

2026-2027 Fairfax County School Board Government Relations Briefing

09/08/2026 Work Session

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Objectives

The School Board will:

- Provide consensus for the revised approach to the Board's legislative work;
- Review 2026 state and federal activities and outcomes;
- Preview potential upcoming policy and budget issues;
- Discuss School Board legislative priorities;
- Discuss staff recommendations for Program revisions;
- Identify potential revisions to FCSB advocacy positions.

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2026 Virginia General Assembly Session and Federal Review



2026 General Assembly Session Review

- The General Assembly considered more than 3,600 bills across all subject areas during their nine week “long” Session
- Over 400 bills identified with some possible impact on FCPS
- While the 400 bills covered a variety of topics, the majority were considered by Education committees
  - House Education (Member: Bulova) received 277 bills, 124 of which were referred to the K-12 Subcommittee
  - Senate Education and Health (Members: Boysko, Pekarsky) heard 238 bills, 77 of which went through the Public Education Subcommittee
- Of the bills identified with potential impact, about 165 passed

(2026 Passed Bill Report)

2026 General Assembly Session Review

2026 General Assembly actions that support Board priorities

- Additional per pupil Special Education funding (JLARC) (p. 14, T.1)
- State Share of Salary Increase/Bonus (p.19, V.1)
- Referendum authority for local school construction sales tax (p.14, P.3)
- Through-year growth assessment system (VGA) eliminated (HB199) (p.16, T.16)
- SOL assessment development, administration, scoring, and release (HB299/SB200) (p. 17, T.28, T.29, T.30)
- School Performance and Support Framework (SPSF); certain changes required (HB643) (p.15, T.1)
- Simultaneous completion of International Baccalaureate diploma and advanced studies diploma (HB595/SB63) (p.18, T.41)
- High school graduation requirements and diploma pathways; prohibiting retroactive implementation (HB1283/SB724) (p.18, T.14, T.42)

(2026 FSCB State and Federal Legislative Program)

2026 General Assembly Session Review

Sample list of passed legislation from the 2026 Session

- Requiring local policies on artificial intelligence use (HB1186/SB394) - pending VDOE guidance
- Establishing goals for completing student financial aid applications (HB1095)
- Developing guidance on the addictive potential of electronic device use (HB1486/SB568)
- Requiring parental notification of course registration deadlines (SB817)
- Changing the timing of grievance dispute resolution procedures (HB116/SB824)
- Prohibiting the use of social media platforms as the sole means of extracurricular activity communications (SB245)
- Providing localities with flexibility regarding the active times of school crossing zones (SB221)

(2026 Passed Bill Report)

2026 General Assembly Session Review

Sample list of passed legislation with delayed effective dates

- Consideration of evidence-based restorative disciplinary practices (HB298) - July 2027
- Counting SOL assessments toward classroom grades (HB299/SB200) - 29/30 SY (estimated)
- Age range restrictions for special education students in certain educational settings (HB461) - July 2027
- Creation of student diabetes medical care and management plans (HB1301/SB122) - 28/29 SY
- Ensuring communication and language accessibility for limited English proficient parents (HB1278/SB685) - July 2027

(2026 Passed Bill Report)

2026 Federal Review

The following highlights recent federal budget and policy actions:

- Year over year level funding of federal education Title programs, reduced state Medicaid and nutrition program (SNAP) funding
- Realignment of U.S. Department of Education responsibilities
  - IDEA/special education – Dept. of Health and Human Services
  - Title I, CTE, adult education, and most K-12 grants – Dept. of Labor
  - Civil rights and student privacy – Dept. of Justice
- Changes in federal civil-rights enforcement (Title VI, Title IX) and federal grant rules and priorities
  - Possible impacts on FCPS policies related to student identity, sports participation as well as eligibility for grants
- Limitations on higher education federal student lending
  - Possible limits to FCPS graduates' access to higher education

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Current State Policy Work



Off Session General Assembly Committees

Off-Session General Assembly work that may result in future action:

- **School Health Services Committee** (Member: Pekarsky)
  - Student mental health screenings best practices, School nurses
- **Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council** (Member: Simon)
  - Open meeting requirements, charges for FOIA requests
- **Joint Committee on Technology and Science** (Members: Pekarsky, McGuire)
  - Website domain rules, regulation of AI systems
- **Joint Subcommittee to Study Elementary & Secondary Education Funding** (Members: Boysko)
  - Continued study of JLARC funding recommendations
- **Joint Subcommittee on Tax Policy** (Members: Surovell, Watts, Sullivan)

Virginia State Board of Education and Virginia Department of Education Current Policy Work

The Virginia State Board and Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) are focused on the following:

- **Accountability** Continued implementation and review of new School Performance and Support framework (SPSF) school accountability system
- **Assessment** Continued implementation of new Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment “cut” scores and changes in test administration. Request for Proposal for new statewide assessment system.
- **Guidance** VDOE guidance on AI usage, internet safety, procedures related to immigration enforcement, language and culturally responsive mental health supports

Virginia Department of Education Work Groups

VDOE work groups that may result in future action:

- Comprehensive review of alternative licensure pathways (SB450)
- Review of current rules regarding false statements as to school division or attendance zone residency (HB290)
- Biennial review of career and technical education courses, pathways, and credentials (SB592)

