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Florida Education Association

Frontline Report

2025 Legislative Session

December 13, 2024

Gearing up for Session

It's almost time for the 2025 legislative session, and already there is less certainty than normal.

Despite having elections just last month, there are already vacant seats in the Legislature as several members have resigned to run for new positions opened up by various appointments made by president-elect Trump. There are also rumors that Gov. DeSantis might be headed to D.C. to head the Pentagon.

Amidst all the uncertainty, there is one thing that will never change: FEA, our local unions and our members will advocate relentlessly for professional salaries and benefits, the freedom to teach and students' freedom to learn. Every child in every neighborhood in Florida deserves a world-class public school, and that is the future we are creating together. To see our full legislative agenda, [click here](#).

To make sure you are getting the latest updates during the legislative session, please subscribe to our education activist text list by texting "edactivist" to 22394. Or, if you're reading this on your phone, simply [click this link](#) and then press send.

Find your Legislators

It takes just a few moments to look up who your legislators are using FEA's [find my legislator tool](#). Whether you have newly elected legislators or incumbents headed back for another term, before session starts is the best time to begin reaching out to your legislators to let them know what issues matter the most to you.

Budget Update

Last week, members of the Florida House were in Tallahassee for orientation commonly referred to as "legislator university," and this week it was the Senate's turn. During this time legislators received training on ethics, bill drafting, and other information they need to do their jobs effectively.

As part of this training, senators received a [presentation](#) on Florida's long range financial outlook where Amy Baker, Coordinator of the Office of Economic and Demographic Research gave senators a stark warning about the need for fiscal restraint as Florida is headed toward a [\\$7 billion budget deficit](#) in the 2026-27 fiscal year if they continue on their current course.

One of the big contributors to Florida's financial predicament is the \$4 billion the state has spent on [private school vouchers](#). This is a 519% increase over the state's projected cost of \$646 million. However, it should be noted the independent, non-partisan Florid Policy Institute was spot on with their [projected cost](#) for 2023's HB 1 that ushered in universal vouchers. This is yet another example of our state leaders being out of sync with what teachers, staff, parents, and experts are telling and showing them.

As we approach the 2025 legislative session, advocating for Florida's educators have robust pay and benefits will remain [FEA's top priority](#).

The reality is Florida is only facing a budget crunch because our elected officials have created a tax system that is the [most regressive in the nation](#)—meaning the poorest Floridians pay the greatest share of taxes of any state. Educators—and others with an average salary between \$35,700-\$61,500—pay an average of 10% of their family income in taxes. Meanwhile, Florida's wealthiest Floridians with an average salary of more than \$730,700 pay less than 3% of their family income in taxes. On top of this, [most corporations in Florida don't pay any taxes at all](#).

In the coming months, legislators will once again try to pit working-class Floridians against one another in an effort to distract from their failure to create a Florida that works for all of us. And without doubt, the conversation will turn to what cuts needs to be made in public education. Let us ask you- do you think that students in your public schools need less mental health resources? Less access to qualified teachers and staff professionals? Less programs that provide them access to food or care? Less programs that allow exceptional students to thrive and non-English speaking students to succeed? When legislators talk about cutting public education funding, this is exactly what they mean to do.

The way we win is by pushing back in one united front.

When parents, educators, students and community members come together and demand a budget that prioritizes our needs over those of the corporations and multi-millionaires, then we will see the investment in public education we deserve. We must not be afraid to speak up and shout.

Upcoming Dates

Now that legislator university has concluded, the real session work begins. In advance of the official start of session on March 4, there is a series of five interim committee weeks starting in early January.

During the interim weeks, the committees will receive reports and presentations as requested by the committee's chairperson. The types of information shared during these meetings offers insight into what the committees will focus on during the regular session.

It's also important to note that bills can move through committees during the interim committee week period. Sometimes substantial bills even make it through all of their committee stops during this interim period meaning they are ready for final passage as soon as session technically begins in March. Legislators count on the public not paying attention during the interim committee weeks, and we must make sure they know we're watching them every step of the way.

Interim Committee Week Dates:

- January 13-17
- January 20-24
- February 3-7
- February 10-14
- February 17-21

Committee Changes

Incoming House Speaker Danny Perez (R-Miami) has reorganized the House's committee structure. Gone are the PreK-12, Higher Education, and Choice and Innovation subcommittees. The three education subcommittees in the House are now Career & Workforce, Education Administration, and Student Academic Success subcommittees. You can check out the [jurisdiction of the new committees here](#).

As of the writing of this email, it has not yet been announced which Representatives will sit on which committees. Once that information has been announced we will pass it along.

Over in the Senate, the committee structure remains the same with a PreK-12 Education Committee chaired by Sen. Corey Simon (R-Tallahassee) and a Postsecondary Education Committee chaired by Sen. Alexis Calatayud (R-Miami). As with the House, the Senate has yet to announce which members will sit on which committees except for the committee chairs.

Get Involved

During the legislative session, it is vitally important that public education advocates are engaged and communicating with lawmakers and with each other. Take just a few moments to [complete this survey](#) and let us know the ways you are planning on engaging during the 2025 legislative session. We'll follow up in January with specifics on how you can get involved.

Questions? Call PPA at 850-224-2078.

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