

**2023-2024
CHARTER SCHOOL
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**



HB 1 – SCHOOL CHOICE (UNIVERSAL VOUCHERS)



- Increases the number of students with disabilities under the FES-UA scholarship from 1% to 3% of Florida's ESE students. Requires private schools to inform parents of ESE students that they are not entitled to the special education and related services under IDEA. FTC eligible students would receive 95% of UWFTE through FEFP (except for the ESE guarantee)
- Expands eligibility for Florida Tax Credit and Family Empowerment scholarships to any eligible student grades K-12 in a public school. Eligibility includes students whose household income does not exceed 185% of the Federal Poverty Level – with a second priority level for families whose income does not exceed 400% of FPL. FTC students may receive a scholarship for transportation to a public school other than the public school in which the student was assigned – equal to the district per student rider expenditure or \$750 – whichever is greater.
- Establishes the personalized education program under 'parent directed' programs. Parents must register with the Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO). Parents must sign an agreement with the SFO to satisfy or maintain eligibility by affirming appropriate use of funds, submitting a student learning plan annually, and ensuring the student takes a nationally normed test prior to renewal each year.
- Establishes Empowerment Savings Accounts for each parent of an eligible student and expands the scope of authorized uses. I suggest reading the bill. Too much to put on a slide. 😊

HB 1 – SCHOOL CHOICE (UNIVERSAL VOUCHERS)

- Gives the Commissioner of Education oversight powers to permanently deny or revoke the authority of an owner, officer, or director to establish or operate a private school in the state and include them in the disqualification list.
- Expressly authorizes any public school in Florida, including charter schools, to enroll a student on a part-time basis, subject to space and availability. PT students can be reported for FTE unless the student is receiving a scholarship and attends the school part-time through contracted services provided by the school. These students may NOT be reported for FTE.
- Authorizes the use of other vehicles to transport students to schools.
- Bill requires the State Board of Education to review the Florida Early Learning-20 Education Code for potential repeals and revisions to allow for more flexibility and efficiency for all public schools.

HB 1– SCHOOL CHOICE (UNIVERSAL VOUCHERS)

- Bill provides a waiver of the master of the general knowledge requirement for an individual who has been provided 3 years of supports and instruction by the school district and has been rated effective or highly effective for each of the last three years. Individuals may also demonstrate mastery through a baccalaureate or masters degree and passing of the subject are exam or by completing a professional preparation and education competency program.
- This bill extends the duration of the nonrenewable temporary certificate from 3 to 5 years.
- The bill removes the requirement for at least one course within the 24 credits required for a standard diploma to be completed through online learning.
- Changes the requirement to transfer student records from 3 days to 5 days.

HB 19– INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS



- Requires schools to provide students and their parents at IEP meetings with information about what happens with legal rights and responsibilities when the student turns 18.

HB 265 – HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA

- To provide consistency across the state and remove barriers for students desiring to sit for the GED exam, the bill prohibits a school district from requiring a student that has reached the age of 16 to take any course prior to sitting for the GED exam unless the student failed to attain a passing score on the GED practice test.



HJR 31 - PARTISAN ELECTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARDS



- Amendment to State Constitution to require members of district school boards to be elected in a partisan election.
- Amendment returns the State Constitution to elections by partisan elections which changed in 2000 to become non-partisan elections.
- This change would apply to elections on or after November 3, 2026, except for early primaries for nomination for 2026 general election.
- Will need 60% of public vote to amend the State Constitution.

SB 190 – INTERSCHOLASTIC EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES



- Authorizes charter school and FLVS full-time students to participate in extracurricular activities at private schools under certain circumstances and through an agreement.
- Authorizes charter school and FLVS full-time students to participate in interscholastic extracurricular activities at private schools under certain circumstances and through an agreement.



SB 290- PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT PROGRESSION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



- Authorizes a parent to retain his or her child in prekindergarten, in consultation with the individual education plan team, if that child has a disability, an individual education plan (IEP), is enrolled in a public-school prekindergarten program at the age of four and is fully funded through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). Also requires student to receive instruction in literacy skills.
- The bill also revises the “good cause exemptions” from mandatory retention, which allows a student in grade 3, who has a learning disability and who is severely below grade-level, be promoted to grade 4, if the student was retained in a prekindergarten program.





HB 379– STUDENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

- Requires school districts to instruct students on social media and prohibit the use of social media applications on district-owned devices or servers. Bill specifies TikTok and any successor platforms.
- Requires instruction on the social, emotional and physical effects of social media for students in grades 6-12. DOE provides to district materials for use to include risks of social media, distribution of misinformation, manipulation of behavior, predatory behavior, human trafficking, etc.
- Prohibits students from using wireless communication devices during instructional time except when used by the direction of the teacher. Also allows teachers to collect devices during instructional time.

