resistant doors, garage doors, and windows rated for impact resistance and wind pressure;

- Exempts sales of propane tanks with a capacity of 20 pounds or less from sales and use tax, and establishes a hunting, fishing, and camping sales tax holiday running September 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026;
- Provides approximately \$272.2 million in total state and local tax reductions;
- Effective July 1, 2026, except as otherwise provided, with one section effective June 29, 2026;

**Board Members:**

- Review the revised back-to-school sales tax holiday dates against the district calendar, as the holiday now runs July 20 through August 20 and may fall differently relative to the district's opening date;
- Review the s. 200.065, F.S., millage adoption changes with district finance staff and legal counsel ahead of the TRIM process;
- Confirm the district understands the tax collector commission waiver provisions as they apply to school millages and any resulting effect on collections;
- Note that the public works sales tax refund mechanism applies to State University System and Florida College System institutions and does not change district purchasing procedures.

**HJR 1F – Save Our Homes from Excessive Property Taxes (Proposed Constitutional Amendment)**

- Proposes amendments to Article VII, Sections 4, 6, and 9, and creates a new section in Article XII of the Florida Constitution;
- Creates a new homestead exemption applicable to all levies other than school district levies, exempting the first \$150,000 of assessed value in 2027 and the first \$250,000 in 2028 and thereafter, with a Consumer Price Index adjustment applied above \$250,000;
- Excludes school district levies from the new exemption, preserving the existing homestead exemption structure as applied to school taxes;
- Creates a five-year exemption for property owners who are not permanent Florida residents as of December 31, 2026, exempting the first \$25,000 of assessed value for school district levies and the first \$50,000 for non-school levies, with such owners receiving the same exemption as permanent residents after five years;
- Directs the Legislature to prescribe by general law a uniform procedure under which counties, municipalities, and school districts may increase the exempt valuation up to all remaining assessed valuation;
- Requires the Legislature to provide by general law a schedule for full elimination of homestead property taxes for levies other than school district levies;
- Reduces the annual assessment increase limitation on non-homestead property from 10 percent to 5 percent, applicable to county, municipal, and special district levies but not to school district levies;
- Limits the use of county and municipal ad valorem revenue to specified core needs, including public safety, funding for education and public schools, and infrastructure financing;
- Revises Save Our Homes portability provisions, expanding the maximum transferable benefit;
- Estimated cash impact on local non-school property tax revenues of -\$4.95 billion in FY 2027-28;
- Passed the House 75-26 and the Senate 30-9 on June 2, 2026; filed with the Secretary of State on June 16, 2026;

- Placed on the November 3, 2026 general election ballot; **requires approval by 60 percent of voters; if approved, takes effect January 1, 2027;**

#### **Board Members:**

- Note that the new and expanded exemptions and the reduced non-homestead assessment cap **apply to non-school levies only**; district Required Local Effort and discretionary millage are not *directly* reduced by the amendment as passed;
- Review the directive requiring the Legislature to prescribe a uniform procedure under which school districts may increase exempt valuation, which would operate through future general law rather than the amendment itself;
- Monitor 2027 implementing legislation if the measure passes, as the amendment would take effect January 1, 2027;
- Consider the county and municipal revenue impact in planning for shared services, interlocal agreements, and school resource officer cost-sharing arrangements funded from county or municipal ad valorem revenue.

#### **SB 124 – Florida Virtual School**

- Removes priority access to the Florida Virtual School for students who need expanded course access, students seeking accelerated access to earn a high school diploma one semester early, and children of active-duty members of the United States Armed Forces, reflecting FLVS capacity to serve all students;
- Authorizes the FLVS president and chief executive officer to request a meeting of the FLVS Board of Trustees, rather than limiting that authority to the board chair or board membership;
- Authorizes the Board of Trustees to enter into contracts with other public and private entities and government agencies, rather than limiting the board to franchise agreements with school districts;
- Aligns the definition of instructional and administrative personnel at FLVS with existing law governing K-12 public school personnel, and removes Board of Trustees authority to reject such personnel from employment for cause;
- Requires, rather than authorizes, FLVS employees, except temporary, seasonal, and student employees, to be state employees for purposes of eligibility to participate in the Florida Retirement System;
- Clarifies the practice of including grade 6-12 part-time students in full-time equivalent student calculations so that all full-time and part-time FLVS students are included;
- Authorizes FLVS to accrue revenue from a direct-support organization, and requires expenditures from all supplemental funds to be contingent upon review and approval by the FLVS president and chief executive officer;
- Requires FLVS to report only on the operations and accomplishments of FLVS, and deletes reporting requirements related to the marketing and operational plan, assets and liabilities, unit cost recommendations, and accountability mechanism recommendations;
- Requires a school district to provide a test administrator when an FLVS student participates in required statewide assessments, the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system, industry certification examinations, and national assessments at the assigned school;
- Chapter No. 2026-67, Laws of Florida;

- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Confirm district procedures for providing FLVS students with testing facilities, a test administrator, and advance notice of administration dates and times, as the district's obligation to supply a test administrator is now express in statute; review assessment scheduling and staffing capacity at schools serving as assigned testing sites; and review any existing district franchise arrangement in light of expanded FLVS contracting authority.

#### **HB 145 – Claims Against the Government (VETOED)**

- Would have increased the statutory limits on payment of claims and collectability of judgments against the state and its agencies and subdivisions from \$200,000 per person and \$300,000 per incident to \$350,000 per person and \$500,000 per incident;
- Would have revised statutes of limitation and presuit procedures for certain claims against government entities, including negligence, contribution, medical malpractice, wrongful death, and sexual battery on victims under 16 years of age;
- Would have applied to causes of action accruing on or after October 1, 2026;
- Passed the House 108-1 and the Senate 36-0; presented to the Governor June 15, 2026;
- Vetoed by the Governor June 30, 2026; did not become law. The limits under s. 768.28, F.S., remain \$200,000 per person and \$300,000 per incident;

**Board Members:** No action is required, and **the sovereign immunity limits applicable to district tort liability under ss. 768.28 and 1006.24, F.S., are unchanged.** Given the margins by which HB 145 passed both chambers **FSBA expects the issue to return in the 2027 session, though not necessarily at the limits proposed here.** Boards may wish to review district liability coverage and self-insurance retention levels ahead of that session so the fiscal exposure of any future increase is understood.

#### **SB 156 – Criminal Offenses Against Law Enforcement Officers and Other Personnel**

- Cites the act as the “Officer Jason Raynor Act”;
- Revises the prohibition on the use or threatened use of force to resist arrest or detention;
- Provides for enhanced punishment for manslaughter when committed against specified officers;
- Revises provisions concerning assault or battery upon specified officers and other personnel;
- Revises the provision concerning resisting, obstructing, or opposing specified officers or other legally authorized persons;
- Chapter No. 2026-144, Laws of Florida;
- Effective June 16, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review the revised offense provisions against the district's school resource officer and safe-school officer agreements to determine whether personnel serving in those roles fall within the categories of officers and other personnel covered by the enhanced penalties, and to update school safety and law enforcement coordination materials accordingly.

