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**BROWARD**  
County Public Schools

## OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

### 2025 Regular Session, Week 9 Summary Report

*May 2, 2025*

## Florida Legislature





Legislative Affairs Department  
Broward County Public Schools

Florida Legislature  
**2025 Regular Session, Week 9 Report**  
April 28 – May 2, 2025

## OVERVIEW

**The Legislature held its ninth week of session, April 28 – May 2, 2025.**

The Regular Legislative Session was originally scheduled to conclude on May 2; however, lawmakers have agreed to reconvene in Tallahassee on May 12 and extend the session through June 6. This extension was deemed necessary to allow more time for thorough consideration of several high-priority bills that remain pending and to ensure the timely passage of the state budget. The additional weeks will give legislators the opportunity to address unresolved issues and finalize critical funding decisions that will impact public services, including education.

### House Bill 5101- Senate Bill 2510

### Budget Conference Update

This month, the Florida House and Senate each passed their respective budget proposals; however, a significant gap of more than \$4 billion remains between the two versions. The House has proposed a \$112.95 billion budget, while the Senate's version totals \$117.36 billion. Due to this substantial difference, lawmakers will reconvene in Tallahassee on May 12 to continue budget negotiations. To allow adequate time for these negotiations and to ensure the state budget is finalized ahead of the July 1 start of the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the legislative session has been extended through June 6.

The first step toward beginning the formal budget conference process in the Florida Legislature is reaching an agreement on a Tax Package, which includes decisions on both recurring and non-recurring revenues and tax-related policy issues. Once legislative leaders finalize the Tax Package, they can then determine the overall budget total. From there, they proceed to allocate funding across major budget areas—often referred to as “silos”—such as Education, Transportation, and the Environment. These allocations serve as the framework for negotiations between the House and Senate budget conferees during the conference process.

When all outstanding differences have been addressed, a final version of the budget—called the conference report—is produced. State law requires a 72-hour “cooling-off” period before the Legislature can vote on the final budget. After legislative approval, the budget is sent to the Governor, who has the authority to veto specific line items before signing the budget into law.

This legislation formally extends the 2025 Regular Session of the Florida Legislature beyond the standard 60-day timeline and limits any legislative activity during the extension to specified bills and their associated conference committee reports. All other pending measures are indefinitely postponed unless both legislative chambers agree to adjourn earlier. For local school districts, this extended session has significant implications as it keeps several critical education-related proposals on the table for further consideration and negotiation.

Key areas of focus include finalizing appropriations for the 2025–2026 fiscal year and approving supplemental funding for the remainder of the 2024–2025 period. These decisions will directly affect district-level funding for teacher and staff salaries, operational costs, capital improvements, and school construction projects. Districts will need to monitor legislative outcomes closely to anticipate changes to their budgets and plan accordingly for the next school year.

The bill also allows continued consideration of proposed amendments to Florida statutes affecting prekindergarten through grade 12 education. These amendments include potential changes to virtual instruction programs, funding mechanisms, and accountability measures that could alter how districts deliver and report online learning options. Adjustments to the Florida Retirement System are also under review, including revisions to employer contribution rates and Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) rules for elected officials—both of which could impact district payroll costs and retirement planning for staff.

Finally, the legislation enables continued work on reorganizing and streamlining Florida’s K–12 scholarship programs. This includes creating new funding streams, aligning eligibility criteria across different scholarship types, and repealing outdated provisions. These changes may affect district enrollment patterns, funding allocations, and the administration of school choice programs. Overall, while the extension is procedural in nature, the policy areas still under discussion carry substantial consequences for local school governance, budgeting, staffing, and program planning.

**All other measures in both houses are indefinitely postponed and withdrawn from consideration as of 12:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 3, 2025.**

This legislation streamlines Florida’s education pathways by integrating internships into graduation requirements, expanding Career and Technical Education course options, and updating eligibility for student recognition programs like Bright Futures, CAPE, and the Seal of Fine Arts. It also revises teacher certification, salary schedules, dual enrollment policies, and school facility planning.

However, the bill raises concerns for public school districts by prohibiting rental or leasing fees for charter schools that convert from district-managed schools. This results in the uncompensated use of district-owned facilities, eliminating a key revenue source while leaving districts responsible for maintenance and capital costs. The provision reduces local control over public assets.