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2027 State and Federal Policy and Budget Preview



2027 State and Federal Timelines

2027 General Assembly Session

- Session convenes on Wednesday, January 13, 2027, for a 45 day “short” session
- “Crossover” estimated Feb. 4
- Scheduled to end Feb. 27
- Second year of budget - amendments to adopted FY27 & FY28 budgets

Federal

- Congressional elections Tuesday Nov. 3
- 120th U.S. Congress convenes January 3, 2027

2027 State Policy and Budget Preview

Possible policy topics include:

- Statewide local collective bargaining
- Math instruction (parallel to Virginia Literacy Act)
- Special Education (parallel to federal IDEA)
- Indoor air quality
- Screen time/AI limitations
- Enrollment requirements for sports participation
- Penalties for false enrollment information
- Limits on FOIA request reimbursements
- Elementary school recess
- School nurse staffing

Budget Outlook

- Cautious state revenue and spending outlook due to ongoing pressures, including inflation and the impact of federal actions

2027 Federal Policy and Budget Preview

Possible policy topics include:

- Continued efforts to realign U.S. Department of Education responsibilities
- Continued move toward federal education funding flexibility, while also introducing new limitations
  - Example: proposal to relax Head Start class size requirements
- Potential changes to or elimination of federal education technology funding (E-Rate)
  - Potential impacts on student technology access

Budget Outlook

- Uncertainty related to FY2027 federal appropriations
  - Potential reliance on Continuing Resolutions (CRs)
- Continued debate over consolidation and/or elimination of K-12 program funding
- State implementation of federal education tax credit policy

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School Board Legislative and Policy Work



Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 State Priorities

Delete

- Educational Governance

Add

- College and Workforce Readiness
  - Credit for work experience, maintaining industry credentials, flexibility for work-based learning opportunities

Revise

- State Funding
  - Eliminate rebenchmarking language
- Assessments
  - Eliminate language related to AP/IB access and Virginia Growth Assessment elimination

Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 Federal Priorities

Revise

- Preserve the role of the U.S. Department of Education in K-12 policy implementation

Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 State Legislative Program

Delete (Note: all page numbers refer to the agenda item strikethrough draft):

- T.5 related to School Quality Profiles (p.8)
- T.14 and T.42 related to retroactive application of graduation requirements in accountability calculations (p.8, p.10)
- T.16 related to the Virginia Growth Assessment (p.9)
- T.17 Removes references to academic screening assessments such as EMAS and VALLSS, retaining native language assessment support for grade-level content assessments such as SOL tests (p.9)
- T.30 related to flexible assessment timing for graduating seniors, summer/semester courses, and SOL and AP/IB test overlaps (p.9)
- T.41 related to International Baccalaureate (IB) diplomas and Advanced Studies Diplomas (p.10)

Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 State Legislative Program

Add

- D.16 Support for adult registered apprenticeship and career training programs (p.1)
- H.7 Flexibility when considering English Learner content performance under SPSF (p.4)
- S.10 Continued flexibility in Children's Services Act (CSA) funds (p.7)

Revise

- College and Workforce Readiness
  - D.3 expands current position to add credit for work experience and maintaining industry credentials (p.1)
  - D.4 updates terminology and expands current position to include more flexibility for completing work based learning opportunities (p.1)
- Environmental Sustainability/Renewable Energy
  - I.7 Clarifies support for outdoor classrooms and learning spaces (p.4)
- School Calendar
  - Q.1 Clarifies support for local calendar flexibility over school holidays (p.7)

Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 State Legislative Program

Revise (Continued)

- School Accountability, Standards of Accreditation and Standards of Learning
  - T.1 Adds support for adjusting accountability performance weighting so mastery and growth are considered more equitably in elementary and middle schools (p.8)
  - T.11 Adds opposition to lowering a school's performance category solely because one student group is identified for federal support and improvement, without considering all elements of the summative rating (p.8)
  - T.19 Revises assessment reporting priorities: retains advance release to divisions, emphasizes visibility of the number of tests administered, and limits subject-level reporting to federal requirements (p.9)
  - T.27 Broadens alternative-assessment flexibility language with more general support for nationally/internationally benchmarked substitute assessments—including AP, IB, and SAT—for high school accountability performance and participation across subject areas (p.9)

Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 State Legislative Program

Revise (Continued)

- School Accountability, Standards of Accreditation and Standards of Learning
  - T.28 Generalizes the position to support clarification of SOL testing flexibility for students (p.9)
  - T.29 Reframes position to balance maximizing instructional time before testing with sufficient time for students with multiple tests, multi-day accommodations, or retakes (p.9)
  - T.33 Simplifies the cut-score position and adds that standard-setting should minimize administrative impacts and align with the implementation timeline for Virginia's new assessment program (p.10)
  - T.34 Clarifies that standardized SOL cut scores should be consistent across levels, subjects, and years (p.10)
- Standards of Quality
  - U.3 Clarifies test coordinator position funding position (p.11)

Staff Recommended Revisions to 2027 Federal Legislative Program

Add

- FED.38 Support for continued administration of K-12 related policy issues through the U.S. Department of Education (p.19)

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Board Discussion

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