### **SB 178 – Athletics in Public K-12 Schools**

- Requires the Florida High School Athletic Association to adopt bylaws authorizing head coaches of athletic teams to support the welfare of students they coach using personal funds, in the form of food, transportation, and recovery services provided in good faith;
- Requires the bylaws to mandate written parental consent before a head coach may provide such assistance, and to restrict such use of funds to one head coach per athletic team;
- Requires coaches who provide assistance using personal funds to report it to FHSAA in a manner provided by FHSAA bylaw;
- Provides that use of personal funds is presumed not to be an impermissible benefit unless it is not reported, is reported and deemed by FHSAA not to be in good faith, or is used for recruiting purposes;
- Sets the maximum amount of personal funds a coach may use at \$15,000 per athletic team per year;
- Authorizes any other organization governing interscholastic athletic competition in Florida to adopt similar bylaws;
- Chapter No. 2026-90, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review district athletic policies and coach handbooks alongside the new FHSAA bylaw requirements, particularly the written parental consent requirement and the reporting obligation placed on head coaches; confirm the district's athletic handbook reflects the \$15,000 annual cap and the one-coach-per-team limitation.

### **SB 182 – Education**

- **School Teacher Training and Mentoring Program:**
  - Establishes the program within the Department of Education, authorizing school districts, charter schools, and charter management organizations to place retired or current classroom teachers in schools earning a grade of “D” or “F” to serve as mentors supporting new or struggling classroom teachers;
  - Requires mentors to have at least three years of teaching experience in prekindergarten through grade 12 and a highly effective rating on their most recent performance evaluation;
  - Authorizes a stipend of up to \$3,000 for teacher mentors and requires each mentor-mentee relationship to last one grading period;
  - Limits retired teacher mentors to no more than five mentees at a time and classroom teachers serving as mentors to no more than one mentee at a time;
  - Requires the Department of Education to establish program standards and a standard contract outlining mentor and mentee responsibilities, and authorizes State Board of Education rulemaking;
  - Authorizes the use of Educational Enrichment Allocation funds under the Florida Education Finance Program, if available, to support the program;

– **Patriotic Displays at Public Schools:**

- Requires, subject to appropriation, that portraits of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln be displayed in a conspicuous place in each public school in the district;
- Requires the Department of Education to select the portraits and make them available to each school district;

– **Instruction in Cursive:**

- Requires public schools to provide cursive writing instruction for students in grades 3 through 5, and requires each student to demonstrate proficiency by the end of grade 5;
- Defines proficiency in cursive writing as the ability to write upper and lowercase letters in cursive, write words and sentences legibly with proper spacing and alignment, and read and apply cursive writing to support literacy development, including writing essays and other assignments in cursive in accordance with state academic standards;

– **Private School Facilities and Land Use:**

- Exempts a private school enrolling 150 or fewer students, or located within the unincorporated area of a specified county, from rezoning, a special exception, or a land use change if located in a commercial or mixed-use zoning district;
- Preempts local mitigation requirements, conditions, performance standards, ordinances, rules, codes, or policies for such schools, except that a county or municipality may require mitigation measures necessary to address vehicular traffic and pedestrian safety reasonably and directly attributable to the operation of the private school;
- Authorizes a private school enrolling 150 or fewer students to operate in certain existing facilities and to satisfy the Florida Fire Prevention Code through an alternative fire safety evaluation adopted by the State Fire Marshal;

– **Florida Tax Credit Scholarship and Charter Schools:**

- Clarifies that when a student's Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program account is closed, remaining funds revert to the scholarship funding organization rather than the state, and must be separately accounted for and used to fund scholarships;
- Prohibits a charter school implementing a school improvement plan or a corrective action plan from dismissing a student based on academic performance;

– Chapter No. 2026-33, Laws of Florida;

– Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Determine whether the district will participate in the School Teacher Training and Mentoring Program at D- and F-graded schools and identify the funding source, including whether Educational Enrichment Allocation funds will be used; approve a plan for cursive writing instruction in grades 3 through 5 and proficiency determination by the end of grade 5; confirm procedures for receiving and displaying the state-provided portraits, noting the requirement is subject to appropriation; and review charter school contracts and sponsor monitoring practices in light of the prohibition on academic dismissal by charter schools under improvement or corrective action plans.

## **SB 212 – Sexual Offenders and Sexual Predators**

- Amends s. 775.215, F.S., defining the term “public swimming pool” and revising residency restrictions for persons convicted of certain sexual offenses occurring on or after a specified date;

- Amends s. 856.022, F.S., revising the prohibition on specified offenders coming within a specified distance of a place where children congregate;
- Prohibits certain persons from contacting, communicating with, or knowingly approaching with the intent to contact or communicate with certain persons at certain locations, and provides an exception;
- Requires a person who has been convicted of specified offenses to provide notice to a school or child care facility under certain circumstances;
- Amends s. 901.15, F.S., authorizing the warrantless arrest of a person if a law enforcement officer has probable cause to believe the person committed specified offenses;
- Amends s. 943.04351, F.S., revising requirements for state agencies or governmental subdivisions to conduct searches before taking specified actions;
- Applies to persons convicted of committing sexual offenses on or after July 1, 2026, or who change their residence on or after that date;
- Chapter No. 2026-17, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Establish a procedure for receiving, documenting, and acting upon notices provided to schools by persons convicted of specified offenses, including which school-level and district-level personnel receive the notice and how it is communicated to school administration and safe-school officers; review district visitor, volunteer, and campus access policies against the revised proximity and contact prohibitions.

#### **HB 399 – Land Use and Development Regulations**

- Requires local governments' interlocal agreements with school districts to address reasonable access to public easements and rights-of-way necessary for public school facilities;
- Requires local governments to charge development permit and development order application fees that reasonably relate to the costs associated with the review, processing, and final disposition of applications;
- Requires local government comprehensive plans and land development regulations to include factors for assessing the compatibility of allowable residential uses within a residential zoning district and future land use category;
- Requires land development regulations to incorporate objective design standards or other measures for mitigating or minimizing potential incompatibility;
- Requires local government staff to identify specific areas of incompatibility, and authorizes staff to recommend mitigation measures to applicants, before recommending denial of rezoning, subdivision, or site plan approval applications on compatibility grounds;
- Prohibits local governments from denying an application on compatibility grounds unless the denial includes written findings identifying areas of incompatibility and concluding that proposed mitigation measures are inadequate and no feasible mitigation measures exist;
- Provides that the fee and compatibility provisions above take effect January 1, 2027;
- Chapter No. 2026-7, Laws of Florida;
- Effective upon becoming law (March 27, 2026), except as otherwise expressly provided;

**Board Members:** Review the district's interlocal agreements with each local government in the district and initiate amendments addressing reasonable access to public easements and rights-of-way necessary for public school facilities before the January 1, 2027, effective date; review district development permit fee obligations in light of the requirement that local government fees reasonably relate to processing costs.

