

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

**BILL #:** [HB 4027](#)

**TITLE:** Hillsborough County Public Schools, Hillsborough County

**SPONSOR(S):** Owen

**COMPANION BILL:** None

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

### Committee References

[Intergovernmental Affairs](#)

14 Y, 2 N



[Education Administration](#)

17 Y, 1 N



[State Affairs](#)

## SUMMARY

### Effect of the Bill:

The bill provides that the Superintendent of Schools for Hillsborough County shall be an elected office beginning with the 2028 general election, subject to approval by the electors of Hillsborough County voting in a referendum to be held at the 2026 general election.

### Fiscal or Economic Impact:

None.

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## ANALYSIS

### EFFECT OF THE BILL:

Subject to approval in a referendum held at the 2026 general election, the bill provides that the [Superintendent of Schools](#) for [Hillsborough County](#) shall be a partisan office elected for a four year term beginning with the 2028 general election. (Section [2](#))

The bill provides findings of fact concerning the transition of the Superintendent of Schools for Hillsborough County from an elected position to an appointed position under the provisions of the 1885 Florida Constitution. (Section [1](#))

The bill is subject to approval by the electors of Hillsborough County voting in a referendum to be held on November 3, 2026, the 2026 general election. The bill specifies the wording of the referendum question on the ballot and requires the referendum to be held in accordance with the Florida Election Code. (Section [3](#))

The bill provides an effective date of upon becoming a law, except that section 2 shall take effect only if approved by a majority vote of the qualified electors of Hillsborough County voting in a referendum to be held at the 2026 general election. (Section [4](#))

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW:

#### [Superintendent of Schools](#)

The Florida Constitution provides that each county constitutes a school district<sup>1</sup> and each school district must have a superintendent of schools.<sup>2</sup> The superintendent may be elected for a four-year term or, if provided by resolution

<sup>1</sup> [Art. IX, s. 4, Fla. Const.](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Art. IX, s. 5, Fla. Const.](#)

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of the district school board or special act approved in a referendum, selected by the school board.<sup>3</sup> The election of a superintendent may only occur at a general election in years that are multiples of four.<sup>4</sup> The term of the superintendent begins on the second Tuesday following the general election in which the superintendent is elected.<sup>5</sup>

If a resolution or special act providing for the selection of the superintendent by the district school board is approved by the voters, the resolution or special act may not be rescinded or repealed by either method for four years.<sup>6</sup> After that four-year period, the resolution or special act may be rescinded or repealed either by a subsequent resolution of the school board, or subsequent special act, approved by the voters.

Of Florida's 67 school districts, 28 districts have a board appointed superintendent and 39 have an elected superintendent.<sup>7</sup> In districts with an appointed superintendent, the district school board sets the qualifications for the position, including education, training, experience, and ability to perform the job.<sup>8</sup> In districts with an elected superintendent, any registered voter in the county may run for the office, and the individual must be a resident of the school district.<sup>9</sup>

The superintendent serves as the secretary and executive officer of the school district.<sup>10</sup> The superintendent possesses general powers to:

- Provide general oversight of the school district;
- Advise and counsel the school board on all education matters and make recommendations on the board's course of action;
- Establish a process for the review and approval of districtwide policies and procedures, through the formal delegated authority of the school board;
- Make recommendations on rules to the school board to supplement those adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) and ensure the execution of the rules adopted;
- Make recommendations on minimum standards and ensure adopted standards of the school board and SBE are executed; and
- Perform other duties assigned by law or rules of the SBE.<sup>11</sup>

The superintendent is also responsible for:

- Presiding at the organizational meeting for the district school board and submitting required documentation to the Department of Education;
- Attending the school board's regular meetings and calling special meetings in event of an emergency;
- Maintaining the official records of the school district, including an inventory of district property;
- Preparing a planned school program for the school district that incorporates data, sponsor studies, and surveys;
- Recommending the establishment, organization, and operation of schools, classes, and services to provide educational opportunities for all children in the district;
- Managing school district personnel, including recommending the revocation of teaching certificates for good cause;
- Making recommendations concerning textbooks and other instructional aids, including distributing and accounting for such material;