HB 379— STUDENT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS-

Required instruction in schools: reading, other language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, health and PE and the arts.

• Additionally, instructional staff must provide instruction in:

The history and content of the Declaration of Independence.

The history, meaning, significance, and effect of the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.

The arguments in support of adopting our republican form of government.

Flag education, including proper flag display and flag salute.

The elements of civil government.

The history of the United States.

The history of the Holocaust.

The history of African Americans.

The elementary principles of agriculture.

The effects of alcoholic and intoxicating liquors and beverages and narcotics.

Kindness to animals.

The history of the state.

The conservation of natural resources.

Comprehensive age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate K-12 instruction on health education and life skills.

The study of Hispanic contributions to the United States.

The study of women's contributions to the United States.

The nature and importance of free enterprise to the United States economy.

Civic and character education.

The sacrifices that veterans and Medal of Honor recipients have made serving the country.

HB 443–EDUCATION



-
- The bill authorizes a charter schools to give enrollment preference to students who are the children of a school safety officer or officers assigned to the charter school and adds accountability measures for charter school sponsors by requiring the Sponsor to provide training to charter schools on systems the sponsor will require the charter school to use.
 - Sponsor will be required to annually provide a report to its charter schools and the Florida Department of Education on what services are being rendered from the sponsor's portion of the administrative fee.
 - Sponsor will be required to make timely payments and reimbursement of eligible federal grant funds. (60 calendar days from the date of submission for reimbursement)
 - State Board of Education to adopt rules for a standard charter school monitoring tool.
 - In addition, the bill modifies the Florida Teachers Classroom Supply Assistance Program (Program) to support more classroom teachers by expanding the definition of a classroom teacher for purposes of the Program and requiring a school district to calculate a prorated share of the funds to a classroom teacher who teaches less than full time.
 - The Bill requires the district to post step-by-step instructions on how to provide first aid for choking in each public school cafeteria within the district.
 - Implements a standard monitoring tool along with the standard contract, etc.

HB 477– TERM LIMITS FOR DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS



- The bill revises term limits for school board members to prohibit a school board member from appearing on a ballot for reelection if, by the end of his or her current term of office, the member will have served, or would have served if not for resignation, in that office for 8 consecutive years. The bill maintains existing law specifying that service of a term of office which began before November 8, 2022, is not counted towards the amended term limits.

HB 543– PUBLIC SAFETY – (CONCEALED CARRY AND SAFE SCHOOLS)



- The bill allows for individuals to carry concealed weapons with needing a permit.
- The bill does NOT change the prohibition against possessing weapons, concealed or not, on school grounds.
- Allows private schools to hire safe schools officers and participate in the guardian program.
- Requires the Office of Safe Schools (DOE) to “develop a statewide behavioral threat management operational process to guide school districts...through the threat management process. The process must be designed to identify, assess, manage, and monitor potential and real threats to schools.” [incl. duties of Threat Mgt. Team, Instrument, portal, monitoring practices, etc.] Also creates a Florida Safe Schools Canine Program for weapons detection.
- Emergency Rules will be established for immediate implementation.

HB 633– CLASS SIZE



-
- Repeals the financial penalty for non-compliance with class size requirements.
 - Requires districts to report to DOE how they intend to resolve the issue prior to the next October survey. With a teacher shortage, expansion of school vouchers, greater mobility issues, the elimination of financial penalties will allow districts to use funds to fix the issue rather than receive a penalty and still have to fix the issue.
 - For a student whose parent is active-duty military personnel and meets the eligibility criteria for special academic programs offered through public schools, the bill requires the student be enrolled in such a program if the student's parent is transferred to the state during the school year. The bill also provides that a student whose parent is on active military duty and is transferred within the state after the controlled open enrollment window, can enroll in any school within the state.

HB 733- MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL START TIMES



- Changes the earliest start times for district and charter middle and high schools beginning July 1, 2026 to the following:
 - Middle School – no middle school could start prior to 8:00 am
 - High School – no high school could start prior to 8:30 am
- The three-year planning period will allow any potential legislative fixes prior to implementation after stakeholder input.

HB 766- ENFORCEMENT OF SCHOOL BUS PASSING INFRACTIONS



- Authorizes a school district to install and maintain school bus infraction detection systems. The school district may contract with a private vendor or manufacturer to provide a school bus infraction detection system on each school bus in its fleet. The system uses electronic traffic enforcement technology to record traffic violations when drivers fail to stop for a school bus displaying a stop signal. The three-year planning period will allow any potential legislative fixes prior to implementation after stakeholder input.
- The bill requires the school district, or a private vendor or manufacturer contracting with a school district, to submit specific information regarding alleged violations to the law enforcement agency authorized to enforce school bus stop signal violations in the school district. The information must be submitted within 30 days after the alleged violation is captured and include a copy of the recorded image showing the motor vehicle; the license plate number and state of issuance; and the date, time, and place of the alleged violation.