#### **HB 453 – Requirements for a Standard High School Diploma**

- Allows completion of two years of marching band to satisfy both the one-credit requirement in physical education and the one-credit requirement in performing arts, rather than one or the other;
- Allows a student with a disability to meet the one-credit physical education requirement by participating in the Special Olympics for one year, as determined by the student's individual education plan team;
- Chapter No. 2026-70, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Update graduation requirement guidance, student progression plans, and course-coding practices to reflect the dual-credit application of marching band; confirm that individual education plan procedures address the Special Olympics option for satisfying the physical education credit.

#### **SB 538 – Extracurricular Activities**

- **Student Eligibility and Participation:**
  - Defines “eligible student” to include home education, charter school, private school, Florida Virtual School, alternative school, and traditional public school students, and defines “governing organization” to include any organization governing interscholastic and intrascholastic activities, including FHSAA;
  - Aligns eligibility across educational settings by specifying that students are eligible to participate at the school in which they are enrolled;
  - Permits participation at a school other than the one in which the student is enrolled if the school of enrollment does not offer the activity or the student is in a home education program, and the school at which the student will participate is located in the school district in which the student resides;
  - Permits participation at a public, charter, or private school in an adjacent school district if no public or charter school in the district of residence offers the activity and an agreement cannot be reached with a private school in that district, and allows the student to petition the governing organization's executive director to explore additional options;
- **Activity Fees:**
  - Authorizes public schools to assess an activity fee to an enrolled student, and to assess a fee to a non-enrolled student not exceeding the greater of the fee paid by enrolled students or a reasonable fee based on costs to the school, not to exceed \$400 per activity;

- Requires activity fees that differ from fees charged to enrolled students to be approved annually by July 1 by the district school board or charter school governing board as an action item;
- Requires each public school to post on its website a complete list of fees charged to participating students, by activity, prior to the beginning of the school year, and to submit the list to the Department of Education;
- Specifies that the activity fee charged to a home education student must be the same as that charged to enrolled students;
- **Transportation and Transfers:**
  - Requires the parents of a participating student to provide transportation, and releases the school and district school board from liability for such transportation;
  - Prohibits participation in sports at two different schools during the same school year unless the student is a dependent child of active duty military personnel relocated by military orders, has been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone, has moved due to a court-ordered change in custody arising from separation, divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent, or has been granted approval by the governing organization's executive director;
  - Requires the governing organization to provide an eligibility determination within 14 days after request, to adopt bylaws establishing transfer eligibility criteria, and to establish an appeals process with a 20-day timeline for a decision;
- **Governing Organizations and Compensation:**
  - Requires a governing organization to adopt, maintain, and enforce sport-specific manuals or handbooks governing interscholastic competition, which may address timing, scoring, equipment, officiating, and athlete safety;
  - Requires the governing organization to allow athletes to request exemptions or accommodations from real-time scoring requirements not later than 72 hours before a sanctioned event;
  - Authorizes a district school board to adopt a policy on the use of voluntary donations and revenues generated by authorized booster clubs to provide funds to athletic coaches or activity sponsors, and specifies such funds may not be used for severance pay or salary compensation;
  - Defines an extracurricular activities administrator and authorizes the superintendent to negotiate individual compensation for such personnel, not to exceed the compensation of the highest paid administrator in the district;
- Chapter No. 2026-93, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Adopt or revise board policy establishing activity fees, noting that any fee for non-enrolled students that differs from the enrolled-student fee requires annual board approval as an action item by July 1 and is **capped at \$400 per activity**; ensure each school posts its complete fee schedule by activity on its website before the school year begins and submits it to the Department of Education; review policy on parent-provided transportation and the associated liability release; consider adopting a policy governing booster club donations used to compensate coaches and activity

sponsors; and review procedures for accepting eligible students from other schools and adjacent districts.

### **HB 561 – Educator Preparation and Certification**

- Authorizes educator preparation institutes to enroll participants and allow them to complete coursework while working to obtain an “eligible” statement of status of eligibility in the certification subject area included in the participant's educational plan;
- Requires the Department of Education to issue a temporary certificate to an educator whose previously issued professional certificate has expired, provided the educator meets basic eligibility requirements for certification, allowing the educator to begin teaching without again demonstrating subject area mastery;
- Requires an applicant seeking reinstatement of a professional educator certificate to meet specified statutory eligibility requirements, but removes the requirement to retake subject area examinations for each subject included on the certificate;
- Provides that upon reinstatement, the professional certificate must include all subject area coverages and endorsements held at the time of expiration;
- Specifies that inservice points earned to obtain or renew a professional certificate that has since expired may not be used to satisfy reinstatement requirements;
- Updates the name of the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at the University of South Florida to the David C. Anchin Center for the Advancement of Teaching as the required collaborating entity for the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence;
- Requires, rather than authorizes, the center to submit a professional learning system to the Department of Education, requires the center to offer professional learning at no cost to certified educators seeking to renew or reinstate a certificate, and requires the center to submit inservice points earned through the system to the department on the educator's behalf;
- Chapter No. 2026-106, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review district hiring and human resources procedures to account for educators returning to the classroom on temporary certificates issued upon expiration, and for reinstated certificate holders who are no longer required to retake subject area examinations; consider how these pathways affect recruitment strategy for hard-to-fill positions.

### **SB 572 – Ethics for Public Officers and Employees**

- Revises the definition of the term “relative” in the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, s. 112.312, F.S., to include current and former foster parents and foster children;
- Creates an exception to the nepotism prohibitions under the Code of Ethics, providing that a board, council, commission, or other collegial body is not prohibited from appointing, employing, promoting, or advancing to a leadership position on that body an elected public official who is a relative of another elected public official serving on the same body;
- Chapter No. 2026-22, Laws of Florida;
- Effective upon becoming law (April 1, 2026);

**Board Members:** Update district nepotism and ethics guidance to reflect the expanded definition of “relative,” which now reaches current and former foster parents and foster children for purposes of the appointment, employment, promotion, and advancement restrictions; **note that the new leadership-position exception is limited to elected officials serving on the same collegial body and does not otherwise alter the nepotism prohibition as it applies to district employment.**

#### **SB 590 – Statute of Limitations Period for Violations Involving Required Reports Concerning Children**

- Tolls the statute of limitations for the offense of failing to make a required report of known or suspected child abuse, including sexual abuse, abandonment, and neglect, until a law enforcement agency or other governmental agency is made aware of the violation;
- Excludes the institution in which the violation occurs from the agencies whose awareness starts the limitations period;
- Applies to any offense that is not otherwise barred from prosecution on or before July 1, 2026;
- Chapter No. 2026-95, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review district mandatory reporting policies, employee training, and internal reporting procedures in light of the tolling provision, under which the limitations period for a failure-to-report offense does not begin to run until a law enforcement or other governmental agency (not the institution where the violation occurred) is made aware of the violation; confirm that district procedures direct employees to report directly to the central abuse hotline and do not treat notification of a school or district administrator as satisfying the reporting obligation.

