

Florida's Education in Focus: Navigating the 2025 K-12 Legislative Landscape

Policy Brief

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To promote clarity and accessibility around K-12 education policy developments in Florida, the UF Education Policy Research Center presents this 2025 legislative brief. This brief is designed to provide a clear, concise overview of key components of several significant education bills introduced or passed during the 2025 legislative session. It is intended for a general audience and aims to present information in an easily digestible format. This brief is explanatory in nature and does not reflect evaluations or endorsements of any specific legislation. Our goal is to provide unbiased information to support informed public understanding and discussion.

2025 K-12 Legislation

Student Health and Emergency Preparedness Legislation

House Bill 1607

House Bill 1607 (HB 1607), mandates that all public schools, including charter schools, provide basic first aid training, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), to specified students. Additionally, each school is required to develop a Plan for Urgent Life-Saving Emergencies (PULSE), outlining procedures for responding to cardiac emergencies. The legislation also stipulates requirements for the availability and maintenance of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) on school premises.

HB 1607 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).



House Bill 597

House Bill 597 (HB 597) keeps emergency medicine called glucagon on hand to help students with diabetes who are having dangerously low blood sugar levels. Schools can buy, accept donations of, or get prescriptions for this medicine, and trained staff are allowed to give it in emergencies. After giving glucagon, staff must call 911 and inform the student's parents. Schools and healthcare providers are protected from legal liability if they act in good faith.

HB 597 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 958

Senate Bill 958 (SB 958) creates section 381.992 in the Florida Statutes, establishing a Type 1 Diabetes Early Detection Program. The Department of Health, in collaboration with school districts, is mandated to develop informational materials for the early detection of Type 1 diabetes, which will be made available to parents and guardians of certain students. Early learning coalitions are required to notify parents and guardians about the availability of these materials.

SB 958 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 1070

Senate Bill 1070 (SB 1070) amends sections 1002.20 and 1006.20 of the Florida Statutes to require certain students to complete at least one electrocardiogram (ECG) screening to participate in interscholastic athletic competition starting in a specified school year. The Florida High School Athletic Association is mandated to adopt policies prohibiting students with abnormal ECGs from participating until medical clearance is provided. The bill also authorizes certain out-of-state licensed practitioners to conduct medical evaluations.

SB 1070 passed both the Florida Senate and House and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 1514

Senate Bill 1514 (SB 1514) establishes new statewide requirements for preventing and responding to life-threatening allergic reactions in schools. The legislation mandates that each public and charter school develop an individualized anaphylaxis action plan for students diagnosed with severe allergies. It also requires training for school personnel in recognizing and treating anaphylaxis, including the administration of epinephrine. Additionally, schools must maintain a supply of epinephrine auto-injectors and ensure quick access in emergency situations.

SB 1514 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Student Safety, Awareness, and Well-Being Legislation

House Bill 85

House Bill 85 (HB 85) mandates that the criteria for hazardous walking conditions for public school students be updated to include at least 4 feet of walking space alongside roadways where certain walking hazards exist along the walking path, and 3 feet of walking space on roads with speed limits of at least 50 mph. The hazardous walking conditions criteria do not apply for residential roads, roads with low traffic, and roads with a 30 mph or lower speed limit.

HB 85 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 1374

Senate Bill 1374 (SB 1374) streamlines and modifies the types of data and reports that Florida school districts must submit to the Department of Education. The bill aims to reduce redundancy and administrative burden by eliminating or consolidating certain reporting mandates. It also establishes clearer timelines and formatting standards for required submissions and encourages the use of electronic systems to increase efficiency and transparency. Additionally, SB 1374 includes provisions to ensure that the data collected is relevant to student outcomes and educational accountability.

In addition to its focus on data streamlining, SB 1374 also introduces new safety-related personnel reporting requirements. Instructional and administrative personnel must self-report any felony or specified misdemeanor arrests within 48 hours, with corresponding district policies for temporary removal from the classroom. Law enforcement must notify school administrators of qualifying arrests within 48 hours as well. Together, these provisions aim to both enhance administrative efficiency and ensure a safe and accountable school environment.

SB 1374 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

House Bill 259

House Bill 259 (HB 259), mandates that August 21 will be “Fentanyl Awareness and Education Day.” The purpose of the day is for agencies and institutions, including public schools, to educate the public and children about the risks and negative effects of fentanyl and drug abuse. People should also be informed about preventative and assistive resources to help prevent drug abuse.