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> [Art. IX, s. 5, Fla. Const.](#) and [s. 100.041\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>5</sup> [S. 100.041\(3\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Art. IX, s. 5, Fla. Const.](#)

<sup>7</sup> Florida Association of District School Superintendents, [About Superintendents](#) (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

<sup>8</sup> [S. 1012.22\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>9</sup> [Art. VI, s. 2, Fla. Const.](#)

<sup>10</sup> [S. 1001.48, F.S.](#)

<sup>11</sup> [S. 1001.49, F.S.](#)

- Providing student transportation;
- The educational facilities of the district;
- Managing the finances of the school district;
- Maintaining records and submitting required reports;
- Cooperating with federal, state, county, or municipal agencies; and
- School improvement and accountability.<sup>12</sup>

While serving as superintendent, an individual must be a resident of the school district.<sup>13</sup> The minimum salary of an elected superintendent is set by a statutory formula based on county population, but may be set at a higher rate by a majority vote of the school board.<sup>14</sup>

### Hillsborough County School District

The Hillsborough County School District is governed by a seven member school board, with five members elected from single-member districts and two members elected at-large.<sup>15</sup>

Article XII, section 2B of the 1885 Florida Constitution, adopted at the 1962 general election, authorized the school boards of Alachua, Baker, Brevard, Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Hendry, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lee, Leon, Manatee, Monroe, Orange, Indian River, and St. Lucie Counties to call a referendum to change the position of superintendent of schools in those counties from an elected position to an appointed one.<sup>16</sup> Hillsborough County voters approved the conversion of the office to an appointed position at the 1966 general election.<sup>17</sup> The 1968 Florida Constitution provides that the method of selection for a superintendent of schools under the 1885 Florida Constitution remains in effect until changed as provided in the 1968 Florida Constitution.<sup>18</sup>

### **Local Bill Forms**

The Florida Constitution prohibits the passage of any special act unless a notice of intention to seek enactment of the bill has been published as provided by general law or the act is conditioned to take effect only upon approval by referendum vote of the electors in the area affected.<sup>19</sup> A legal advertisement of the proposed bill must be placed in a newspaper of general circulation or published on a publicly accessible website<sup>20</sup> at least 30 days prior to the introduction of the local bill in the House or Senate.<sup>21</sup> The bill will take effect only upon its approval in a referendum held on November 3, 2026.

The House local bill policy requires a completed and signed Local Bill Certification Form and Economic Impact Statement Form be filed with the Clerk of the House at the time the local bill is filed or as soon thereafter as possible.<sup>22</sup> Under the policy, a committee or subcommittee may not consider a local bill unless these forms have been filed. The following forms have been submitted for the bill:

- [Local Bill Certification Form](#)
- [Economic Impact Statement Form](#)

<sup>12</sup> [S. 1001.51, F.S.](#)

<sup>13</sup> [S. 1001.463, F.S.](#)

<sup>14</sup> [S. 1001.47, F.S.](#)

<sup>15</sup> Fla. School Boards Association, [School Board & Superintendent Elections & Composition](#) (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

<sup>16</sup> See [CS/HJR 1443 \(1961\)](#).

<sup>17</sup> Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections, 1966 Certificate of County Canvassing Board (on file with Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee).

<sup>18</sup> [Art. XII, s. 5, Fla. Const.](#)

<sup>19</sup> [Art. III, s. 10, Fla. Const.](#)

<sup>20</sup> [S. 50.0311\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>21</sup> [S. 11.02, F.S.](#) If there is no newspaper circulated throughout or published in the county and no publicly accessible website has been designated, notice must be posted for at least 30 days in at least three public places in the county, one of which must be at the courthouse.

<sup>22</sup> Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, [Local Bill Policies and Procedures Manual](#), p. 11 (last visited Jan. 21, 2026).

**BILL HISTORY**

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee</a>	14 Y, 2 N	1/14/2026	Darden	Darden
<a href="#">Education Administration Subcommittee</a>	17 Y, 1 N	1/21/2026	Sleap	Dixon
<a href="#">State Affairs Committee</a>				