

Florida Education Association

Frontline Report

2026 Legislative Session

February 13, 2026

Six weeks down; three weeks left to go. As we near the finish line, we want to give you an overview on bills that would impact students, educators, and school communities. Read on to learn more about

- FEA members' priority legislation,
- An update on the budget (and opportunity to take action!)
- A preview of what policy will be heard next week,
- Gov. DeSantis' priorities on life support, for now,
- An update on anti-worker, anti-freedom bills, and
- Thanks!

FEA priority legislation adopted unanimously in the Senate

Two bills that would advance the priorities of FEA members passed the Senate on unanimous votes.

SB 1216 would help address salary compression for PreK-12 teachers by eliminating provisions that have limited cost-of-living adjustments and other provisions that restrict locals unions' ability to negotiate fair pay.

On the higher education front, **SB 176** establishes safety policies and procedures at Florida's colleges and universities. This is commonsense legislation which will help to ensure faculty and staff on all of Florida's higher education campuses are safe and secure. Importantly, unlike some other alleged safety measures that have been heard in the legislature this session, SB 176 does not allow more firearms on campus.

Budget Update

There is not much new news since [last week's Frontline](#) when it comes to the budget, but we do want to make sure you understand the process that will take place in the final weeks of session.

Both chambers passed their respective budgets this week and you can find the [FEFP summary budgets here](#). Over the next two weeks, the chambers must come to agreement on the differences in their budget. This happens through what is known as budget conference, a process that happens largely outside of the public view.

For some perspective on the budget proposals, the chart below shows that what both chambers have offered is a decrease from Gov. DeSantis' first budget in 2019 when adjusted for inflation and a massive decrease from per-student spending levels before the Great Recession.

Putting the PreK-12 Budget into Perspective		
2006 Per-student Spending adjusted for inflation (Pre-Great recession)	\$10,922	Florida average teacher salary #28 in the nation
2019 Per student spending adjusted for inflation (The first budget Gov. DeSantis signed into law.)	\$9,726	Florida average teacher salary #46 in the nation and per student spending is \$1,196 less than 2006.
2026 House Proposed budget	\$9,434	Florida average teacher salary #50 in the nation and per student funding is \$1,488 less than 2006 and \$292 less than DeSantis' first budget
2026 Senate proposed budget	\$9,338	Florida average teacher salary #50 in the nation and per student funding is \$1,584 less than 2006 and \$388 less than DeSantis' first budget

If you agree that students, educators, and school communities deserve a budget that provides a real investment in education, you can [email your legislators here to let them know](#).

A rundown of some of the bills we are monitoring

- [SB 538](#) passed the Senate unanimously earlier this week. As a reminder this is the bill that allows a district school superintendent to “negotiate individual compensation” for “any athletic director or coach or the director of an activity sponsor.” The way this bill circumvents collective bargaining to allow superintendents to negotiate salaries directly with educators is by creating a new category of employee in state law that would allow superintendents to reclassify sponsors of extracurricular activities as administrative personnel. The House version of this bill, [HB 731](#), has passed each of its committees and is ready for a vote on the House floor but has not yet been placed on the special order calendar.
- [SB 7036](#) will be heard on the Senate floor on Tuesday, February 24. This bill is an omnibus bill that is full Florida Department of Education priorities including expanding the definition of “educational emergency” to allow school districts to circumvent collective bargaining when it

comes to salary increases. Its House companion [HB 1071](#) will be heard on the House floor on Wednesday, February 25.

- [HB 757](#) will also be on the House floor on Wednesday, February 25. This bill expands the “guardian” program that currently exists in PreK-12 schools to higher education campuses. The Senate companion, [SB 896](#), will have its final committee stop on Tuesday, February 24.

Gov. DeSantis’ priorities on life support, for now

Heading into this session one of the big questions was what the legislature would do regarding property taxes and changes to vaccine requirements—two policies that Gov. DeSantis was heavily pushing.

While the House did pass [a bill](#) to put property tax reform on the ballot in November, the Senate so far has shown no appetite to address property tax reform during the regular session. No property tax bills are moving in the Senate. Underscoring this point, Gov. DeSantis recently put out a statement saying that he was working with the Senate on a property tax proposal and that it was more important to get it done right than to get it done quickly. This could be an indication that Gov. DeSantis intends to call a special session to address property taxes. Or we could find ourselves with a lengthy extended session like happened last year when the 60-day session became a 105-day session. Either way, it is increasingly looking less likely that the two chambers will agree on property tax reform before session is scheduled to end on Friday, March 13.

On the vaccine front, [a bill](#) that would make it easier for parents to exempt their children from current vaccine requirements is moving through the Senate with its final committee hearing on Tuesday, February 24. However, the House companion to the bill has not moved. Notably, neither of these bills roll back vaccine requirements for students as Gov. DeSantis was pushing for at the start of session.

That being said, the final three weeks of session always are full of twists and turns. There will certainly be some unexpected developments, and until the session is officially over any bill still has a chance of passing both chambers and being sent to the governor’s desk.

Anti-worker, anti-freedom legislation

In some good news, [SB 1296](#) will not be heard in committee next week.

The House State Affairs Committee meets twice next week, meaning there are two opportunities for [HB 995](#) to be heard in its final committee. As of the writing of this email, the agenda for next Tuesday has not been released. If it is placed on the agenda, we will send a follow-up email and let you know.

If the bill is not placed on Tuesday's agenda, the next opportunity for HB 995 to be heard is on Thursday, February 26.

Thanks!

Again this week educators from around the state came up to Tallahassee to meet with lawmakers and work to advance priorities that strengthen our public schools! Thank you to members who came up from United Teachers of Dade, Duval Teachers United, Escambia Education Association, Lake County Education Association, Teachers Association of Lee County, Osceola County Education Association, Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association, United School Employees of Pasco, Polk Education Association, St. Johns Education Association and Volusia United Educators.

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