



Legislative Affairs Department
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2026 Regular Session, Week 8 Report

March 2 – March 6, 2026

Executive Summary:

With one more week left in the 2026 60-day Florida Legislative Session, budget conference negotiations have neither been held nor scheduled. As of now, there is no information on when the conferees will meet or when the budget might be finalized. The earliest possible completion date for the budget is mid to late spring.

Week 8 activity reflected continued movement on K–12 education, early learning, and cross-cutting governance measures, with several items advancing on unanimous or near-unanimous votes and a smaller set drawing sharper debate around process, constitutional concerns, and local authority. Education-related action this week included autism-focused professional learning and incentives, educator mentoring, dyslexia/dyscalculia screening, and technology/computer science requirements that explicitly integrate artificial intelligence. Governance and transparency measures affecting school board operations also advanced, including a proposal establishing additional rights for district school board members to access information and strengthening public-record documentation expectations.

For BCPS, the dominant signals this week are (1) continued legislative emphasis on specialized training and compliance expectations for ESE-related needs (autism professional learning; IEP-related process requirements), (2) sustained momentum on teacher pipeline supports (mentoring) and early identification interventions (screening and progress monitoring), (3) expanding technology expectations (AI-integrated computer science), and (4) the emergence of school board governance/transparency proposals that could materially affect board operations, documentation, and internal workflows.

Key Highlights:

- [**SB 206 \(Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder\)**](#) was reported favorably with a committee substitute (17–0), expanding autism micro-credential expectations and teacher incentives, and was later laid on the table in favor of [**HB 851**](#).
- [**HB 851 \(Professional Learning for Instructional and School Administrative Personnel\)**](#) was reported favorably with a committee substitute (35–0), requiring districts to provide an annual autism-specific professional learning opportunity for instructional and school-based administrative personnel.
- [**SB 182 \(School Teacher Training and Mentoring Program\)**](#) was reported favorably (18–0), establishing a statewide teacher training and mentoring program to improve teacher effectiveness and student outcomes.
- [**SB 1620 \(Public Education\)**](#) was reported favorably with a committee substitute (22–0), addressing school board member access to information, meeting documentation, “good cause” clarification, and prohibiting nondisclosure agreements.
- [**HB 615 \(Individual Education Plans\)**](#) passed the House (112–0), strengthening timely evaluation requirements for students with disabilities, expanding parental notifications, and requiring standardized service logs.

- [**SB 1340 \(Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring\)**](#) was reported favorably (34–0), requiring prompt screening, intervention, and evaluation for students exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.
- [**HB 1503 \(Computer Science Education and Certification\)**](#) passed the Senate (33–0), integrating artificial intelligence instruction into computer science education and establishing additional subject area coverages.
- [**SB 482 \(Artificial Intelligence Bill of Rights\)**](#) passed the Senate (35–2), establishing consumer and child safeguards for AI usage and requiring parental notice and opt-out for AI instructional tools in education.
- [**SB 1690 \(Child Care and Early Learning Services\)**](#) passed the Senate (37–0), streamlining early learning services by removing certain annual parental notification requirements and establishing a professional recognition center.
- [**HB 905 \(Foreign Influence\)**](#) passed the House (86–20), strengthening foreign influence restrictions through registration requirements, contracting limits, and enhanced penalties.

Major Legislative Actions:

Exceptional student education (ESE), professional learning, and IEP process:

- [**HB 851 \(Professional Learning for Instructional and School Administrative Personnel\)**](#): reported favorably with a committee substitute (35–0); substituted for [**SB 206**](#); requires districts to provide an annual autism-specific professional learning opportunity for instructional and school-based administrative personnel.
- [**SB 206 \(Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder\)**](#): reported favorably with a committee substitute (17–0); laid on the table and referred to [**HB 851**](#); requires completion of an autism micro-credential and provides expanded incentives for teachers of students with autism spectrum disorder.
- [**HB 615 \(Individual Education Plans\)**](#): passed the House (112–0); strengthens timely evaluation processes for students with disabilities, enhances parental rights/notifications, and requires standardized service logs.

Workforce pipeline and instructional capacity:

- [**SB 182 \(School Teacher Training and Mentoring Program\)**](#): reported favorably (18–0); establishes a mentoring program to improve teacher effectiveness and student outcomes; discussion emphasized supporting struggling schools through structured mentorship.

Early identification and progress monitoring:

- [**SB 1340 \(Coordinated Screening and Progress Monitoring\)**](#): reported favorably (34–0); requires prompt screening, intervention, and evaluation for students exhibiting characteristics of dyslexia or dyscalculia.