HB 1069– EDUCATION



-
- Defines ‘sex’ as the classification of gender at birth
 - Establish that all K-12 educational institutions have a policy recognizing that “sex is an immutable biological trait and that it is false to ascribe to a person a pronoun that does not correspond to such person’s sex.”
 - Prohibits the use of preferred pronouns.
 - Expands the probation on classroom instruction about sexual orientation or gender identity from K-3 to PreK-8.
 - Requires health instruction classes to teach that “biological males impregnate biological females by fertilizing the female’s egg with the male’s sperm; that the female then gestates the offspring; and that these reproductive roles are binary, stable, and unchangeable.”
 - Requires schools to remove books that have been challenged until the objection is resolved.
 - Discontinue using a book if the school board would prohibit someone from reading from a book at a school board meeting.
 - Clarify that the law applies to classroom libraries and charter schools as well.

HB 1259 – EDUCATION - CHARTER SCHOOL CAPITAL OUTLAY FUNDING



- Bill provides a 5-year path of local sharing (1.5 millage) with eligible charter schools that are operated by a not-for-profit entity in the largest school.
 - For fiscal year 2023-2024, 20 percent.
 - For fiscal year 2024-2025, 40 percent.
 - For fiscal year 2025-2026, 60 percent.
 - For fiscal year 2026-2027, 80 percent.
 - For fiscal year 2027-2028, and each fiscal year thereafter, 100 percent.
- Revises charter school eligibility/ineligibility criteria to receive capital outlay funds and use of funds.
- If a district school board levies a sales surtax for capital projects, the calculation for sharing revenues with charter schools must be based on capital outlay full-time equivalent enrollment for any resolutions adopted after July 1, 2023.

HB 1537 – EDUCATION



- The bill adds strategies and practices to support effective, research-based assessment and grading practices aligned to the state's academic standards to the list of uniform core curricula topics that must be included in teacher preparation programs.
- The bill requires that all state approved educator preparation programs cover scientifically-based reading instruction, content literacy, and mathematical practices for each subject identified on the participant's statement of status of eligibility or temporary certificate. **Creates a special magistrate process for teachers to challenge district procedures or practices.**
- The bill delineates, separates, and renames the two alternative certification pathways offered by school districts, charter schools, and charter management organizations: Professional Learning Certification Programs and Professional Education Competency Programs. Professional Learning Certification Programs must include a teacher mentorship and induction component to ensure candidates receive timely coaching and feedback to improve practice. The bill provides for mentor activities to be routine and requires all professional learning to be in alignment with the professional learning criteria. Professional Education Competency Programs are established in a new section in law to separate the two alternative certification pathways.

SB 1670- DEFERRED RETIREMENT PROGRAM (DROP)

- This bill would allow all K-12 instructional and administrative personnel to participate in DROP for up to 60 additional months beyond the initial 60-month period
- There is no companion bill, but HB 239 contains some of the same language and includes a cost structure that would greatly affect districts or charter schools who utilize FRS.



HB 1035 – TEACHER TRAINING AND CONDUCT

HB 5101- EDUCATION



- Requires the Commissioner of Education to review all teacher training requirements in federal and state law, as well as State Board rule or local district policy.
- Requires Commissioner to “eliminate any classroom teacher training requirements not required by federal or state law.”
- Creates a special magistrate process for teachers to challenge district procedures or practices.
- Expands teacher’s authority over discipline within the classroom. Establishes a rebuttable presumption in any legal proceeding that a teacher’s (or principal’s or bus driver’s) actions, except in the cases of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment, were necessary to restore and maintain safety or the educational atmosphere.
- May overlap and correlate with the Teacher’s Bill of Rights.
- HB 5101 changes the calculation methodology for FEFP – FES, District Cost Differentials, removes some supplements and categoricals

HB 7039– STUDENT OUTCOMES



-
- Extensive bills that may radically change district practices regarding reading and math strategies and the identification of deficiencies in both reading and math.
 - Directs Just Read, Florida Office along with New Worlds Reading Initiative to develop and provide access to an online repository of digital science of reading instructional resources, and to identify instructional and intervention programs grounded in science.
 - Requires that the primary instructional strategies for teaching word reading is phonics instructions and prohibits the use of the three-cueing model.
 - Modifies the requirements of the charter school application and agreement, VPK instructor training and standards, educator professional development, teacher preparation programs, district certification add-on programs, instructional materials programs, etc.
 - Modifies the requirements of the coordinated screening and progress monitoring system to require a PM plan for students struggling in mathematics and requires the DOE to provide a list of programs for students with dyslexia and all struggling readers.
 - Requires school districts to include substantial mathematics deficiencies in their Early Warning System and adds mathematics interventions to the SAI allocation.





QUESTIONS

THANK YOU