



**FLORIDA SCHOOL  
LABOR RELATIONS SERVICE &  
FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL NEGOTIATORS**



# 2024 LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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# OUTLINE

- Florida's Education Budget
- Deregulation Package of Bills
- Florida Retirement System
- Government Accountability
- Suits Against Governments
- Artificial Intelligence / New Worlds
- Public Employees
- Teacher Preparation Programs
- School Safety
- Questions?



# FLORIDA'S EDUCATION BUDGET

Issue	House Position	Senate Position
Total Potential	\$28,432,609,972	\$28,342,724,759
Total Potential Increase	\$1,822,692,761 – 6.85%	\$1,732,807,548 – 6.51%
Base Student Allocation	\$5,316.31 – 3.44%	\$5,314.91 – 3.41%
ESE Guaranteed Increase	\$100,517,365 – 8.30%	\$79,260,768 – 6.54%
Student Mental Health Increase	\$0 – 0.00%	\$20,000,000 – 12.5%
Safe Schools Increase	\$0 – 0.00%	\$40,000,000 – 16%
Educational Enrichment Increase	\$73,753,338 – 9.19%	\$32,444,847 – 4.04%
Average Increase Per Student	2.50%	2.50%
Anticipated Voucher Spending	\$2,926,512,915	\$2,813,039,230

# DEREGULATION

Came about because of HB 1 from 2023

## Senate

- Took the lead
- High priority of Senate President
- 3 bills
  - SB 7000 Deregulation of Public Schools/Instructional, Administrative, and Support Personnel
  - SB 7002 Deregulation of Public Schools/School District Finance & Budgets, Facilities, & Administration & Oversight
  - SB 7004 Deregulation of Public Schools/Assessment & Accountability, Instruction, & Education Choice

## House

- Indicated early on accountability off the table
- 2 bills
  - HB 7025 Education
  - HB 7039 Education

## Compromise

- SB 7002 and SB 7004 with House mostly language.

# DEREGULATION

## **SB 7002 (HB 7039 Education)**

- Open meeting notices, tentative budgets, and proposed millage levies can be advertised on the district website rather than in a newspaper.
- Repeals reporting requirements for the district guidance report and the reduction of relocatable use report.
- SBE to develop strategies to address critical teacher shortage areas.
- Expands Teacher Apprenticeship Program eligibility by aligning the GPA requirement with the GPA requirement for the professional certificate.
- School districts develop and adopt their own policies relating to mentors and support for first-time teachers.
- 45 days for VPK instructors to complete literacy training.
- Added topics that may not be precluded in collective bargaining (incentives to highly effective teachers, student intervention and support strategies, school safety plans, school district calendar)
- Not required to build more emergency shelter space than identified as needed in the statewide emergency shelter plan.
- Allows districts to lease/lease-purchase other district buildings instead of only educational facilities (school buildings).
- Removes the requirement that a board must acquire a lease of at least 40 years to construct or place a facility.
- Waves initial subject area exam and certification fees for a temporary or professional certificate in ESE K-12 & applies to add Elementary K-6 and vice versa.

# DEREGULATION

## **SB 7004 (HB 7025 Education)**

- Removes the requirement to notify DOE of the district plan regarding instructional materials use.
- ~~Authorizes a \$100 fee for objections to materials after the first 5 objections by a person whose student is not enrolled in the school where the material is located. Fee returned if objection is upheld.~~
- Reduces the summer VPK testing requirement from 3 times to 2 times per year.
- Removes common assessment requirements for DJJ students.
- Changes made by the SBE to the school grades model or grading scale must go into effect in the following school year, at the earliest.
- Removes the requirement to provide multiple opportunities for part-time and full-time K-12 virtual instruction.
- Repeals reporting requirements relating to fine arts, charter technical career centers, middle grades career courses, academically high-performing school districts, Committee of Practitioners under the No Child Left Behind Act, and implementation of school improvement and accountability.



## HB 151 / SB 7024 FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM

- **Senate Bill maintains the status quo with updated rates.**
- **House Bill:**
  - Restores a 3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for eligible FRS pension plan members initially enrolled in the FRS before July 1, 2011.
  - Increases member contribution rates to better align with the benefits earned by each employee class.
  - Increases the allocations to the investment plan accounts for each membership class.
  - Allows FRS retirees to receive both compensation from an employer that participates in the FRS and retirement benefits, provided the retiree is not reemployed within the 6 months following the date of retirement.
  - Authorizes certain elected officers who have completed a DROP participation period as of June 30, 2023, to remain in elective office and receive his or her accumulated DROP proceeds.
  - Adjusts the employer contribution rates for the FRS based on the annual actuarial valuation and additional actuarial studies.