HB 259 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

House Bill 1237

House Bill 1237 (CS/HB 1237) requires public schools, including charter schools, to provide human trafficking awareness education to students in specified grade levels. The instruction must include information on the warning signs of human trafficking, prevention strategies, and how to seek help. School districts are tasked with incorporating this content into existing health education curricula and ensuring that instruction is age-appropriate and evidence-based. The bill also emphasizes the importance of equipping educators with the necessary training to effectively deliver this content.

HB 1237 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 1470

Senate Bill 1470 (SB 1470) revises and expands the Coach Aaron Feis Guardian Program—now named after Chris Hixon, Coach Aaron Feis, and Coach Scott Beigel—to allow participation by certain childcare facilities. The bill requires county sheriffs to establish a guardian program if requested by a district and broadens eligibility criteria while updating firearm training and qualification requirements for school guardians and security personnel. It mandates new safety procedures to be implemented during periods of heightened threat and calls for the Office of Safe Schools to convene a statewide workgroup composed of education and law enforcement entities to strengthen and standardize safety practices.

SB 1470 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Access and Support for Learners Legislation

Senate Bill 1402

Senate Bill 1402 (1402) clarifies, and updates provisions related to students enrolled in dropout retrieval programs operated by certain private providers in partnership with Florida school districts. The bill establishes that these students are considered regularly enrolled for purposes of state funding, provided the programs meet specific instructional and operational criteria. It also outlines accountability measures and reporting requirements to ensure program quality and student progress. These updates are intended to support re-engagement of at-risk youth and improve educational pathways for students who have previously disengaged from traditional schooling.



SB 1402 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 1102

Senate Bill 1102 (SB 1102) amends sections 1002.87 and 1002.89 of the Florida Statutes to revise the criteria for a child to receive priority for participation in the school readiness program, focusing on children from birth to the beginning of the school year for which they are eligible for admission to kindergarten. The bill also provides requirements for a school readiness program provider to be eligible for specified funding beginning on a specified date.

SB 1102 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Supporting Students with Disabilities and Mental Health Needs

House Bill 447

House Bill 447 (HB 447) encourages public schools to teach disability history and awareness during the first two weeks of October. If school districts choose to participate, they must include age-appropriate topics: bullying and physical disabilities for grades K–3, autism for grades 4–6, hearing impairments for grades 7–9, and learning and intellectual disabilities for grades 10–12. The goal is to promote understanding, reduce bullying, and support inclusion, and the Florida Department of Education may collaborate with the Evin B. Hartsell Foundation to develop teaching materials.

CS/HB 447 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 112

Senate Bill 112 (SB 112) strengthens support for students with developmental disabilities by revising regulations related to funding, resources, and educational services. The bill updates how grant funding may be used under the Dr. and Mrs. Alfonse and Kathleen Cinotti Health Care Screening and Services Grant Program and modifies eligibility requirements for the Early Steps Program and its Extended Option. It also mandates the continued operation of the UF Center for Autism and Neurodevelopment and allocates funds for summer programs and facilities specifically designed for children with autism. In addition, the bill directs a review of in-service training and curricula for educators working with students with disabilities and revises professional certificate renewal requirements to better support inclusive instruction.

SB 112 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

House Bill 809

House Bill 809 (HB 809) streamlines the certification process for school social workers by exempting them from certain standardized testing requirements typically required for educator certification. Specifically, individuals in these roles are no longer required to pass the general knowledge and subject area exams, helping to reduce barriers to entry and support the recruitment and retention of qualified school-based mental health professionals.

HB 809 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

House Bill 969

House Bill 969 (HB 969) strengthens accountability for student mental health services by requiring the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) to conduct and submit regular evaluations to the Governor and Legislature. These evaluations must assess how school districts are complying with mental health-related laws, examine the effectiveness of funded programs, and provide recommendations for improvement. The goal is to ensure transparency, identify best practices, and improve mental health outcomes for students statewide.

HB 969 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Curriculum, and Cultural Instruction Legislation

Senate Bill 356

Senate Bill 356 (SB 356) officially makes January 27 “Holocaust Remembrance Day” each year, honoring the millions of lives lost during the Holocaust. Public schools may observe the day with activities or instruction, and if January 27 isn’t a school day, it can be observed on the next school day. The law also allows schools to teach students about the horrors of the Holocaust, the dangers of anti-Semitism, and the positive contributions of Jewish people.

