

Provided below is a list of Senate and House Bills that impact Education/Charters – courtesy of the Florida Charter School Alliance.

<https://flcharterschool.org/2024-florida-legislative-session-ed-related-bills-signed-as-of-may-2024/>

SB 46

Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence Program (RAISE)

The bill authorizes school districts participating in the Reading Achievement Initiative for Scholastic Excellence (RAISE) tutoring program to offer the tutoring program after the school day and to provide a stipend to instructional personnel and high school students serving as tutors during after-school hours.

The bill limits to unpaid hours the tutoring hours that count towards meeting community service requirements for high school graduation, if locally required, and the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

*There are no charters identified as RAISE schools.

HB 523

Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program

The bill establishes the Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program (program) to recognize high school graduates who have met specified criteria in fine arts by having an appropriate Seal of Fine Arts (seal) affixed to the student's high school diploma.

The bill establishes the program beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, sets course and experiential criteria for earning the seal, and requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules to administer the program, which may include additional criteria for receipt of the seal.

The bill requires the Commissioner of Education (Commissioner) to prepare the seal and provide to school districts a rubric for implementation of the program. Each school district is required to maintain records to identify students earning the seal, report such data to the Commissioner, affix the seal to the student's diploma, and indicate on the student's transcript that the seal was earned by the student.

The bill prohibits fees associated with the seal.

*Applies to High School only.

HB 865

Youth Athletic Activities

Revising the requirements for certain athletic coaches to include certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, and the use of an automatic external defibrillator; providing requirements for such certification; providing an effective date.

Each person who is employed and renders service as an athletic coach in any public school in any district of this state shall:

- a. Hold a valid temporary or professional certificate or an athletic coaching certificate. The athletic coaching certificate may be used for either part-time or full-time positions.
- b. Hold and maintain a certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, and the use of an automatic external defibrillator. The certification must be consistent with national evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines.

HB 883

Short-acting Bronchodilator Use in Public and Private Schools

The bill provides a framework for public and private schools to treat students with asthma or who are otherwise in respiratory distress.

The bill authorizes:

- Trained staff to administer short-acting bronchodilators to students in respiratory distress and includes civil immunity for good-faith administration.
- Schools to acquire and safely maintain a supply of bronchodilators.
- Allopathic and osteopathic physicians, physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses to prescribe bronchodilators and components issued in the name of a public or private school.
- Licensed pharmacists to dispense bronchodilators and components pursuant to a prescription issued in the name of a public or private school, and includes civil and criminal immunity for a healthcare practitioner or pharmacist that dispenses short-acting bronchodilators or components in good faith and with reasonable care.

HB 917

Career and Technical Education

The bill authorizes minors aged 16 or 17 to work in residential construction if the minor:

- Has earned his or her Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 10 certification;
- Is under the direct supervision of a person 21 years of age or older with at least two years of related experience and his or her OSHA 10 certification.
- Is not working on any scaffolding, roof, superstructure, or ladder above six feet.
- Is not in violation of any OSHA rule or federal law related to minors in the workplace.

The bill authorizes a student who earns credit for one year of related technical instruction for a registered apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship program to use such credit to satisfy specified high school graduation credit requirements.

HB 931

School Chaplains

This bill authorizes each district school board or charter school governing board to adopt a policy to authorize volunteer school chaplains to provide supports, services, and programs to students.

The bill requires the policy to:

- Describe the supports, services, or programs that volunteer school chaplains may be assigned;
- Require that principals of schools with a volunteer school chaplain inform all parents of the availability of such supports, services, and programs; and
- Require written parental consent before a student participates in or receives supports, services, and programs provided by a volunteer school chaplain. Parents must be permitted to select a volunteer school chaplain from the list provided by the school district, which must include the chaplain's religious affiliation, if any.

The bill requires any district school board or **charter** school governing board that adopts a volunteer school chaplain policy to publish the list of volunteer school chaplains, including any religious affiliation, on the school district's website.

The bill requires volunteer school chaplains to meet the background screening requirements for noninstructional school district employees or contractual personnel who are permitted access on school grounds when students are present or have direct contact with students.

SB 994

Student Transportation Safety

The bill revises various provisions relating to the camera enforcement of traffic infractions related to passing of a stopped school bus. Specifically, the bill:

- Authorizes a private vendor or manufacturer of a school bus infraction detector system to receive a fixed amount of collected proceeds for services rendered regarding a school bus infraction detection system.
- Eliminates the requirement for the required signage on school buses with school bus infraction detection systems to be highly reflective.
- Provides that a court having jurisdiction over traffic violations must determine if a traffic violation occurred using a school bus infraction detection system and provides penalties if the court determines a violation has taken place.
- Allocates civil penalties from these systems to the appropriate school district to pay for the program's operation and school transportation safety initiatives, bus driver recruitment and retention stipends, or other student transportation safety enhancements.
- Provides that the collection of evidence from a school bus infraction detection system does not constitute remote surveillance.
- Limits the use of video and images from the system to traffic enforcement and for purposes of determining civil or criminal liability.
- Requires a \$25 administrative charge from a violation to be remitted to the participating school district and be used for the purposes listed above.

