

VALENCIA COLLEGE

2025 LEGISLATIVE SESSION REPORT

PRELIMINARY EDITION

May 9, 2025

GENERAL SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ The 2025 Florida Legislature adjourned on Friday afternoon, May 2, 2025, but did not adjourn *sine die* – instead the House filed HCR 1631, extending the 2025 legislative session until 11:59 p.m. on Friday, June 6, 2025. The legislature will reconvene to debate and approve the General Appropriations Act and determine the amount of the overall budget. A total of 1,823 bills were filed this Session, with only 255 bills being passed by both chambers and in the process of being sent to the Governor.
- ▶ Notably, unlike in recent years, the legislature did not pass substantive legislation with significant impact on Valencia or the Florida College System (FCS) in general, and the bills that did pass with provisions applicable to the FCS focused on apprenticeship programs, educator preparation programs, expansion of eligibility for Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grants, and allowing Classic Learning Test scores as an acceptable alternative to other established standardized tests.
- ▶ For now, while a consensus budget for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2025 hasn't been passed, both chambers passed spending plans that would be smaller than the \$117.4 billion budget the Legislature passed last year. The proposed budget for the coming fiscal year that the Senate passed this session would appropriate \$117.36 billion, while the House's proposal would make far deeper cuts, having come in at \$112.95 billion. (That \$4.4 billion difference is the main reason lawmakers haven't reached an agreement and passed a final bill).
- ▶ [Will add final budget results and impact on FCS/Valencia here...]

General Appropriations Act (GAA) 2025-26 (Pending Approval by Legislature and Governor)

- ▶ The Legislature has three methods to reflect funding decisions made in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) process.
 - ◆ “Proviso” is language in the General Appropriations Act attached to a specific appropriation that directs or authorizes how the funds can be expended.
 - ◆ An "implementing bill" is a substantive bill that provides instructions to enact specific provisions for a GAA appropriation or proviso by changing the law (Florida Statutes) temporarily for one year. This is necessary because the courts have ruled the GAA cannot contradict current law; however, there may be a need to suspend some provision of law.
 - ◆ A "conforming bill" is also a substantive bill that may “travel” with the GAA. It differs from the implementing bill in that it makes permanent changes to Florida Statutes.
- ▶ In summary, proviso language and implementing bills are law for only one year and then they expire, while a conforming bill makes a permanent change in Florida law.

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- ▶ Bills that are passed by the Legislature are sent to the Governor for further action. The Governor may sign, veto, or allow a bill to become law without his signature. While the Governor may veto the entire appropriations act or exercise his veto by “line item,” he does not have “line item” veto in a conforming, implementing, or general bill but must act on the entire bill.
- ▶ When a bill is passed and sent to the Governor while the Legislature is in session, the Governor must act within seven days from the time his office receives the bill. If during that period or on the seventh day the legislature adjourns sine die or takes a recess of more than thirty days, the Governor has fifteen consecutive days from the date he receives a bill to act on that bill. Leadership of the Legislature usually staggers sending bills to the Governor to provide time to review the bills.
- ▶ Following are the 2025-2026 appropriations bills (*Pending Approval by Legislature and Governor*):
 - ◆ Conference Report on HB 2500 – 2025-2026 General Appropriations Act
 - ◆ Conference Report on HB 2502 – Implementing the 2025-2026 General Appropriations Act

HOW TO FIND THE FINAL VERSION OF A BILL

The simplest way to see the final version of a bill is to go to www.flsenate.gov and enter the bill number in the space provided on the top of the homepage or go to www.flhouse.gov and click on the top tab “Bills.” Senate bills are always even numbers (SB 00), and House bills are always odd numbers (HB 11). On the House site, note that you may choose either chamber or choose “both.” When you enter the bill number, the history of the bill will appear. For bills that have passed, go to the section on “Bill Text” and choose the entry followed by “ER,” which is the most recent, enrolled version of the bill. An enrolled bill is the one being sent to the Governor. For bills that have not passed, go to the section on “Bill Text” and choose the entry with the latest date, which is the final version of the bill before it failed. Staff analyses for bills are also found on the bill sites.

GENERAL BILLS OF NOTE THAT PASSED

(All are Pending Approval of the Governor, except for SB 2C, which was approved as indicated)

SB 2C (Gruters) 2025C Special Session, February 11-February 14, 2025 ***(Approved by Governor; Chapter No. 2025-1)***

Among many other provisions affecting immigration matters:

- ▶ Amends s. 1009.26, F.S., effective July 1, 2025, to specify that a student must be a citizen of the United States or lawfully present in the United States, in addition to the other conditions, in order to qualify for the out-of-state fee waiver at a Florida public postsecondary institution.
- ▶ In addition to new applications for fee waivers that must be evaluated based on the additional criteria in the bill, the bill also requires postsecondary institutions to, beginning July 1, 2025, reevaluate any student who is currently receiving the fee waiver to determine continued eligibility.
- ▶ Effective Date: July 1, 2025

HB 681 (Careers & Workforce Subcommittee; Melo) Apprenticeship/Preapprenticeship Program Funding

Strengthens apprenticeship program partnerships with local educational agencies, establish a standard model contract, revise reporting deadlines, and enhance funding oversight.