## Chamber Session Activities

Please find below a summary of legislative actions taken during the sessions of the Florida Senate and Florida House of Representatives. The following 31 bills have been **enrolled**, meaning they have passed both legislative chambers in identical form and are now being prepared for presentation to the Governor for final approval or veto. All other measures in both houses are indefinitely postponed and withdrawn from consideration.

*Please note that the legislative summaries provided below are tentative and will be finalized as detailed bill analyses are completed.*

### House Bill 85      **Hazardous Walking Conditions**

This bill revises the criteria for identifying hazardous walking conditions for public school students. It adds limited access facilities—as defined in section 334.03(12), Florida Statutes—to the list of roads automatically considered hazardous for student pedestrians. The bill also retains and clarifies existing conditions related to road width, surface quality, and speed limits used in determining whether a walkway is unsafe for students.

### Senate Bill 112      **Children with Developmental Disabilities**

This legislation significantly expands services and supports children with developmental disabilities, with a particular focus on autism. Key provisions include the extension of the Early Steps Program to allow eligible children to remain in the program through the school year following their fourth birthday via the newly created Early Steps Extended Option, accompanied by dedicated state funding. The bill also updates statutory definitions related to the program and formally defines the role of the Department of Health.

### House Bill 259      **Special Observances**

This bill establishes August 21 of each year as Fentanyl Awareness and Education Day in Florida. The new statute aims to increase public understanding of the dangers associated with fentanyl and the risks of overdose. The legislation encourages public agencies, local governments, and schools to participate by organizing awareness events. It also promotes education on drug prevention, available support resources, and related public health issues to help combat the growing impact of fentanyl in communities across the state.

### Senate Bill 268      **Public Records/Congressional Members and Public Officers**

Expands public records exemptions by protecting partial home addresses, telephone numbers, and certain personal information of current public officers, and their families.

**House Bill 279 False Reporting**

This legislation would directly relate to individuals who knowingly make false or malicious emergency communications—such as fake threats of violence or school shootings—that result in significant consequences, including injury, panic, or disruption. In this context, this could apply to anyone (students, adults, or outside individuals) who falsely reports a threat (e.g., a bomb threat or active shooter call) to emergency services. If that false report leads to great bodily harm, permanent injury, or death—such as injuries during evacuations or police responses—those responsible could face enhanced criminal penalties, mandatory restitution, and prosecution costs under this law.

**Senate Bill 296 Middle School and High School Start Times**

This legislation mandates later start times for middle and high schools beginning July 1, 2026, as part of a statewide effort to support student health and academic performance. Specifically, it prohibits middle schools from starting before 8:00 a.m. and high schools before 8:30 a.m. To comply, district school boards must submit a report to the Department of Education by June 1, 2026, outlining their scheduled start times, implementation strategies, financial impacts, and any unintended consequences. Charter schools are also subject to the reporting requirement, with certain exemptions provided for charter schools-in-the-workplace.

**Senate Bill 356 Holocaust Remembrance Day**

This bill requires the Governor to annually proclaim January 27 as Holocaust Remembrance Day in Florida, aligning with International Holocaust Remembrance Day. It authorizes observances to be held in public schools and at public exercises designated by the Governor. If January 27 falls on a non-school day, schools are given flexibility to schedule observances on a nearby date. The bill also permits instruction on the Holocaust, anti-Semitism, and the positive contributions of the Jewish community as part of school programming, supporting education and awareness throughout the state.

**House Bill 443 Education**

This legislation expands operational flexibility for charter schools, lab schools, and virtual education programs. It designates charter schools as public facilities for concurrency, allows lab schools to use discretionary capital funds for property and construction at or below appraised value, and bars sponsors from imposing earlier reporting or audit deadlines than they follow themselves.

Charter schools may adopt their own student codes of conduct and exceed enrollment caps if facilities can accommodate growth, with required sponsor notification. The bill ensures charter schools, and their contractors have access to data systems (unless restricted by law) and prohibits individuals tied to school landlords from serving on governing boards. It also allows high-performing charter schools to assume the charters of others in the same district and permits full-time virtual students to participate in interscholastic athletics at public or private schools if eligibility criteria are met.