#### **HB 753 – School Counselors**

- Requires that performance evaluation criteria for certified school counselors be based on indicators from the Florida School Counseling Standards;
- Exempts individuals seeking an educator certificate as a school counselor from demonstration of mastery of general knowledge and mastery of professional preparation and education competence;
- Specifies that the exemption does not limit a school district from requiring demonstration of mastery as a condition of employment as a certified school counselor;
- Chapter No. 2026-107, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Approve revisions to the district's school counselor evaluation instrument to align with the Florida School Counseling Standards; determine whether the district will require demonstration of mastery as a condition of employment notwithstanding the certification exemption, and update personnel policy accordingly.

#### **HB 757 – School Safety**

- **Guardian Program:**
  - Expands participation in the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program to Florida's public postsecondary institutions;

- Requires sheriffs to assist public postsecondary educational institutions in implementing guardian programs, and requires a sheriff to establish a guardian training program or contract with certain other sheriffs' offices to do so in specified circumstances;
- Requires that each school guardian and school security guard reported be uniquely identified;
- **New Criminal Offense:**
  - Amends s. 790.115, F.S., to create a second-degree felony for discharging any weapon or firearm within 1,000 feet of a school during hours of operation or during a sanctioned school activity, unless discharged for lawful defense of the person or another or for a lawful purpose;
  - Requires a person arrested for the offense to be held in custody until brought before the court for admittance to bail;
  - Ranks the offense on the offense severity ranking chart of the Criminal Punishment Code;
- **Reporting Applications and Records:**
  - Requires schools without a public safety reporting application to promote the use of FortifyFL and to install or bookmark a link to the tool on specified school-issued devices;
  - Requires specified records relating to student behavior, including threat assessment reports and student psychological evaluations, to be transferred from a K-12 school to a Florida College System institution or state university upon the student's enrollment;
- **Training:**
  - Requires district school safety specialists to explain the purpose and proper execution of specified school safety training protocols;
  - Authorizes the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to adopt rules and regulations, respectively;
- Creates s. 1006.601, F.S.;
- Chapter No. 2026-80, Laws of Florida;
- Effective upon becoming law (May 15, 2026), except that the s. 790.115, F.S., offense provisions take effect October 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Confirm whether the district's public safety reporting application satisfies the requirement, and if not, implement FortifyFL promotion and installation of the required device links; establish a procedure for transferring threat assessment reports and student psychological evaluations to postsecondary institutions upon student enrollment, and review it with legal counsel for consistency with FERPA and state student records law; confirm that the training delivered by the district school safety specialist includes explanation of the purpose and proper execution of required protocols; and review reporting practices to ensure each school guardian and school security guard is uniquely identified.

### **SB 824 – School District Unimproved Real Property**

- Requires school districts to annually submit to the Department of Education an inventory of all unimproved real property owned by the district;
- Defines “unimproved real property” as any parcel of land owned in whole or in part by a district that does not contain any vertical improvements, including buildings, permanent structures, or constructed facilities;

- Requires the inventory to be complete as of June 30 of that year and submitted on a date determined by the Department of Education;
- Requires each parcel entry to include the identification number, the address or descriptive location and acreage, the date of acquisition by the district, the current use if any, and the fair market value calculated using the most recent county property appraiser assessment or a district-commissioned appraisal completed within the previous 24 months;
- Requires the Department of Education to compile the data into a statewide report including total statewide acreage, aggregate statewide fair market value, a district-by-district breakdown with total parcels and acreage, fair market value, and each parcel's identification number and acreage, and any trends or findings the department determines relevant to statewide land use or long-range facilities planning;
- Requires the Department of Education to publish the statewide report on its website by December 1, 2026, and every 3 years thereafter;
- Chapter No. 2026-122, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Compile the district's inventory of unimproved real property as of June 30 and establish a recurring process for annual submission; confirm whether existing county property appraiser valuations will be used or whether district-commissioned appraisals within the previous 24 months are needed for any parcels; review the inventory in connection with long-range facilities planning before it is submitted.

#### **HB 851 – Professional Learning for Instructional and School Administrative Personnel**

- Requires each school district's professional learning system to provide at least one autism-specific professional learning opportunity each year for instructional personnel and school-based administrators;
- Requires the professional learning to be developed in consultation with the district's assigned Center for Autism and Related Disabilities;
- Requires the professional learning to include evidence-based practices for supporting students with autism spectrum disorder across all levels of need, including academic instruction, behavioral supports, communication strategies, and inclusive practices;
- Chapter No. 2026-109, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Approve the district professional development plan revision adding the annual autism-specific offering for instructional personnel and school-based administrators; confirm that the plan reflects the required consultation with the district's assigned Center for Autism and Related Disabilities in developing the content.

#### **HB 905 – Foreign Influence**

- Cites the act as the “Foreign Influence Restriction and Enforcement Act”;
- Expands the prohibition against a state agency, political subdivision, or public school that is authorized to expend state-appropriated funds or levy ad valorem taxes entering into an

agreement with, or accepting a grant from, a foreign country of concern, so that the prohibition also reaches agreements with a subdivision of a foreign country of concern;

- Expands the definition of the term “foreign source of concern” to include a designated foreign terrorist organization or an agent acting on its behalf;
- Increases the penalty for a public officer, agency employee, local government attorney, or candidate who violates restrictions on gifts where the gift was received from a designated foreign terrorist organization or a foreign country of concern;
- Requires ethics training for specified public officials to include information on foreign countries of concern and their influence;
- Reclassifies criminal offenses committed for the purpose of benefiting, promoting, or furthering the interests of a foreign government, a designated foreign terrorist organization, or an agent of such government or organization;
- Chapter No. 2026-66, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review district agreements, memoranda of understanding, grants, and accepted donations against the expanded prohibition, which now reaches subdivisions of a foreign country of concern, with attention to world language and cultural exchange programs, instructional material and curriculum partnerships, and foreign-sourced gifts; confirm that required ethics training for board members and covered district officials is updated to include the foreign influence content.

#### **HB 967 – Electronic Payments Made to Units of Local Governments**

- Requires each unit of local government, including all municipalities, special districts, counties, and county constitutional officers, to accept payment by credit card, charge card, bank debit card, and electronic fund transfer for financial obligations owed to the local government, except when another form of payment is required by law;
- Requires local governments to have an online method to accept payments;
- Chapter No. 2026-169, Laws of Florida;
- Effective January 1, 2027;

**Board Members:** Determine whether the district is a unit of local government for purposes of this requirement, and if so, inventory all district collection points (including school-level fees, food service accounts, facility rentals, and athletic and activity fees) and confirm each accepts card payment and electronic fund transfer through an online method by January 1, 2027; review merchant processing costs and any convenience fee practices in connection with implementation.