SB 356 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

House Bill 549



House Bill 549 (HB 549) says that all state agencies, school textbooks, and library materials must start using the name “Gulf of America” instead of “Gulf of Mexico,” following the new federal name change. Any new school materials bought after July 2025, must reflect this updated name.

HB 549 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Miscellaneous

Senate Bill 8

Senate Bill 8 (SB 8) authorizes a claims settlement requiring the Pasco County School Board to provide \$1.2 million in compensation to Marcus Button and his mother, Robin Button. This settlement addresses the permanent, life-altering injuries Marcus sustained because of negligence by a school district employee. While the bill sets limits on allowable attorney fees and related expenses, it affirms the family's right to receive just compensation for the harm endured.



SB 8 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 248

Senate Bill 248 (SB 248) mandates that homeschool students can participate in their associated public school extracurricular athletics sports programs as long as they meet the necessary requirements to join. For students who attend private school, the criteria to join an extracurricular athletic activity hosted by a Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSA) school has been modified with new expectations and rules about student participation.

SB 248 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 296

Senate Bill 296 (SB 296) addresses school start times for middle and high schools in Florida, aiming to support adolescent health through later start times. However, rather than mandating a universal change, the bill allows flexibility for local decision-making.

Specifically, it provides an exemption for district school boards and charter school governing boards from the requirement that, by July 1, 2026, middle schools must start no earlier than 8:00 a.m. and high schools no earlier than 8:30 a.m. Instead of enforcing these start times, boards may submit a report to the Florida Department of Education by June 1, 2026. The report must include current start times, strategies considered for implementation, and the anticipated impacts or unintended consequences of adopting the later times. This approach preserves local control while encouraging districts to consider student well-being.

SB 296 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

House Bill 443

House Bill (HB 443) makes several changes to how charter schools operate. It gives them more flexibility—like allowing them to increase student enrollment under certain conditions, set their own student conduct codes, and use capital funds to buy property or build schools. It also lets virtual school students join sports teams at local public or private schools. The law tightens rules about who can serve on charter school boards and clarifies what services school districts must provide to charter schools. Overall, it aims to give charter schools more independence while ensuring they still meet public standards. The law takes effect on July 1, 2025.

HB 443 passed both the Florida House and Senate and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Senate Bill 738

Senate Bill 738 (SB 738) amends Florida Statutes to exempt public and private preschools from certain municipal special assessments, defining “preschool” for this purpose. It revises licensing standards for all licensed childcare facilities, including updates to minimum standards and training requirements for childcare personnel, emphasizing early literacy and language development. The bill also mandates that county commissions annually affirm specific decisions and expands the types of providers considered when developing plans to eliminate duplicative inspections.

SB 738 passed both the Florida Senate and House and has been signed by the Governor.

See more information including the language and the breakdown of votes [here](#).

Summary

In 2025, Florida passed a wide range of K–12 education legislation addressing student health, safety, access, and support. Several new laws focus on emergency preparedness and medical needs in schools, including requirements for CPR training, diabetes and allergy response plans, and mental health accountability. Student safety remains a key priority, with updated reporting procedures, revised guardian programs, and initiatives to raise awareness around fentanyl and human trafficking. Access-focused legislation supports dropout recovery, school readiness, and more flexibility for charter schools. Additional bills strengthen support for students with disabilities and mental health needs, including changes to educator training, certification pathways, and service evaluations. Finally, legislation addressed cultural instruction, curriculum standards, and school operations, reflecting a continued emphasis on both local autonomy and student well-being.

Appendix

Methodology

The 2025 education-related bills discussed in this brief were identified through a review of the Florida House and Senate websites and filtered by those that had passed both House and Senate committees. Multiple sources, including non-partisan newspaper coverage, were consulted to ensure the accuracy and neutrality of the selected legislation.

To maintain a clear focus on K–12 education, higher education bills were excluded. While these bills are important within the broader educational landscape, they fall outside the scope of this brief.

Once the relevant K–12 bills were identified, each was researched in greater detail using the official websites of the Florida House of Representatives and the Florida Senate. This included reviewing bill text, sponsors, status, and voting history.

The methodology used in this brief aims to provide an accurate and focused overview of 2025 legislation most directly affecting K–12 education in Florida. By narrowing the scope to K–12-specific bills, this brief offers a more in-depth examination of the policies and proposals shaping the educational experiences of Florida’s K–12 students in the 2025 legislative session.