House Bill 447	<b>Disability History and Awareness Instruction</b>	
	This legislation enhances disability history and awareness instruction by establishing grade-specific content requirements in public schools. For grades K–3, instruction must include discussions on bullying and activities focused on understanding physical disabilities. Grades 4–6 are required to include content on autism spectrum disorder, while grades 7–9 must address hearing impairments. Finally, grades 10–12 are to include instruction on learning and intellectual disabilities, ensuring a more structured and comprehensive approach to disability awareness throughout a student’s education.	
House Bill 549	<b>Gulf of America</b>	<b>APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR</b>
	Requires state agencies to update geographic materials to reflect new federal designation of "Gulf of Mexico" as "Gulf of America"; & requires instructional materials & library media center collections adopted or acquired by certain entities on or after specified date to reflect new federal designation of "Gulf of Mexico" as "Gulf of America".	
House Bill 597	<b>Diabetes Management in Schools</b>	<b>APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR</b>
	This legislation authorizes public schools to acquire, store, and administer undesignated glucagon to assist diabetic students during hypoglycemic emergencies. It defines key terms such as “authorized health care practitioner,” “participating school,” and “undesignated glucagon,” and allows schools to obtain glucagon through purchase, donation, grants, or prescription via a county health department. Schools must store the medication securely and ensure it is administered by a school nurse or trained staff according to a student’s diabetes medical management plan or provider’s orders. The bill also provides civil and criminal liability protections for those acting in good faith, including health care professionals, pharmacists, school personnel, and school districts.	
House Bill 681	<b>Apprenticeship and Preapprenticeship Program Funding</b>	
	This legislation strengthens Florida’s apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs by formalizing partnerships between training providers and local educational agencies through written agreements that ensure an equitable division of funds and prevent unauthorized fees or withheld amounts. It directs the Department of Education to create a standard model contract outlining responsibilities, funding allocations, and compliance expectations. The bill revises the annual apprenticeship report deadline from September 1 to November 30 and expands required data to include cost breakdowns, administrative time, and wage progression. Additionally, it mandates the development of a public apprenticeship funding transparency tool by July 1, 2026, and implements public notice and participation requirements for District Workforce Education Funding Steering Committee meetings, while also requiring timely submission of the workforce education funding model to the Legislature.	
Senate Bill 738	<b>Child Care and Early Learning Providers</b>	
	This legislation brings several updates relevant to local school districts operating childcare and preschool programs. It exempts public and private preschools from certain municipal special assessments and defines “preschool” as any licensed childcare facility, which may impact district-run or affiliated preschool programs. The bill revises licensing standards for childcare facilities, emphasizing child health, nutrition, safety, and development, and introduces three levels of violations related	

to health and safety. Personnel screening is streamlined, requiring the Department of Children and Families to complete background checks within three business days or allow provisional hires for up to 45 days, with appropriate supervision. Additionally, the bill updates training requirements for childcare personnel, offering free online courses and expanding topics like child development and disability support, which could be applicable for district employees in childcare settings. The legislation also aims to eliminate duplicative inspections, including family day care homes operated by school districts, and establishes abbreviated inspections for compliant providers. Certain childcare facilities, such as those affiliated with religious schools or meeting Federal Department of Defense standards, are exempt from licensing requirements, but personnel screening remains mandatory. The bill further aligns emergent literacy training with updated childcare rules, which may be relevant for early education programs within the district.

**House Bill 809      School Social Workers**

Exempts school social workers from specified educator certification requirements.

**Senate Bill 958      Type 1 Diabetes Early Detection Program**

This legislation establishes a Type 1 diabetes early detection program aimed at increasing awareness among parents and guardians. The Department of Health is tasked with developing educational materials on early detection of Type 1 diabetes, in collaboration with school districts, and making these resources available online. Schools are required to use a standardized method to annually notify parents or guardians of voluntary prekindergarten, kindergarten, and first grade students about the availability of these materials. Additionally, the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program statute is amended to mandate that early learning coalitions inform parents and guardians about these early detection resources, ensuring that all families are made aware of important health information for young students.

**House Bill 969      Reporting of Student Mental Health Outcomes**

This legislation introduces new requirements for the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to evaluate school-based mental health services. OPPAGA, in collaboration with key stakeholders, will assess school districts' compliance and outcomes related to mental health services. The initial evaluation must be submitted by December 31, 2025, and will include an analysis of spending plans, statutory compliance, treatment outcomes, data collection processes, and how mental health services are integrated within the broader coordinated system of care. A final report is due by December 1, 2026, providing a review of ongoing compliance, performance, and mental health service outcomes, along with recommendations to enhance system capacity and integration. School districts, the Department of Education, and other relevant entities will be required to provide necessary data and coordinate with OPPAGA during these evaluations.

