

advocate for SCHOOLS



TO SEE A LIST OF BILLS TRACKED BY AASB
DURING THE 2025 REGULAR SESSION,
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Legislative and Policy Agenda

AASB helps local education leaders improve student achievement through advocacy for Alabama's public schools. The association's more than 800 school board members represent every public school board in the state. AASB's legislative and policy agenda represents their collective voice.

2025 POLICY AGENDA

View Legislature In Session

AASB is your boots on the ground in Montgomery when lawmakers are in town, but did you know you can also watch what is going on at the State House?

The League of Women Voters of Alabama Education Fund, a nonpartisan advocacy group, hosts [The Alabama Channel](#), an online resource library that allows you to search and view live and recorded video footage of the Alabama Legislature including committee meetings and floor action.

2025 Regular Legislative Session

24 Days Remain



School Funding Tied to Pledge of Allegiance and Prayer

Up to 25% of state funding could be withheld from local boards for failure to recite daily the Pledge of Allegiance and a Judeo-Christian prayer in schools. [H.231](#) sponsored by Rep. Reed Ingram and approved by the House State Government Committee Wednesday would provide for a constitutional amendment which, if ratified, would require local boards to adopt a policy requiring schools to begin each school day with students voluntarily reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer representative of Judeo-Christian values.

While the bill sponsor noted that students would not be forced to participate in prayer, the penalty for noncompliance could result in the Legislature clawing back state funds allocated to school boards. **Any efforts to withhold funds from public K-12 schools will always be of concern to AASB.**

The provision requiring school prayer based on Judeo-Christian values is very likely an unconstitutional violation of the first amendment establishment clause. The decision in [Kennedy v. Bremerton School District](#), a 2022 U.S. Supreme Court case involving a coach's prayer after a football game, did not address the type of government-sponsored religious speech mandated in this legislation.

Speaking of Funding...

The Legislative Study Commission on School Funding voted during its final meeting Thursday to formally adopt its final report as a "roadmap" for how the Legislature could revise school funding policy to better meet student needs. The [final report](#) outlines three options:

- 1) Make no changes and keep the current funding system;
- 2) Establish a new, student-weighted funding system to replace the current Foundation Program; or
- 3) Develop a hybrid approach using the current Foundation Program with additional funds for specific student populations.

The Commission voiced support for a hybrid approach to school funding rather than a completely new funding model as previously discussed. A hybrid approach would keep the current Foundation Program in place and add in new funds for specific student populations, such as special education, English Language Learners (ELL), poverty, gifted and rural schools. Incremental increases in student-weighted funds would be added as revenues grow.

Gov. Kay Ivey's recommended Education Trust Fund (ETF) budget package would support this hybrid approach to student-weighted funding. The FY26 ETF budget ([S.112 Orr](#)) includes a \$10 million increase for ELL and a first-time appropriation from the Educational Opportunities Reserve Fund ([S.111 Orr](#)) would allocate an additional \$100 million to fund special education, poverty and rural student needs.

OF NOTE: Recommendations in the report include additional accountability and transparency measures such as requiring extra reporting for school systems when they receive additional funds for student needs and providing additional funds for public charter schools to fill gaps in local funding.

Senate Finance and Taxation Education Chair Sen. Arthur Orr and House Ways and Means Education Chair Rep. Danny Garrett said the challenges of a new student-weighted funding formula are complex and revamping the Foundation Program is complicated. A hybrid approach would increase funds for student needs as funds are available. Any changes to school funding would take place over the next five years, requiring a financially feasible, practical budget. "Slow and steady is the motto," **Orr** said. The budget chairs stated these proposed changes to school funding would require legislation.

Governor's Priority Bills

A series of companion bills were introduced to address Ivey's priorities for the 2025 Reg-

ular Legislative Session, specifically a bill requiring the Ten Commandments be posted in public K-12 schools. Although a 2018 constitutional amendment allows for the display of the Ten Commandments on public property, including schools, [S.166 \(Kelley\)](#) and [H.178 \(Gidley\)](#) would **mandate** each local board display the Ten Commandments and a historical context statement in a common area of each school in its system. **The Senate bill will be before the Senate Education Policy Committee Wednesday.**

‘Panic Buttons’ in Schools

Rep. Alan Baker has introduced [H.234](#) which would require each local board and public charter school to provide teachers and other school staff with wearable mobile emergency response technology.