#### **SB 1022 – Children's Initiatives**

- Creates the Bay County 32401 Children's Initiative within Bay County and the Pompano RYZE (Resilient Youth with Zeal to Excel) Children's Initiative within Broward County, adding to the Florida Children's Initiatives, which are community-based service networks located in disadvantaged areas of the state and established to improve the educational, economic, and health outcomes of area residents;
- Requires each initiative to be managed by a not-for-profit corporation that complies with the requirements for not-for-profit corporations in ch. 617, F.S.;

- Requires the area served by each initiative to be large enough to include all the necessary components of community life, yet small enough to serve all members of the community who wish to participate;
- Chapter No. 2026-100, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** This bill applies to Bay and Broward Counties only. Boards in those counties should identify the schools located within the designated initiative service areas and determine what coordination, data sharing, or partnership role the district will have with the managing not-for-profit corporation.

### **HB 1069 – Background Screenings**

- Defines the term “team based in this state” for purposes of the background screening requirements applicable to athletic coaches;
- Specifies that independent sanctioning authorities responsible for approving athletic coaches are qualified entities for purposes of background screening, and removes obsolete dates related to the requirement that athletic coaches be background screened;
- **Authorizes an independent sanctioning authority to exempt persons under 18 years of age and certain referees from the requirement to pass a level 2 background screening if specified criteria are met;**
- Requires each qualified entity to designate a user administrator to serve as the primary point of contact for managing compliance with state and federal law governing the security and privacy of criminal history information;
- Authorizes the Care Provider Background Screening Clearinghouse to share background screening records with independent sanctioning authorities that meet specified criteria;
- Prohibits a person screened through the Clearinghouse by certain entities from denying or failing to acknowledge an arrest, whether or not the record of the arrest has been sealed or expunged;
- Chapter No. 2026-114, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Confirm which district functions operate as a qualified entity for background screening purposes and, where the designation applies, name a user administrator as the district's primary point of contact for criminal history security and privacy compliance and record that designation with the screening entities the district uses; review screening procedures for athletic coaches, volunteers, and contractors against the revised requirements, including the applicant's obligation to acknowledge arrests regardless of sealing or expunction.

### **HB 1073 – Public Education**

- Creates the “District School Board Members' Bill of Rights” clarifying the rights of school board members in the exercise of their statutory oversight and responsibility;
- Provides that board members have the right, upon request, to free and timely access to all school district documents *necessary* to fulfill required constitutional and statutory duties, with requests not related to a matter on a publicly noticed board meeting to be fulfilled within **10 business days**

**after receipt, and requires that any document provided to one board member be offered to all board members;**

- Provides that board members have the right to consult with the district's chief financial officer on general matters related to the budget and the sources and uses of district funds, and to have reasonable access to district budget and financial transaction information;
- Provides that board members have the right to request any document or information from district staff, except documents or information the member would be prohibited by law from accessing, **with the permission of the superintendent** or other members of the administration, and specifies such permission must not be unreasonably withheld;
- Provides that board members have the right to comment publicly during or outside of board meetings on any matter of board business, except student and employee disciplinary hearings;
- Specifies records that must be kept as a public record with the minutes;
- Prohibits a school district from requiring or providing incentives to an employee to sign a nondisclosure or confidentiality agreement, and prohibits imposing employment conditions that would circumvent that prohibition;
- **Defines “good cause” for district school board rejection of an employee nominated for a position as the nominated employee having fabricated or materially exaggerated credentials or background, not meeting the minimum requirements for the position, or having had an educator certificate revoked by another state;**
- Chapter No. 2026-73, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review board policy and operating procedures against the enumerated rights, including the 10-business-day response requirement for document requests unrelated to a noticed meeting and the requirement that documents provided to one member be offered to all; identify and discontinue any employment practice involving nondisclosure or confidentiality agreements; and review the board's process for acting on superintendent personnel nominations against the statutory definition of good cause.

### **HB 1085 – Local Government Cyber Security**

- Codifies the Local Government Cybersecurity Protection Program, administered by the Florida Digital Service, to provide information technology commodities and services to local government participants to develop and enhance their cybersecurity risk management programs consistent with s. 282.3185, F.S., and to assist local governments with mitigation and defense against cybersecurity threats, including ransomware incidents;
- Authorizes the Florida Digital Service to apply for and accept any agency, department, or federal funds or grants in furtherance of the program;
- Requires the program to be administered based on objective eligibility and evaluation criteria, and requires prioritization of fiscally constrained counties;
- Requires the Florida Digital Service to award grants under the program by December 1 each year;
- Permits a local government to purchase information technology commodities from the program regardless of its participation in the grant program;

- Requires the Florida Digital Service to enter into a data-sharing agreement with a participating local government, as necessary, to support the detection, prevention, and response to cybersecurity incidents consistent with s. 282.318, F.S., the State Cybersecurity Act;
- Requires the Florida Digital Service to submit an annual report on the implementation and outcomes of the program to the Executive Office of Policy and Budget and the chairs of the legislative appropriations committees;
- Repeals the program on October 2, 2031, unless reviewed and saved by the Legislature;
- Chapter No. 2026-115, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Determine whether the district qualifies as a local government participant eligible for the program, and if so, evaluate participation in the annual grant cycle ahead of the December 1 award date; note that information technology commodities may be purchased through the program regardless of grant participation, and review whether that purchasing channel offers advantages over existing district procurement; review the required data-sharing agreement terms before entering into any agreement.

#### **HB 1115 – Grants for Genetic Counseling Education**

- Creates the Genetic Counseling Education Enhancement Grant Program within the State University System to support the development, growth, and sustainability of accredited graduate-level genetic counseling programs;
- Requires the Board of Governors to administer the program and award competitive grants to state universities to address faculty shortages, student financial barriers, and clinical training needs;
- Authorizes, subject to appropriation, a one-time start-up grant to establish an accredited genetic counseling program at a state university, and authorizes performance-based awards to accredited programs based on program completers and certification examination passage rates;
- Requires grant funds to be used to recruit and retain qualified faculty, provide cost-of-attendance scholarships, and support clinical training experiences, and prohibits use for general administrative overhead, construction of new facilities, or non-program-related activities;
- Requires each participating state university to submit an annual report to the Board of Governors, and requires the Board of Governors to compile a statewide summary for the Governor and the Legislature by July 1 each year;
- Chapter No. 2026-131, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** This bill operates within the State University System and does not impose requirements on school districts. It is included for reference as part of the state's health care workforce pipeline; **districts with health science career and technical education programs may wish to monitor the expansion of accredited genetic counseling programs as a postsecondary pathway for students.**

#### **HB 1153 – Juvenile Justice**

- Defines the terms “juvenile detention officer” and “juvenile probation officer” and includes such officers within the definition of “officer” in ch. 943, F.S., subjecting them to the same standards

and training as other officers, and includes certified supervisory personnel but not support personnel employed by the employing agency;