**The bus infraction detector systems were optional two years ago. This legislation cleans up gray areas. If charters use these, then applicable.*

SB 1264

History of Communism*

The bill requires, beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, instruction in public schools on the history of communism that is age and developmentally appropriate. The bill specifies topics that must be included in such instruction.

The bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to prepare and offer standards for the required instruction, and allows the DOE to seek input from victims of communism and organizations dedicated to the victims of communism.

**EXEMPTION FROM STATUTES.— exempt from all statutes in chapters 1000-1013 (1003.42 Required Instruction would fall under this category – unless listed specifically in 1002.33)*

HB 1285

Education

The bill makes a number of changes to Florida's K-12 public schools and postsecondary institutions. For Florida's K-12 public schools, the bill:

- Defines a classical school and authorizes an enrollment preference at classical charter schools for students who were previously enrolled in a public school that implemented a classical school model.
- Requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a specialized teaching certificate for educators who teach in a classical school.
- Provides additional student populations a charter school can target in its enrollment process relating to the employment location of the parent or guardian.
- Specifies the responsibilities of a school district and charter school in implementing a turnaround plan for a public school reopening as a charter school.
- Authorizes alternate methods of communicating to parents regarding placement into a dropout prevention and academic intervention program.
 - Provides that, beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, any changes made by the SBE to components in the school grades model or to the school grading scale go into effect, at the earliest, in the following school year.
 - Provides students in grades 11 and 12 an opportunity to take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and consult with a military recruiter during the school day.
 - Specifies that a resident in the county who is not the parent or guardian of a student with access to school district materials may object to no more than one material per month.
 - Allows that property exemptions for charters do not need to take place annually unless there are changes in the owner or lessee.

HB 1361

Education

The bill enhances supports for students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program (VPK) through grade 12 by:

- Designating the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning (Lastinger Center) as the administrator of the New Worlds Reading Initiative and New Worlds Scholarship programs.
- Codifying the Lastinger Center in law and establishing duties for the center.
- Establishing the New Worlds Tutoring Program to be administered by the Lastinger Center to support school districts and schools in improving student achievement in reading and mathematics, including grants for automated tutoring for students in kindergarten through grade 5 and for in-person tutoring for, at a minimum, students in grades kindergarten through 5.
- Expanding the eligibility for the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts to include VPK students.
- Expands the minimum qualifications to offer tutoring under the New Worlds Scholarship Accounts to include a person with a specified micro credential or specified VPK credential.
- Clarifying student eligibility for supports under the New Worlds Reading Initiative as identified by student progress monitoring.
- Providing for a mechanism for parents to use the New Worlds Scholarship Account to make direct purchases of qualifying expenditures.
- Establishing a grant program for artificial intelligence learning platforms in order to improve outcomes for students and reduce teacher workload. The bill provides a recurring appropriation of \$2 million for the Lastinger Center to administer the grants for subscription fees and professional learning to support and accelerate learning for students in grades 6 through 12 during the school day.
- After initial notification of parents for students exhibiting a reading or math deficiency the school shall apprise the parent at least monthly of the student's progress in response to intensive interventions and supports. Communication must be in writing and must explain additional interventions or supports that will be implemented to accelerate student's progress if those already being implemented have not resulted in improvement.

The provisions of the bill implementing the New Worlds Reading Initiative are subject to legislative appropriation.

HB 1403

School Choice

The bill makes several changes to Florida's school choice program consisting primarily of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship (FTC), which includes students in a personalized education program (PEP), the Family Empowerment Scholarship for students attending a private school (FES-EO), and the Family Empowerment Scholarship for students with disabilities (FES-UA).

HB 1473

School Safety

The bill modifies provisions related to the Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel Guardian Program, which:

- Clarify that private schools seeking to participate in the guardian program are responsible for costs associated with background screening in addition to costs associated with training, but authorizes the sheriff providing the training to waive the costs.
- Provide that an individual certified and in good standing with the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission is exempt from the required school guardian training.
- Change the 12-hour diversity training to training on de-escalating incidents.
- Implement new reporting requirements related to individuals certified as school guardians and serving as school guardians in school districts, charter schools, and private schools, with penalties for noncompliance.
- Require the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to serve as the central repository of information regarding certified and appointed guardians.

The bill establishes new perimeter and door safety requirements with which school districts **and charter school governing boards must comply by August 1, 2024**. These include:

- Keeping routes of ingress and egress securely closed and locked when students are on campus, or actively staffed when open or unlocked.
- Requiring that violations of such perimeter and safety requirements be reported to the applicable school official or governing board.
- Requiring classrooms to be locked, or actively staffed, during class time, and for classrooms to have the safest part of the room marked.