Local boards could use money from the Education Advancement and Technology Fund, Lt. Governor’s K-12 Capital Grant Program or the School Security and Fire Safety Fund (currently unfunded by the Legislature) to comply with this bill. **AASB is opposed to any efforts to earmark Education Advancement and Technology Funds and supports a dedicated line item for school safety and security.**

The six states (Florida, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, and Utah) that have enacted similar legislation also invested significant one-time and recurring school safety funds to cover the costs of implementing this technology.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ACTION

House Education Policy

► Three Cueing

[H.9 \(Hulsey\)](#) - **Three-Cueing Literacy Instruction** - would prohibit the use of the three-cueing teaching model that teaches students to read based on visual cues. This teaching model is not aligned with the science of reading requirements in the Alabama Literacy Act. The State Board of Education (SBOE) adopted Administrative Code rule changes prohibiting this practice last May. **Bill goes to full House for vote.**

House State Government

► Drag Queens in K-12 Schools

[H.67 \(Stadthagen\)](#) - **Drag Performers/Schools** - would prohibit K-12 schools and public libraries from knowingly presenting or sponsoring drag performances without parental consent, and would prohibit state entities from allowing minors to share facilities with members of the opposite sex during overnight programs. **Bill goes to full House for vote.**

SENATE COMMITTEE ACTION

Senate Finance & Taxation Education

► Educator Worker’s Comp, Adult Changing Tables

[S.1 \(Givhan\)](#) - **Education Employees’ Worker’s Compensation** - would create a new benefit program, compensation fund and administrative board for on-the-job injury claims from education employees. The bill’s fiscal note of a minimum \$14.9 million annually is not included

in the ETF budget. **Bill goes to full Senate for vote.**
[S.83 \(Orr\)](#) - **Adult Changing Tables** - would require public entities, including K-12 schools, to install and maintain adult changing tables in all newly constructed or renovated public buildings. AASB is working with the bill sponsor to narrow the scope to public buildings accessed primarily by adults, not K-12 students. Schools already are required to provide services for special education needs. **Bill goes to full Senate for vote.**

HOUSE FLOOR ACTION

The following bill received passage in the House:

[H.102 \(Ross\)](#) - **Dual Enrollment** - would require dual enrollment courses, offered by community colleges and higher education institutions and approved for dual credit by the SDE, be accessible to all eligible high school students through every local education agency.

SENATE FLOOR ACTION

The following bill received passage in the Senate:

[S.59 \(Chesteen\)](#) - **Military Records for Proof of Immunization** - would allow active duty military personnel to substitute military medical records of dependents as evidence of age-appropriate immunizations instead of the “Blue Card” at a public or private school.

Select Bill Introductions

The following education-related bills were introduced:

[H.244 \(Butler\)](#) - **Don’t Say Gay** - would expand the state’s existing law prohibiting any classroom discussion or instruction of sexual orientation or gender identity from grades K-5 to grades PreK-12 and would prevent employees from displaying a flag or other insignia relating to sexual orientation or gender identity. It also would prohibit public PreK-12 teachers and education employees from referring to a student by pronouns inconsistent with the student’s biological sex at birth.

[H.246 \(Stadthagen\)](#) - **Pronouns** - would prohibit public school employees from using names/pronouns inconsistent with the student’s biological sex without written permission from the student’s parent or guardian. It also would protect employees from adverse employment action for declining to use a name/pronoun other than a legal name/pronoun corresponding to the student’s biological sex.

[H.247 \(Standridge\)](#) - **Gulf of America** - would rename the Gulf of Mexico as the “Gulf of America” and require all state and local entities and all employees of those entities to observe and implement the name change where practicable.

[H.266 \(Woods\)](#) - **REACH Act** - would codify an existing program between the SDE and the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) to offer a nontraditional high school diploma as an additional pathway for students who withdraw/drop out.

[H.277 \(Yarbrough\)](#) - **2nd Amendment Sales Tax Holiday** - would create a new sales tax holiday for ammunition, firearms and hunting supplies annually from Memorial Day to the Fourth of July. The bill would allow cities and counties to opt-in to the sales tax holiday.

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