



STATE OF FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Ms. Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya
Associate Superintendent

***Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants Administration, and
Community Engagement***

The Florida Legislature

- ◎ The Florida Legislature is comprised of bicameral (two) houses:
- ◎ Florida Senate and Florida House of Representatives
 - Senate (upper house) = **40** members
 - House of Representatives (lower house) = **120** members
- ◎ Total of **160** state legislators elected to represent select state districts
- *Legislators are required to reside in the district elected to represent*

The Florida Legislature

Florida Senate

- 40 members who serve four-year terms for a maximum of two terms (eight years)
- No limit on the number of legislative bills to file during the legislative session
- 2016 - 2018 Composition of the Florida Senate
 - 24 members affiliated with the Republican Party;
 - 15 members with the Democratic Party; and
 - 1 vacancy.

2016 – 2018 Leadership Florida Senate



Joe Negron,
Senate President



Anitere Flores,
President *pro tempore*



Wilton Simpson,
Majority Leader



Oscar Braynon II,
Minority Leader



Lauren Book,
Minority Leader *pro tempore*

The Florida Legislature

Florida House of Representatives

- 120 members who serve two-year terms for maximum of four terms (eight years)
- Limit of six legislative bills to file during the regular legislative session
- As of September 2017,
 - 76 members affiliated with the Republican Party;
 - 41 with the Democratic Party; and
 - 3 vacancies.

2016 – 2018 Leadership

Florida House of Representatives



Richard Corcoran,
House Speaker



Jeanette M. Nunez,
Speaker *pro tempore*



Ray Rodrigues,
Majority Leader



Janet Cruz,
Minority Leader



Bobby B. Dubose,
Minority Leader *pro tempore*

Role of the State Legislature

- ⦿ Create and/or amend laws in alignment with the state's constitution
- ⦿ Provide link for the citizens of the electoral district to the state government
- ⦿ Deliberate on all issues that impact the citizens who elect legislator/s into office
- ⦿ Approve state budget, annually.

▪

Rules of the Legislature

- ◎ Both chambers adopt rules to ensure constitutional requirements are met
- ◎ Senate and House of Representatives may waive rules by a 2/3 vote of its members

Florida's Legislative Timeline

- ⦿ Annually, the state legislature meets in 60 day regular sessions with the possibility of special sessions, as needed, beginning on the 1st Tuesday in March.
- ⦿ Starting in September through December of the subsequent year, interim committee meetings begin.
- ⦿ Every ten years, the U.S. Census enumerates the population, which mandates electoral district boundaries to be redrawn in response to population changes, as required by federal, state, and local governments: next U.S. census - year 2020.

2018 Legislative Session Interim Committee Meetings

- ⦿ September 2017 *Week of the 11th*
- ⦿ October 2017 *Week of the 9th*
- ⦿ October 2017 *Week of the 23th*
- ⦿ November 2017 *Week of the 6th*
- ⦿ November 2017 *Week of the 13th*
- ⦿ December 2017 *Week of the 4th*

2018 Legislative Session Key Dates

- ◎ January 09, 2018: Regular Session convenes (Article III, Section 3(b), Constitution), deadline for filing bills for introduction (Rule 3.7(1))
- ◎ February 27, 2018: 50th day - last day for regularly scheduled committee meetings (Rule 2.9(2))
- ◎ March 9, 2018: 60th day - last day of Regular Session (Article III, section 3(d), Constitution)

Overview of Legislative Committees

- ⦿ Committees are comprised of a select, small group of House and Senate members to closely review bills, and perform fact-finding groundwork.
- ⦿ The number of committees and its membership changes every two years for the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- ⦿ Committee names, which usually describe its policy jurisdiction, and numbers are part of the rules adopted by both the House and Senate during the organization session.

Legislative Committees

Four types:

- **Standing Committees**
 - *review proposed legislation, offer amendment, or deem bill as favorable/or unfavorable.*
- **Select Committees**
 - *perform a specific task*
- **Conference Committees**
 - *reconcile substantial differences between the Senate and House on bills that have passed both chambers.*
- **Joint Committees**
 - *examine bill with bi-partisan participation*

Introduction of Bills

- ◎ Once written and reviewed by Bill Drafting, all bills are filed with the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate by noon on the first day of the legislative session.
- ◎ Senate Bills are designated SB and are even numbered; House Bills are designated HB and are odd numbered.
- ◎ All bills contain:
 - title that is descriptive of the general topic;
 - enacting clause; and
 - effective date.

Introduction of Bills

- ⦿ A legislator, citizen or group may suggest an idea for a new law or bill.
- ⦿ Once bill is drafted, the legislator (member) files bill in the appropriate chamber; must be filed in both chambers for introduction.
- ⦿ Bills are referred to committees for focused discussion.

Committee Process

- ⦿ Once introduced, bills are heard at committees of reference.
- ⦿ *Committees* are formed to:
 - Analyze legislative bills;
 - Conduct hearings to obtain information about the subject of the bill; and
 - Vote on legislative bills, as presented at the committees of reference, to determine whether proposed action moves forward in the legislature.

Committee Process

- ⦿ Once bills are heard at all committees of reference, bills return to the full legislative body - where the bill originated - to be heard once more for final passage.
- ⦿ Upon passage by the originating chamber, bills are transmitted to the other chamber to be heard with the respective chambers' companion bill.

Final Passage of Legislation

- ⦿ Bills filed in one chamber must have a companion bill, which may be identical, similar, or comparable to one another, filed in the other chamber. Bills must be identical for final passage.
- ⦿ Bills must be read three (3) times in the chamber before a final vote is held in the full chamber.
- ⦿ Bills to be amended are returned to the chamber of origin for approval; amendments require approval by both chambers of the Legislature.
- ⦿ Bills that are approved are sent to the Governor for final action.

Final Passage of Legislation

Governor's Role

- ⦿ A bill presented to the Governor for action during the legislative session requires the Governor to act within seven (7) days. If presented after the conclusion of session, the Governor has (15) days.
- ⦿ The Governor has three (3) options:
 - Veto a bill;
 - Sign a bill; and
 - Take no action.
- ⦿ After a bill is signed/or approved, it is codified into Florida Statutes, and it becomes law.



STATE OF FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Thank You

Questions?

Contact Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya
Associate Superintendent,
(305) 995-1497
imendez@dadeschools.net