Technology and AI-integrated computer science:

- [**SB 1694 \(Technology Education\)**](#): laid on the table; referred to [**HB 1503**](#).
- [**HB 1503 \(Computer Science Education and Certification\)**](#): passed the Senate (33–0); enhances computer science education requirements by integrating artificial intelligence instruction and establishing additional subject area coverages.
- [**SB 482 \(Artificial Intelligence Bill of Rights\)**](#): passed the Senate (35–2); establishes consumer and child safeguards for AI usage, tightens rules on AI-generated likenesses, and requires parental notice and opt-out for AI instructional tools in education.

School board governance, transparency, and district operations:

- [SB 1620 \(Public Education\)](#): reported favorably with a committee substitute (22–0): establishes new rights for district school board members to access information and consult on budget matters, requires additional public-record documentation from school board meetings, clarifies “good cause” for personnel decisions, and prohibits school districts from requiring or incentivizing nondisclosure agreements.

Child care and early learning:

- [SB 1690 \(Child Care and Early Learning Services\)](#): passed the Senate (37–0): streamlines child care and early learning services by removing certain annual parental notification requirements, clarifying licensing exemptions, updating terminology, and establishing a professional recognition center.

Charter/private school facilities and school choice-adjacent items:

- [HB 833 \(Private School Facilities\)](#): passed the House (85–22): expands permitted use of private schools enrolling 150 or fewer students in certain zoning districts and clarifies compliance with the Florida Fire Prevention Code.

Civics and student programming:

- [SB 1062 \(Speech and Debate Education\)](#): passed the Senate (36–0): creates statewide infrastructure to expand and elevate speech and debate education.

Cross-cutting: foreign influence, elections, public records, labor relations:

- [HB 905 \(Foreign Influence\)](#): passed the House (86–20): strengthens restrictions on foreign influence through registration requirements, contracting limits, and penalty enhancements.
- [SB 1178 \(Foreign Influence\)](#): reported favorably with a committee substitute (11–5): debate centered on process concerns regarding late amendments and whether added provisions were sufficiently vetted.
- [SB 620 \(Candidate Qualifying\)](#): reported favorably with a committee substitute (22–0) in committee; later Senate floor vote reflected divided support (12–6) as presented in the provided data.
- [SB 1296 \(Public Employees Relations Commission\)](#): reported favorably (21–13): revises union membership/certification processes, dispute procedures, and related definitions; debate raised constitutionality and fairness concerns.
- [SB 1298 \(Public Records/Public Employees Relations Commission\)](#): reported unfavorably (8–10): would have created a public records exemption for employee statements seeking to decertify a collective bargaining agent.
- [SB 7046 \(Taxation\)](#): reported favorably with a committee substitute (12–5): debate included net-zero policy prohibitions and local assessment limits, with concerns about local authority and charter school access to voter-approved levies.

Other notable items:

- [HB 1153 \(Juvenile Justice\)](#): passed the House (108–0): expands recognition of juvenile detention/probation officers for benefits and revises multiple juvenile justice and county cost-recovery provisions.
- [HB 1389 \(Affordable Housing\)](#): passed the House (76–29): expands authorizations for affordable multifamily and mixed-use developments and requires adoption of accessory dwelling unit ordinances.

Alignment with BCPS Priorities:

Retaining High-Quality Staff:

- Autism-focused professional learning and micro-credential incentives ([HB 851](#) / [SB 206](#)) and teacher mentoring ([SB 182](#)) align with strengthening instructional capacity and retention supports.

Strengthening Operations:

- School board governance/transparency provisions ([SB 1620](#)) could materially affect internal workflows, documentation practices, and board support operations.
- Labor relations changes ([SB 1296](#)) remain a high-impact operational watch item due to potential effects on bargaining processes and HR administration.

Addressing the Funding Gap:

- The absence of scheduled budget conferences increases uncertainty for district planning; several advancing mandates (ESE process/logging, professional learning expectations, screening requirements, AI-integrated instruction) may carry staffing, training, and technology costs.

Enhancing Safety & Mental Health:

- Early identification and intervention measures ([SB 1340](#)) and ESE process strengthening ([HB 615](#)) support student needs but may increase compliance and documentation workload.

Promoting Academic Equity:

- ESE-focused measures ([HB 615](#); [HB 851](#)) and early screening ([SB 1340](#)) advance access and supports for students with disabilities and learning differences.
- Speech and debate expansion ([SB 1062](#)) supports civic learning and student leadership opportunities.

Next Steps:

- Track end-of-session posture for high-impact education and governance measures ([SB 1620](#); [HB 615](#); [HB 851](#); [SB 1340](#); [HB 1503](#); [SB 482](#)) and identify any late amendments that change implementation timelines or fiscal impacts.
- Prepare an internal implementation crosswalk for items with likely district workload (owner, required policy/procedure updates, training needs, technology needs, and anticipated start dates).
- Monitor budget conference timing closely and maintain contingency planning for delayed budget completion, including impacts to staffing, safety, and instructional initiatives.
- Continue monitoring cross-cutting measures with operational implications (foreign influence compliance, labor relations changes, and public records-related items) for downstream effects on district administration and board support.