

Central Area Advisory Council (CAAC)
Legislative Update – 2026 Florida Legislative Session
February 18, 2026

I. 2026 Session Focus: Safety, Student Supports & Academic Programming

The 2026 legislative session is heavily focused on:

- Mass-casualty response training
- Elopement and seizure-action planning
- IEP procedure updates
- Autism supports
- Multilingual assessments
- Career planning frameworks

Why this matters for BCPS:

Expands compliance requirements and training mandates. May require additional staffing and funding to implement effectively.

II. Major Education Omnibus & Governance Bills

- **SB 7036 – Education Omnibus**
Passed Senate Appropriations (10–0).
- **SB 1620 / HB 1073 – Public Education / School Board Governance**
Addresses charter contracts, emergency triggers, epinephrine policies, pre-K screening, math pathways.

Why this matters for BCPS:

May redefine charter oversight, board transparency rules, and governance authority.

III. Teacher Compensation, Certification & Labor

- **SB 1216 – Personnel Compensation**
Expands COLA flexibility and advanced degree credit.
- **SB 1296 / 1298 – PERC Overhaul**
Changes union certification thresholds and bargaining timelines.
- **HB 561 – Educator Certification**
Streamlines certification pathways.

Why this matters for BCPS:

Could improve hiring flexibility but may significantly impact labor relations and workforce stability.

IV. Content, DEI & Parental Rights

- **HB 1119 – Materials Harmful to Minors**
Strengthens removal processes for instructional materials.
- **HB 1071 – Education (DEI & Parent Opt-Out)**
Restricts certain DEI activities and expands opt-out rights.

- **HB 173 – Parental Rights**
Expands parental consent requirements.

Why this matters for BCPS:

Increases compliance expectations and affects curriculum oversight, classroom instruction, and family engagement.

V. Safety, Technology & District Operations

HB 757 / SB 896 – School Safety Expansion

Expands Guardian Program and firearm restrictions near schools.

HB 859 – ESE Classroom Cameras

Requires audio/video in self-contained ESE classrooms.

Additional bills affect:

- School board term limits
- Public records payments
- Facility use
- Millage & property tax proposals

Why this matters for BCPS:

Impacts safety infrastructure costs, facilities management, and potential district revenue streams.

Key Takeaways

1. The 2026 session is highly consequential for public education.
2. Governance, workforce, safety, and instructional policy are central themes.
3. Many mandates expand requirements without guaranteed funding.
4. CAAC plays a critical advisory role in elevating community voice.