

2019 Florida Legislative Session on Education

Update on May 9, 2019

ANTI-SEMITISM (PASSED): Requires schools and colleges to address allegations of anti-Semitism in the same way they address racism. ([HB 741](#))

BRIGHT FUTURES (PASSED): Raises the requirements for the merit-based Bright Futures scholarships. For students an “Academic” scholarship, which covers full tuition and fees at state universities and colleges, the required SAT score would rise from 1290 to around 1330. For the second-tier “Medallion” award which covers 75 percent of tuition and fees, the benchmark would climb from 1170 to about 1200. ([SB 190](#))

CAREER-TECHNICAL EDUCATION (PASSED): Expands apprenticeship programs, adds career planning support for students, offers to replace a science graduation credit with a computer science course. ([HB 7071](#))

CHARTER AUTHORIZERS (FAILED): Allows charter school authorizers other than school districts, which currently hold the sole right to approve charters. ([HB 1197](#) / [SB 1668](#))

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION (FAILED): Makes the Commissioner of Education an elected position, returning it to the Florida Cabinet. ([HJR 1309](#) / [SJR 422](#))

DISQUALIFIED TEACHERS (FAILED): Creates lists of people disqualified from working in the state’s public, private and charter schools. ([HB 1127](#) / [SB 1444](#))

FINANCIAL LITERACY (PASSED): Requires all school districts to offer a financial literacy course consisting of at least one-half credit as an elective. ([HB 7071](#))

GUARDIANS (PASSED): Expands the school guardian program to allow trained teachers in certain school districts to volunteer to carry weapons. ([SB 7030](#))

MILITARY UNIFORMS (PASSED): Requires school districts to allow authorized students to wear military dress uniforms at high school graduations. ([SB 292](#))

PARENTAL RIGHTS (FAILED): Creates a new section of Florida law that would create a parental “bill of rights,” establishing parents’ authority to direct “the education and care” of their child as well as their “moral and religious training.” ([HB 1171](#) / [SB 1726](#))

REFERENDUM MONEY (PASSED): Requires school districts to share future local referendum money with charter schools. ([HB 7123](#))

SCHOOL BOARD TERM LIMITS (FAILED): Limits the terms of school board members to eight years. Would require voter approval. ([HJR 229](#) / [SJR 274](#))

SCHOOLS OF HOPE (PASSED): Expands the “Schools of Hope” program that lets charter schools open near consistently low-performing public schools. Allows charter school operators to open schools “opportunity zones,” a term from President Trump’s 2017 tax bill designed to boost investment in economically poor areas. ([SB 7070](#)) *Vote in house, Newton joins R’s. In Senate split right down party lines*

SCHOOL STRUCTURES (FAILED): Requires certain new school facilities be constructed in compliance with public shelter design criteria. ([HB 1233](#) / [SB 586](#))

SPANKING (FAILED): Bans corporal punishment as a disciplinary option for teachers and principals. ([HB 1361](#) / [SB 1120](#))

SPENDING (FAILED): Requires 80 percent of state education funding to be spent on teachers' salaries and bonuses, classroom supplies, technology for students and tutoring, in lieu of administration. ([HB 1434](#))

TEACHER TESTING (PASSED): Eases the testing requirements attached to teacher certification. ([SB 7070](#))

TUITION SURCHARGE (FAILED): Changes the rules when universities may add a tuition surcharge to Florida resident students ([HB 257](#) / [SB 280](#))

UNIVERSITY SURVEYS (FAILED): Requires universities to conduct "intellectual freedom" surveys that measure "the extent to which competing ideas, perspectives, and claims of truth are presented" on campus and whether the university community feels "safe and supported in exploring and articulating their beliefs and viewpoints" in the classroom. ([HB 839](#) / [SB 1296](#))

VOUCHERS (PASSED): Creates a scholarship program for private schools for families of four who make roughly \$77,000 a year or less, using public money. ([SB 7070](#)) *Vote in house, Newton joins R's. In Senate split right down party lines*

WATER FILTERS (FAILED): Requires schools built before 1986 to install water filters at all drinking fountains in an effort to reduce lead. ([SB 66](#) / [HB 545](#))

WORKFORCE EDUCATION (PASSED): Requires middle school students to take a course in career education planning, allows certain course substitutions for high school graduation requirements, requires high schools to offer a financial literacy elective course, create a career and technical education high school graduation pathway, establishes degree articulation agreements between colleges and universities. ([HB 7071](#))

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Opposing this Bill Senate Bill 1410 - Hope Scholarship Bill, allowing parents to apply for a scholarship if they feel their child is bullied and use the money at a private school. This will take public school money and give it to private schools. Further information on the League of Women voters website <http://lwveducation.com/category/florida/>