- ▶ Changes the annual apprenticeship report publication date from September 1 to November 30 and expands the data it must include, such as detailed cost allocations, administrative hours, and wage progression.
- ▶ Requires training providers and local educational agencies to determine an equitable split of apprenticeship funding and formalize their partnerships in written agreements, preventing additional fees or withheld funds beyond the agreed amount.
- ▶ Directs the Department of Education to develop a standard model contract template detailing the parties' responsibilities, funding division, and compliance requirements for apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.
- ▶ Mandates creation of an apprenticeship funding transparency tool by July 1, 2026, displaying historical funding amounts for apprenticeship programs by funding source and institution.
- ▶ Establishes public notice and participation requirements for District Workforce Education Funding Steering Committee meetings, permit the use of communications media technology, and require timely submission of the workforce education funding model to the Legislature.
- ▶ Effective Date: July 1, 2025

HB 875 (Education & Employment Committee, et.al.) Educator Preparation

- ▶ Modernizes teacher preparation, certification, and counseling pathways to improve teacher readiness and enhance professional learning.
- ▶ Requires the Department of Education to convene a workgroup to revise the Florida Educator Accomplished Practices by 2026 and develop a new Florida Teacher Excellence Examination aligned to the revised standards.
- ▶ Creates a flexible pathway for postsecondary school counseling students, including a reduced internship requirement for full-time teachers meeting specified experience and evaluation criteria.
- ▶ Authorizes the hiring of certain nondegree fine and performing arts teachers and sets minimum qualifications for those positions.
- ▶ Establishes uniform core curricula for teacher preparation programs aligned with the revised Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, including required introduction to education and classroom management courses.
- ▶ Creates the Florida Center for Teaching Excellence at Miami Dade College to develop evidence-based training opportunities, model clinical experiences, and expand a statewide network of teacher mentors.

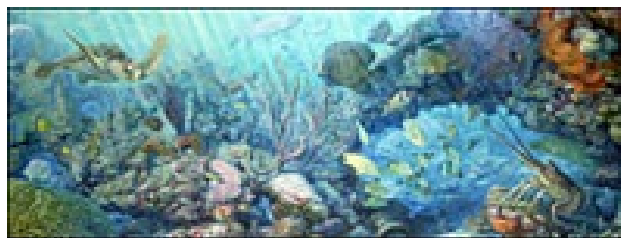
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- ▶ Establishes the Coaching for Educator Readiness and Teaching (CERT) Program as an alternative pathway to professional certification using on-the-job mentorship and learning assessments.
- ▶ Updates mentor requirements in teacher apprenticeship programs to reference uniform statewide standards and qualifications.
- ▶ Revises acceptable means of demonstrating mastery of general knowledge and professional preparation for educator certification, including alternatives to the professional education competency exam under certain circumstances.
- ▶ Requires integration of training on the use of evidence-based instructional materials and research-based reading strategies into professional learning programs.
- ▶ Effective Date: July 1, 2025

HB 1105 (Education & Employment Committee, et.al.) Education

Among many other provisions affecting K-12 institutions:

- ▶ Restructures Florida Bright Futures requirements to allow paid work hours or volunteer service, updates the Florida Gold Seal Vocational and CAPE Scholars requirements, and clarifies the Advanced Placement Capstone designation.
- ▶ Broadens dual enrollment and career education instruction and mandates new agreements on scheduling and transportation to boost participation.
- ▶ Alters board membership requirements and leadership election processes for Florida ABLE, Inc., and allows district revenues to cover certain liability insurance costs under a modified levy.
- ▶ Expands eligibility for Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grants to include charter schools and considers job engine charter school applications, requiring the department to establish mathematics endorsement competencies by a specified date.
- ▶ Effective Date: July 1, 2025



Beyond the Seven Mile Bridge *

**The ten murals commissioned by the Florida House of Representatives in which the artist Christopher M. Still depicts Florida's historic and natural beauty are installed in the Florida House of Representatives Chamber. Click on this image to view a detailed description of this artwork; click on title for access to images and descriptions of all ten murals. To view video tours and discussions of the House Murals, click "[Florida House Mural Tours](#)"*

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HB 1145 (Higher Education Budget Subcommittee; Shoaf) Workforce Education

- ▶ Expands eligibility for workforce grants to charter schools, increases the number of programs requiring money-back guarantees, and enhances reporting and tuition reimbursement criteria.
- ▶ Makes charter schools eligible for the Workforce Development Capitalization Incentive Grant Program.
- ▶ Requires school districts and Florida College System institutions to offer money-back guarantees on three additional programs by July 1, 2026 and report these programs to the State Board of Education.
- ▶ Sets additional requirements for student eligibility to receive tuition reimbursement under the money-back guarantee, limiting work search requirements to those specified under s. 443.091.
- ▶ Directs the Department of Education to include eligibility criteria for tuition reimbursement in its annual performance results report.
- ▶ Effective Date: July 1, 2025

HB 1255 (Education & Employment Committee, et.al.) Education

Among many other provisions affecting K-12 institutions and charter schools:

- ▶ Renames Hillsborough Community College to Hillsborough College.
- ▶ Allows Classic Learning Test scores as an acceptable alternative to other standardized tests for college readiness and advanced course placement.
- ▶ Effective Date: July 1, 2025

The online version (with updates as available) of the 2025 Session Report may be found at <http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel>.

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