- Adds juvenile detention officers and juvenile probation officers to the definition of “law enforcement, correctional, or correctional probation officers” for purposes of death benefits and commemorative service awards, makes such officers eligible for the Governor's Medal of Heroism, and authorizes an entity that employs or appoints such officers to establish a Medal of Valor program;
- Exempts the Department of Juvenile Justice from the prohibition against sheltering an unmarried minor without the consent of the minor's parent or guardian or without notifying a law enforcement officer;
- Revises the definition of the term “family in need of services” to include legal guardians in addition to parents and custodians;
- Revises the circumstances under which a child may be placed in a shelter as punishment for contempt of court to include a child subject to shelter proceedings under ch. 984, F.S., rather than only a child adjudicated in need of services;
- Codifies juvenile detention cost sharing, requiring the Department of Juvenile Justice to review county juvenile detention payments quarterly and, where a county has not met its financial obligation, to direct the Department of Revenue to deduct the amount owed from the county's revenue sharing funds under s. 218.28, F.S., and transfer those funds into the Shared County/State Juvenile Detention Trust Fund;
- Chapter No. 2026-16, Laws of Florida;
- Effective upon becoming law (March 30, 2026);

**Board Members:** Update child study team, truancy, and children and families in need of services referral procedures to reflect the revised definition of “family in need of services,” which now includes legal guardians, and the expanded circumstances for shelter placement under ch. 984, F.S.; confirm that referral procedures reflect the Department of Juvenile Justice's new authority to shelter an unmarried minor without prior parental or guardian consent.

### **HB 1201 – Student Health and Safety**

- Specifies that the term “school,” for purposes of the requirements governing care of students with epilepsy or a seizure disorder, includes a charter school;
- Provides that written orders from a student's physician or other medical professional regarding services to be provided by a school for a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder may be in a form determined by the medical professional;
- Revises the employee training requirement so that it applies to each school district employee and charter school employee whose duties include regular contact with a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder, rather than to each school employee, and provides that such employees include any employee who teaches or transports the student to and from school or school activities;
- Provides that completion of the required training is valid for five years;
- Requires each public school to display a poster developed by the Department of Education describing the basic steps of responding to an individual having a seizure;

- Requires the Department of Health, as part of its existing educational program concerning epilepsy, to include education and training requirements specific to public schools and school personnel;
- Chapter No. 2026-75, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Identify all instructional, transportation, and support employees whose duties include regular contact with a student with epilepsy or a seizure disorder (including bus operators and attendants), and place the required training on a five-year renewal cycle; obtain and post the Department of Education seizure response poster at each school, and confirm that charter schools in the district have been notified that the training, poster, and physician order provisions apply to them.

### **HB 1217 – Prohibited Governmental Policies Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

- Prohibits a governmental entity from enacting or enforcing a resolution, ordinance, rule, code, or policy to support a net zero policy, and defines the term “net zero policy” as any policy, program, or initiative designed to achieve a balance between the total amount of greenhouse gas emitted into the atmosphere and an equal amount removed from the atmosphere;
- Prohibits a governmental entity from using public funds to support, implement, or advance a net zero policy by providing procurement or purchasing preferences or by paying dues, membership fees, subscriptions, or contributions to private organizations that adopt, require support for, or advocate for a net zero policy;
- Prohibits a governmental entity from imposing any charge, including a tax, fee, penalty, offset, or assessment, to advance a net zero policy, and requires each governmental entity to submit an annual affidavit to the Department of Revenue attesting to compliance with this provision;
- Prohibits a governmental entity from implementing, administering, or enforcing any program, or joining any organization, that has a policy of establishing limits on greenhouse gas emissions or of requiring or incentivizing participation in an emissions trading program;
- Defines the term “governmental entity” to include a state, regional, county, municipal, special district, or other political subdivision, whether executive, judicial, or legislative, and expressly includes public schools, state colleges, and state universities;
- Provides that the act does not prevent a municipality or governmental entity that owns or operates and directly controls an electric or natural gas utility from adopting rules, regulations, or policies governing the utility; the Public Service Commission from exercising its powers and duties to regulate public utilities; or a governmental entity from otherwise exercising its authority as provided by law;
- Chapter No. 2026-45, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review board policies, facility and energy plans, procurement and purchasing preferences, and organizational memberships and dues against the prohibitions, as the definition of “governmental entity” expressly includes public schools; and establish the process and assign responsibility for preparing and submitting the district's annual compliance affidavit to the Department of Revenue.

## HB 1279 – Education

### – Virtual Instruction and School Choice:

- Revises notification requirements for school districts to include all public and private virtual instruction options, rather than only the Florida Virtual School, and to provide student access based on student choice;
- Authorizes students receiving a Family Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities to satisfy the regular and direct contact requirement by attending a private school's physical location at least two school days per week;
- Requires the Department of Education to make specified CAPE Digital Tool certificates available to middle grades students, and limits such students to two certificates per school year;

### – Student Health and Safety:

- Authorizes public and private schools to purchase, maintain, and administer Food and Drug Administration-approved epinephrine delivery devices, rather than limiting references to epinephrine auto-injectors;
- Clarifies that, notwithstanding local ordinances or development orders, a school district or charter school may use any combination of safe-school officer options authorized by law;

### – Early Learning Accountability:

- Updates Voluntary Prekindergarten accountability provisions by removing obsolete kindergarten readiness-rate provisions and revising related accountability references;
- Revises the criteria to maintain a designation as a Gold Seal Quality Care provider to specify that the consequence for class I violations requires a determination that the provider is the primary cause of the violation;

### – Courses and Graduation Requirements:

- Directs the Department of Education to identify and publish mathematics pathways for students by September 1, 2026;
- Directs the Department of Education to develop applied algebra courses aligned with the identified mathematics pathways and career and technical education career clusters by January 1, 2027, for district implementation in the 2029-2030 school year;
- Requires each applied algebra course to prepare students for the statewide, standardized Algebra I end-of-course assessment, satisfy applicable mathematics credit requirements for high school graduation and middle grades promotion, and be accepted as a mathematics credit for state university admissions;
- Authorizes a school district to reserve up to one percent of Title I funds for specified STEM-related educational services, technologies, and instructional supports;
- Authorizes a qualifying one-credit dance techniques course to satisfy a physical education or performing arts credit required to earn a standard high school diploma;

### – Student Supports, Literacy, and School Improvement:

- Requires a school district to notify a parent within 10 school days when a related service identified in a student's individual education plan is not provided as scheduled, explain the reason the service was not provided, and discuss a plan for make-up services;