# HB 735/SB 735 GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

**Implements standards of conduct for public officers and lobbyists; introduces restrictions on certain employment contracts.**

- Defines "foreign country of concern" and prohibits accepting anything of value from such countries by specified individuals.
- Specifies financial disclosure requirements for mayors and elected local officials based on population thresholds.
- Requires registration for individuals lobbying counties, municipalities, or special districts and establishes procedures for registration cancellation and public disclosure.
- Prohibits counties, municipalities, and school boards from renewing or extending employment contracts of certain officials during specified timeframes without unanimous approval.
- Requires the submission of proposed charter amendments to the electors at the earliest election.
- Mandates compliance monitoring for lobbyist registration by local entities and outlines investigation procedures for non-compliance.
- Allows the enforcement of findings and recommendations by local chief executives or governing bodies after investigations.





## **SUITS AGAINST GOVERNMENTS – HB 569 / SB 472**

- Both Bills Double Amount for Sovereign Immunity per individual and per total claim
- Both Bills establish a COLA on those limits in future years
- Both Bills permit settlements above the limits
- Both Bills set limits on when claims must be filed and what limits apply to which claims
- House Bill is stalled over additional tort reform package
- Sponsors have threatened extreme starting positions for next year if passage was blocked this year

# HB 1361/SB 7038 EDUCATION

- Aims to enhance education through artificial intelligence implementation, expanded eligibility for New Worlds Scholarship Accounts, and creation of University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning.
- Awards grants to school districts for artificial intelligence that supports students and teachers in grades 6-12, emphasizing platforms that aid in tutoring, lesson planning, and tracking student progress.
- Expands New Worlds Scholarship Accounts eligibility to students in the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program and revises the criteria and management of these accounts, encouraging direct purchase systems for educational materials.
- Establishes the University of Florida Lastinger Center for Learning to develop programs and research in early learning, literacy, mathematics, and provide professional learning for educators including micro-credentials.
- Revises eligibility and administration of the New Worlds Reading Initiative, eliminating the requirement for the Department of Education to designate an administrator for the initiative, and enhancing the initiative's focus on student literacy improvement.
- Introduces an annual report requirement to the Legislature and Commissioner of Education by eligible nonprofit scholarship-funding organizations administering tutoring programs aimed at improving student achievement in reading and mathematics.
- Senate bill also requires each school district and prekindergarten provider to notify parents of eligible students about scholarship processes and adjusts progress monitoring requirements.



## **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES– HB 1471 / SB 1746**

- Mandates public employees to submit membership authorization forms to their bargaining agent, simplifying and updating membership and dues information requirements.
- Modifies registration and financial reporting requirements for employee organizations, removing the mandate for audited financial statements and updating the content and submission timing of annual financial statements and renewal applications.
- Specifies conditions under which an employee organization must petition for recertification and outlines circumstances that may lead to revocation or denial of registration or certification by the commission.
- Allows for the submission of financial statements prepared by certified public accountants instead of audited statements for registration renewals within a specified timeframe and prohibits commission action based solely on the absence of audited financial statements during this period.
- Senate Bill authorizes investigations of union applications under certain circumstances and mandates rejection of applications if the application fails to meet required standards.



## HB 1291/ SB 1372 EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Imposes restrictions on educator and school leader preparation programs to ensure historical events are not distorted and certain theories are not taught, while promoting critical thinking and mastery of program content.

- Prohibits courses within teacher, postsecondary educator, professional learning certification, and school leader preparation programs from distorting historical events or teaching curriculum that assert systemic racism, sexism, oppression, and privilege as inherent in US institutions.
- Requires these programs to offer opportunities for candidates to think critically, master academic content, learn instructional strategies, and demonstrate competence.
- Specifies that school leader preparation programs must also train candidates in instructional leadership strategies, coaching development, school safety, and continuous improvement efforts.

# SCHOOL SAFETY – HB 1473 / SB 1356

- Assigns private schools the responsibility for covering costs linked to school guardian programs, while allowing sheriffs to waive these costs.
- Allows certain individuals to be certified as school guardians without completing specific training requirements and adjusting training mandates.
- Requires schools and sheriffs to timely report information regarding school guardians and their programs to the Department of Law Enforcement, which will maintain a comprehensive list and report non-compliant entities.
- Establishes penalties for drone operation over public and private schools, including potential criminal charges for unauthorized video recording.
- Mandates district school boards and charter schools to provide instruction on the use of a mobile suspicious activity reporting tool to students each school year.
- Obligates superintendents to notify appropriate officials at postsecondary institutions of certain alleged acts by dual-enrolled students within a specific timeframe.
- Directs the Office of Safe Schools to develop and adhere to a school safety compliance inspection report, conduct unannounced inspections, and refer non-compliant personnel for disciplinary action.
- Stipulates that schools must keep records of emergency drills, including active assailant emergency drills, and comply with specified safety requirements such as locking classrooms and identifying safe areas.
- Requires district school boards and charter school governing boards to adopt a progressive discipline policy for personnel who knowingly violate school safety protocols.



**QUESTIONS?**