

2020 Florida Legislative Session:

The policy part of the session ended Friday, however the session was extended to this week for the purpose of debating and passing the budget. As a reminder, this past October we kicked off the Fund Our Future bus tour, followed by the Rally in Tallahassee where more than 15,000 members and supporters of our public schools gathered. We had hundreds of members visit lawmakers in Tallahassee during session and thousands of members and supporters email, call and write lawmakers about our issues. None of this would have happened without your leadership and dedication.

These actions led to what may have been one of the best sessions we have seen in decades. There were literally no new laws related to the operations of our public schools, other than the salary language. The following topics were part of bills that **died** this session:

- The attack on our union (HB1)
- A required moment of silence each day
- A shortening of the timelines for turnaround schools and giving more power to the commissioner with the authority to turn schools over to charters sooner.
- An early childhood plan pushed by the commissioner
- A so-called parental rights bill designed to limit the rights of teachers and schools when students misbehave
- A limit on how many terms school board members can serve
- A massive charter expansion that would have allowed universities to sponsor charters without school board approval
- Another massive charter expansion that would have allowed developers to build charters in their community and save a large number of seats just for the community – in other words giving wealthy communities essentially a taxpayer funded private school.
- A bill that would have moved the search for college and university presidents out of the sunshine and into a secret process.
- A requirement for putting cameras in ESE classrooms
- A rewrite of the laws around restraint and seclusion of students

A good bill that passed was the end of the Best and Brightest program and no new bonus programs.

Two bad bills that passed – a voucher expansion and the requirement that districts share future capital outlay referendum with charter schools.

The budget and salary plan:

- ✓ \$400 million to raise the base pay for classroom teachers – anyone making less than the new base pay must be raised to that new amount.
- ✓ \$100 million for veteran classroom teachers and all instructional staff not including substitutes or paraprofessionals.
- ✓ \$340 million in the Base Student Allocation (BSA). This can be used for salaries for any employees, including education staff professionals.
- ✓ The specific breakdown by district and language for salaries was sent last night.