- Requires a school district to inform parents at each IEP meeting of the right to access all service provider logs or progress notes within 15 school days after the service is provided;
- Expands the definition of an educational emergency to include designated persistently low-performing schools, allowing a district school board to exercise specified authority over personnel contracts in the selection, placement, and compensation of instructional personnel;
- Requires, for a student with a reading deficiency, that the student plan and parent notices include information about eligibility for the New Worlds Reading Initiative;
- Expands summer bridge program eligibility for VPK students by raising the eligible score threshold on the final administration of the statewide English Language Arts assessment from the 10th to the 25th percentile;
- **Acceleration and Advanced Coursework:**
  - Requires the State Board of Education to establish a statewide uniform weighted grading system for honors courses and articulated acceleration mechanisms, which must be used by district school boards when calculating high school grade point averages;
  - Authorizes bonus funds for school districts and teachers for students' successful completion of Florida advanced courses and tests, aligned with bonuses offered for other advanced and career examinations;
  - Specifies that postsecondary institutions eligible to participate in the dual enrollment program are Florida public postsecondary institutions and eligible not-for-profit independent colleges and universities;
- Chapter No. 2026-59, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Implement the 10-school-day parent notification requirement for undelivered IEP related services, including a tracking mechanism identifying missed services and documenting make-up plans, and revise IEP meeting scripts to inform parents of the right to access service provider logs within 15 school days; review virtual instruction notification materials to include all public and private options; approve revisions to the district grading policy once the State Board establishes the statewide uniform weighted grading system, as districts must use it in calculating high school grade point averages; consider whether to reserve up to one percent of Title I funds for STEM supports; prepare for applied algebra course implementation in 2029-2030; and **note the clarified authority to use any combination of safe-school officer options notwithstanding local ordinances.**

#### **SB 1296 – Public Employees Relations Commission**

- Requires a showing of interest form submitted with an employee organization's application for certification or recertification to be signed by a bargaining unit employee within the 12 months preceding the filing of the application;
- Revises the threshold for certification, recertification, and decertification of a non-public safety employee organization to require at least 50 percent of the total bargaining unit to participate in the election and at least 50 percent of those participating to vote affirmatively;
- Authorizes a combination of mail and on-site election methods based on specified considerations, including the number of available on-site polling locations, the commission's workload, and the size of the bargaining unit, and requires the commission to conduct the election by mail ballot if a

party to the election so requests, with a prepaid postage return envelope included subject to appropriation;

- Clarifies the bargaining unit determination process, allowing determination of the unit after a change in case law or statutory law;
- Prohibits a public employer from compensating or providing leave or benefits to a non-public safety unit employee for the purpose of engaging in employee organization activities, with specified exceptions: representational activities, such as engaging in collective bargaining, participating in grievances, or representing employees in disciplinary proceedings, may be performed without loss of pay or benefits if the employer and bargaining agent agree, and other employee organization activities, such as promoting or soliciting membership, seeking certification, or engaging in specified political activity, may be performed as agreed in a collective bargaining agreement if the employee organization fully reimburses the public employer;
- Provides that the compensation prohibition does not apply to employee organizations representing public safety field workers, whose members may continue to engage in paid leave for such activities without reimbursement;
- Requires a public employer to allow equal access to communal spaces and internal communications systems by any employee organization or petitioning public employee;
- Institutes a fast-track impasse process for local government salary increases specifically appropriated by the Legislature that require modification of a bargaining agreement, other than salary increases appropriated for employees in public safety bargaining units;
- Conforms various hearing procedures and timeframes to ss. 120.569 and 120.57, F.S.;
- Chapter No. 2026-58, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review collective bargaining agreements and past practices for provisions granting paid release time, leave, or benefits for employee organization activities, and identify which activities may continue by agreement without loss of pay and which now require full reimbursement by the employee organization; confirm that district practices governing access to communal spaces and internal communications systems apply equally to all employee organizations and petitioning employees; and review the fast-track impasse process in connection with any legislatively appropriated salary increase that requires modification of a bargaining agreement.

### **HB 1329 – Local Government Finances**

- Cites the act as the “Local Government Financial Transparency and Accountability Act”;
- Requires county and municipal tentative, adopted tentative, and final budgets to be posted on official websites in PDF or similar downloadable form, including a budget overview and summaries of expenses by fund, department, and program, as well as expenditures related to debt obligations and capital projects;
- Revises timeframes for posting budget information and noticing public budget hearings, requiring tentative budgets and proposed budget amendments to be posted 5 days rather than 2 days before the hearing, and final budgets and adopted amendments to be posted for 5 years rather than 2 years following adoption;
- Requires counties and municipalities to conduct a budget reduction strategy workshop and to post quarterly employee compensation summaries and a budget development calendar;

- Requires that the demonstrated-need study used to show extraordinary circumstances justifying an impact fee rate increase beyond ordinary phase-in limitations specify the standards used to support the existence of such circumstances, and be accompanied by a declaration of the method and timeframe by which the increase will increase capacity;
- Prohibits a local government, including a school district or special district, from increasing an impact fee rate using the extraordinary circumstances provisions by more than 100 percent in a 4-year period;
- Provides procedures related to impact fee payor requests for refunds and for the expiration of certain interlocal agreements;
- Effective January 1, 2027;

**Board Members:** Review the district's educational facilities impact fee methodology against the new demonstrated-need study standards and the 100 percent cap on extraordinary circumstances increases within a 4-year period; review this alongside the impact fee changes enacted in SB 1080 during the 2025 session; and identify any interlocal agreements subject to the new expiration provisions.

### **HB 1389 – Affordable Housing**

- Provides that the preemptions of the Live Local Act permitting the development of affordable housing apply on any property owned by a county, municipality, or school district;
- Provides that those preemptions apply on property more than 3 acres in size owned by a religious institution which has contained a house of public worship for 10 years;
- Provides that, through July 1, 2030, a multifamily or mixed-use development using the Live Local Act preemptions may consist of an assemblage of parcels under common ownership or control separated by no more than 15 feet of land and limited public pedestrian access;
- Provides that the preemptions do not apply in an area subject to a land development regulation intended to retain the open character of land, any area of critical state concern, or any portion of property under a conservation easement;
- Provides that a local government may not use dimensional means such as setbacks or stepbacks to constructively restrict the height of a project authorized by the Live Local Act;
- Excludes farming and farm operations, including the packaging and sale of products raised on the premises, from the definitions of commercial, industrial, or mixed-use zoning that would require local government approval of affordable housing developments;
- Provides that the Live Local Act may apply if the development is approved by the governing body of an airport where the proposed development is near an airport runway or noise zone;
- Provides that an applicant who submitted documentation before July 1, 2026, may proceed under prior law or notify the local government of intent to revise the submission to account for the changes made by the bill;
- Clarifies under the Florida Fair Housing Act that it is unlawful to discriminate in land use decisions or in permitting based on the financing of an affordable housing development, and waives sovereign immunity in cases based on such discrimination;
- Revises the missing middle property tax exemption, applicable to the 2027 tax rolls, by defining a multifamily project to include multiple parcels held under common ownership or control developed as one plan, requiring a taxing authority to find that local availability of affordable units

has exceeded demand for each of the previous 3 years rather than the most recent year before opting out, and allowing a development that received a building permit within 4 years before a local government opted out to apply for the exemption;

- Authorizes local governments to provide density bonus incentives to landowners who donate real estate to assist in providing affordable housing to military families receiving the basic allowance for housing;
- Chapter No. 2026-179, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Note that Live Local Act preemptions now expressly reach property owned by a school district, and review district-owned parcels, particularly surplus and unimproved property, for exposure to these provisions; **coordinate this review with the unimproved real property inventory required under SB 824**; consult legal counsel before disposing of, or entering into, agreements regarding district-owned land that could qualify for development under the Act.