**Senate Bill 1070      Electrocardiograms for Student Athletes**

This legislation, known as the "Second Chance Act," mandates that high school student athletes undergo at least one electrocardiogram (ECG) screening before participating in interscholastic athletics. Exemptions are provided for religious objections and medical exceptions. The bill also authorizes certain out-of-state licensed practitioners to conduct these medical evaluations. If an ECG result is abnormal, the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) will adopt rules to

prohibit participation until the student is medically cleared. School districts are required to seek public-private partnerships to provide low-cost ECGs for students. Additionally, the bill limits liability for schools that follow ECG results and medical clearances in good faith.

**Senate Bill 1080 Local Government Land Regulation**

This legislation prohibits school districts from imposing alternative fees in place of impact fees unless they meet specific statutory requirements. If such fees are challenged legally, the burden of proof falls on the school districts to justify the fees. This ensures greater accountability and transparency when districts seek to levy alternative fees for new construction or development.

**Senate Bill 1102 School Readiness Program**



This legislation expands priorities for children with special needs in school readiness programs by refining the criteria for granting priority. It specifies that validated documentation of special needs is required, broadening the forms of acceptable verification. Additionally, school readiness program providers serving children with special needs can qualify for a special needs differential allocation if they meet certain program assessments, complete staff training, and maintain ongoing professional development. Beginning July 1, 2027, providers will need to have staff trained in early identification of social and communication delays and inclusive childcare practices to be eligible for the special needs differential rate, ensuring that these programs are equipped to meet the needs of all children.

**House Bill 1145 Workforce Education**

This legislation expands eligibility for the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program to include charter schools, providing more funding opportunities for workforce development initiatives. It also mandates that school districts and Florida College System institutions offer money-back guarantees on three additional programs by July 1, 2026, and report these programs to the State Board of Education. The bill sets additional eligibility requirements for students to qualify for tuition reimbursement under the money-back guarantee, aligning work search criteria with those specified in s. 443.091. Additionally, the Department of Education will include eligibility criteria for tuition reimbursement in its annual performance results report.

**House Bill 1237 Human Trafficking Awareness**

This legislation mandates human trafficking awareness training for certain Florida public school personnel, including instructional, administrative, and educational support staff. By December 1, 2025, the Department of Education must identify a free training curriculum that covers key topics such as definitions, identification of victims, and reporting protocols. The training can be delivered in-person or online, and all affected school personnel must complete the training and formally acknowledge their participation. Additionally, charter schools are now required to comply with the same training requirements, ensuring a statewide approach to addressing human trafficking awareness in schools.



**Senate Bill 1374 School District Reporting Requirement**

This legislation authorizes background screenings for volunteers at the discretion of school districts and other specified entities. It also mandates that district school boards remove instructional personnel from the classroom within 24 hours of an arrest for certain offenses. The bill expands the list of offenses for which law enforcement must notify schools when an employee is arrested. Additionally, it requires instructional and administrative staff to self-report felony arrests, certain misdemeanor arrests, and specified legal dispositions within 48 hours. School districts must ensure the confidentiality of sealed and expunged records, in accordance with existing state laws.

**Senate Bill 1402 Students Enrolled in Dropout Retrieval Programs**

This legislation revises the accountability and grading requirements for virtual instruction providers. Providers are now required to receive a separate school grade or school improvement rating in each district they serve. However, providers that operate exclusively as dropout retrieval programs are exempt from certain district grading requirements. Dropout retrieval programs, defined as programs for students who have withdrawn before graduation and are not currently enrolled, must choose whether to receive a school grade or a school improvement rating for accountability purposes.

**Senate Bill 1470 School Safety**

This legislation expands the School Guardian Program to include child care facilities, requiring them or their security agencies to cover training and screening costs, with some costs potentially waived by sheriffs, except for initial security guard training. It authorizes sheriffs to certify and train school security guards employed by security agencies, establishes annual weapons inspections and qualification requirements, and imposes stricter reporting obligations. Childcare facilities can be partnered with law enforcement or security agencies to assign safe-school officers and adopt guardian program provisions, but they will bear the full costs. The bill also mandates a statewide behavioral threat management process, introduces a Florida-specific threat assessment tool, and requires digitized threat assessment reporting and data management rules. New locked campus access point requirements are outlined, along with provisions for temporary door locks during active assailant incidents and classroom marking of safe areas. It establishes a centralized panic alert system for schools, integrated with digital maps to improve law enforcement responses. Finally, the Office of Safe Schools is tasked with convening a work group to develop recommendations for creating a Florida Institute of School Safety.