HB 1473 School Safety (continued)

- Requiring all school classrooms and other instructional spaces must clearly and conspicuously mark the safest areas in each classroom or other instructional space where students must shelter in place during an emergency. Students must be notified of these safe areas within the first 10 days of the school year.
- Requiring each school district to develop a progressive discipline policy for instructional and administrative personnel who knowingly violate school safety requirements

The bill requires the Office of Safe Schools (OSS) to, by August 1, 2024, develop and adopt a Florida school safety compliance inspection report to document compliance with Florida school safety requirements.

The OSS must also:

- Triennially conduct unannounced inspections of all public schools using the safety compliance inspection report, with associated reporting and acknowledgement. The bill provides for a bonus program for school principals and charter school administrators whose schools are found to be in full compliance with school safety requirements.
- By December 1, 2024, evaluate the distribution methodology for the Safe Schools Allocation and, if necessary, make recommendations for an alternate methodology to distribute the remaining balance of the Safe Schools Allocation.

The bill provides for criminal penalties against a person who knowingly or willfully operates a drone over a Pre-K -12 public or private school or allows a drone to make contact with a school, with specified exceptions.

The bill requires public schools, including charter schools, within the first five days of school to provide age and developmentally appropriate instruction on the use or misuse of FortifyFL, the state mobile suspicious activity reporting tool.

When a child of any age is taken into custody by a law enforcement officer for an offense that would have been a felony if committed by an adult, or a crime of violence, the law enforcement agency must notify the superintendent of schools that the child is alleged to have committed the delinquent act. If the child is a dual enrolled student at a postsecondary institution, the superintendent of schools, or his or her designee, must notify the chief of police or the public safety director of the postsecondary institution at which the student is dual enrolled within 1 business day after receiving the initial notification.

HB 1473 School Safety (continued)

Lastly, the bill creates, subject to appropriation, a grant program to be administered by the FDLE to support private schools' school safety efforts.

*It is not if but WHEN OSS comes to your school site to do a safety inspection compliance report. Ensure that your notebook is ready and up to date. Ensure your staff is knowledgeable of the notebook and its contents.

HB 1509

Pub. Rec./School Guardians

The bill creates an exemption from public records requirements for any information held by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) or a law enforcement agency, school district, or charter school and reported to the FDLE that would identify whether an individual has been certified to serve as a school guardian.

The bill provides that the public record exemption is a public necessity because disclosure of the identity of a school guardian could affect his or her ability to adequately respond to an active assailant situation.

The public records exemption established in the bill is subject to the Open Government Sunset Review Act and stands repealed on October 2, 2029, unless reviewed and saved from repeal through reenactment by the Legislature.

SB 1688

Career-themed Courses

The bill adds requirements to improve student awareness of career and technical education (CTE) opportunities.

The bill requires each district school board to inform students and parents during course selection for middle school of the career and professional academy or career-themed courses available within the district.

SB 7002

Deregulation of Public Schools *School District Personnel*

- Requires the SBE to waive initial subject area examination and certification fees for specified exceptional student education teachers and requires the Commissioner of 2024 Summary of Legislation Passed Committee on Education Pre-K -12 Education to make recommendations for the retention of exceptional student education teachers;
- Authorizes a newly-hired Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program instructor to complete required emergent literacy training within 45 days of employment.
- Authorizes certified educators to request that their certification be placed in inactive status; Professional Learning requirements may be a condition of reactivating a certificate inactive for more than 1 year.
- Authorizes the use of a passing score on the SAT, ACT, or Classical Learning Test to satisfy the mastery of general knowledge requirement for professional educator certification;

The bill expands the role of the Florida Institute for Charter School Innovation Institute (FCI) by authorizing the Institute to develop a professional learning system and design an alternative teacher preparation program to enable certified teachers at charter schools to add coverages and endorsements to their certificates.

The bill also clarifies that a teacher candidate enrolled in a postsecondary educator preparation institute must meet basic screening and teacher eligibility requirements prior to participating in field experiences.

FYI only – information within SB7002

Section 8 – 1003.53 Related to Dropout prevention and academic interventions - A district school board may adopt a policy that allows a parent to agree to an alternative method of notification. Such agreement may be made before the need for notification arises or at the time the notification becomes required.

Section 11 – F.S. 1006.09 Related to student discipline and school safety: The district school board may adopt a policy that allows a parent to agree to an alternative method of notification. Such agreement may be made before the need for notification arises or at the time the notification becomes required.

SB 7004

Education

For students with substantial deficiency in reading or math, upon the request of the parent, the teacher or school administrator shall meet to discuss the student's progress. The parent may request more frequent notification of the student's progress, more frequent interventions or supports, and earlier implementation of the additional interventions or supports described in the initial notification.

Student Progression

The bill provides that a student who has filed a formal declaration of intent to terminate school enrollment may take the GED assessment, without an extraordinary exemption, after reaching the age of 16.