### **HB 1471 – Systems of Law and Terrorist Organizations**

- Prohibits a court, administrative law judge, hearing officer, agency, arbitration panel, or any other authority or tribunal from applying a provision of foreign law or religious law that would result in a violation of a person's constitutional rights;
- Prohibits a court from enforcing a foreign judgment or order that results from the application of foreign law or religious law which is inconsistent with a person's constitutional rights or otherwise violates public policy, and prohibits enforcement of a contractual choice of law clause or forum selection clause to the extent it would violate, or would likely result in a violation of, a person's constitutional rights;
- Authorizes the Chief of Domestic Security within the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to designate a qualifying organization as a domestic terrorist organization or a foreign terrorist organization, requires notice prior to designation, and provides a means of appeal;
- Provides that a domestic terrorist organization is subject to the same laws and restrictions that apply to a foreign terrorist organization, and applies the existing criminal penalty for joining a foreign terrorist organization to joining, supporting, or assisting a domestic terrorist organization;
- Prohibits the state and its subdivisions from expending any monies to support a terrorist organization or accepting any funds from a terrorist organization;
- Prohibits a public school from expending state or federal funds to promote, support, or maintain any program or campus activity that promotes a terrorist organization or that promotes a person or entity providing material support to a terrorist organization;
- Provides that a private school accepting scholarship funds may not contract with, be owned or operated by, or, except in limited circumstances, accept funds from a person affiliated with a terrorist organization, and may not contract with a school program or student group that promotes a terrorist organization or a person or entity providing material support to a terrorist organization;
- Authorizes the Department of State to administratively dissolve a corporation that has been designated as a domestic or foreign terrorist organization;
- Chapter No. 2026-28, Laws of Florida;

- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Review district-funded programs, student clubs and organizations, outside speakers and presenters, facility use agreements, and vendor and contractor relationships against the prohibition on expending state or federal funds to promote or support a terrorist organization, and establish a process for monitoring designations made by the Chief of Domestic Security; review district practices for accepting donations, grants, and sponsorships against the prohibition on accepting funds from a terrorist organization.

### **SB 1690 – Child Care and Early Learning Services**

- Renames the term “family day care home” as “family child care home” throughout the Florida Statutes;
- Amends s. 402.306, F.S., requiring the Department of Children and Families and local licensing agencies to disseminate electronically specified information regarding all child care facilities rather than only licensed facilities, including licensing standards and procedures, health and safety standards for school readiness providers, monitoring and inspection reports, and annual data on child deaths, serious injuries, and substantiated abuse occurring in child care settings;
- Amends ss. 402.313 and 402.3131, F.S., removing the annual requirement that family child care homes and large family child care homes provide parents with information related to flu shots and to leaving children unattended in a vehicle;
- Amends s. 402.316, F.S., requiring specified license-exempt child care facilities, being those that are an integral part of a church or parochial school and those operated by businesses for the benefit of their employees, to include a statement regarding their exemption from Department of Children and Families licensure and regulation on their websites, promotional materials, and facility-created documents and forms provided to families;
- Amends s. 1001.24, F.S., adding early learning programs for children from birth to five years of age to the purposes of the Department of Education direct-support organization, authorizing the Florida Education Foundation, Inc., to receive, hold, invest, and administer property and to make expenditures for the benefit of such programs in addition to public prekindergarten through grade 12;
- Creates s. 1002.821, F.S., establishing the Florida Child Care Fund within the Department of Education direct-support organization to support the early learning and child care needs of Florida families, and requiring the Division of Early Learning to annually prepare, and the Department of Education to publish on its website, a report on program performance and fundraising activities by January 1 of each year, beginning January 1, 2027;
- Amends s. 1002.95, F.S., expanding, subject to appropriation, the role of the TEACH Scholarship Program administrator to establish and administer the Center for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, which is to ensure statewide alignment of training, trainer approval, and competency-based assessments for early learning professionals;
- Amends s. 627.70161, F.S., adding large family child care to the types of child care services for which cancellation, denial, or nonrenewal of residential property insurance is prohibited solely on the basis that those services are provided at the residence;
- Chapter No. 2026-140, Laws of Florida;
- Effective July 1, 2026;

**Board Members:** Update district policies, contracts, applications, and communications that use the term “family day care home” to the new statutory term; review any district-operated or district-contracted prekindergarten, school readiness, and extended day programs against the revised licensing and disclosure requirements, including the exemption statement now required of church-affiliated and employer-operated exempt providers; and monitor development of the Center for Early Childhood Professional Recognition for its effect on training and credentialing of district early learning personnel.

#### **HB 4027 – Hillsborough County Public Schools, Hillsborough County**

- Provides that the Superintendent of Schools for Hillsborough County is a partisan office elected for a four-year term, beginning with the 2028 general election;
- Provides findings of fact concerning the transition of the Hillsborough County Superintendent of Schools from an elected to an appointed position under Article XII, Section 2B of the 1885 Florida Constitution, which Hillsborough County voters approved at the 1966 general election;
- Requires a referendum to be held November 3, 2026, in conjunction with the 2026 general election, specifies the wording of the referendum question on the ballot, and requires the referendum to be conducted in accordance with the Florida Election Code;
- Chapter No. 2026-196, Laws of Florida;
- Effective June 8, 2026, except that the provision making the office of Superintendent of Schools an elected office takes effect only upon approval by a majority vote of the qualified electors of Hillsborough County voting in the referendum;

**Board Members:** This is a local bill applying only to Hillsborough County. Note that Article IX, Section 5 of the Florida Constitution permits a district to change its method of superintendent selection by district school board resolution or by special act, in either case approved by referendum, and that a resolution or special act providing for an appointed superintendent may not be rescinded or repealed by either method for four years after approval.

#### **SB 7022 – Public Records / Examination and Assessment Instruments**

- Expands the public records exemption for examination and assessment instruments, including related developmental materials and workpapers, to instruments held by additional records custodians, including public schools, district school boards, boards of trustees, the State Board of Education, and the Board of Governors, where the prior exemption was limited to Florida College System institutions, state universities, and the Department of Education;
- Authorizes covered custodians to disclose confidential and exempt materials to other covered custodians, and requires public schools, district school boards, Florida College System institutions, and state universities to provide such materials upon request to the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, or the Board of Governors;
- Provides that the exemption may not be construed to limit a student's or parent's rights relating to student records and education records;
- Revises the duties of the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors to require adoption of rules and regulations limited to establishing retention schedules and disposal processes for exempt records, rather than governing access, maintenance, and destruction of exempt records;
- Extends the scheduled repeal of the exemption from October 2, 2026, to October 2, 2031;

- Chapter No. 2026-69, Laws of Florida;
- Effective upon becoming law (May 11, 2026);

**Board Members:** Update public records response procedures to reflect that district-held examination and assessment instruments and related developmental materials are now exempt; confirm the district can produce such materials to the Department of Education or State Board of Education upon request; and ensure retention and disposal practices align with forthcoming State Board rules.