**Senate Bill 1514 Anaphylaxis in Traditional Public and Public Charter Schools**

This legislation requires public schools serving K-8 students to provide anaphylaxis training for enough school personnel, ensuring they recognize and respond to anaphylaxis, including the administration of an epinephrine delivery device. Schools must also maintain effective emergency action plans for students with allergies, ensuring that these plans are always accessible when the student is on school grounds or participating in school-sponsored activities. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Health, is tasked with adopting implementing rules by October 1, 2025.

**Senate Bill 1546    Background Screening of Athletic Coaches**

Extend the deadline for conducting level 2 background screenings of athletic coaches to July 1, 2026. Revises the required date for independent sanctioning authorities to complete level 2 background screenings of current and prospective athletic coaches from January 1, 2025, to July 1, 2026.

**House Bill 1607    Cardiac Emergencies**

This legislation requires all public schools to provide basic first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), once in middle school and once in high school. The training must include hands-on CPR skills and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). Schools are also required to develop a PULSE (Urgent Life-Saving Emergency) plan, integrating with local emergency responder protocols. Each school, including charter schools, must have at least one operational AED on campus and ensure appropriate staff are trained in first aid, CPR, and defibrillator use. The legislation provides liability protection for school employees and volunteers who use a defibrillator under existing Good Samaritan laws.

**Senate Bill 248    Student Participation in Interscholastic and Interscholastic Extracurricular Sports**

This legislation expands eligibility and revises participation criteria for home education and private school students in interscholastic extracurricular activities. It specifies that an activity or sport must meet designation requirements to be recognized. Home education students are now allowed to participate in activities at their designated public school or through an agreement with a private school, provided they meet similar academic and residency requirements as other students. These students can also participate in any public school within their district if they meet set conditions. Private school students are permitted to participate in FHSAA



sports even if their school is not an FHSAA member or does not offer the sport. The bill also removes the restriction that limited FHSAA sports participation for students from non-member private schools with fewer than 200 students, broadening access for private school students. Non-FHSAA member private schools are now required to make student records available for FHSAA requests.

**House Bill 875    Educator Preparation**

This legislation modernizes teacher preparation and certification by establishing new pathways, updating clinical training, and enhancing program accountability. It creates a new statutory section consolidating core curricula standards for state-approved teacher prep programs and replaces “field experience” with “clinical experience” to raise standards for preservice training. It introduces updated exam and reading instruction requirements, reduces internship hours for qualified educators pursuing counseling credentials, and allows nondegree part-time arts instructors if they meet new qualification standards. The bill launches the Coaching for Educator Readiness and Teaching Certification (CERT) Program to help temporary certificate holders earn professional certification through mentorship. It also updates criteria for mentor teachers, revises certification exam and endorsement requirements, and aligns

professional development and certificate renewal with current best practices in literacy and instructional strategies.

#### House Bill 1105 **Education**

This legislation expands and refines Florida's education pathways by integrating work-related internships into high school graduation requirements, introducing new course options for Career and Technical Education, and enhancing eligibility for the Florida Seal of Fine Arts and the Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars and CAPE Scholars awards. It updates Bright Futures criteria, introduces an Advanced Placement Capstone designation for Florida Academic Scholars, and adjusts career dual enrollment requirements for better scheduling and transportation information. Additionally, it revises salary schedules, certification processes, and teacher preparation standards, while streamlining school facility planning regulations. The governance of the Florida ABLE, Inc. board is revised, and the Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys is transferred to Florida Memorial University, with expanded duties and reporting requirements.

#### House Bill 1255 **Education**

This legislation significantly impacts local school districts by revising teacher recruitment practices, instructional standards, and district-level authority. It allows individuals completing registered apprenticeship programs to fill career service roles without open competition and renames "critical teacher shortage areas" to "high-demand teacher needs areas," affecting recruitment incentives and compensation. The bill mandates updates to academic standards by 2026, requires instruction on human embryologic development with a parental opt-out, and permits the use of the CLT10 as an alternative to the PSAT/PreACT. Districts must adopt new tutoring strategies, update parental notification procedures for math-deficient students, and expand training for staff assisting military families. It restricts district spending on organizations that promote political or social activism contrary to state board definitions, limits local building and permitting authority over charter school facilities, and compels administrative site plan approvals for qualifying charter schools.

