

# 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 731](#)

**TITLE:** Interscholastic or Intrасcholastic Extracurricular Activities

**SPONSOR(S):** Abbott and Anderson

**COMPANION BILL:** [SB 538](#) (Simon)

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

### Committee References

[Student Academic Success](#)

16 Y, 0 N



[PreK-12 Budget](#)

15 Y, 0 N



[Education & Employment](#)

## SUMMARY

### **Effect of the Bill:**

The bill provides school districts and school communities additional flexibility relating to the compensation of athletic coaches. Additionally, the bill standardizes the transfer eligibility process for the entire state by transferring policy and decision-making authority from school districts to governing associations as well as providing specific timelines for student eligibility appeals to minimize the impact of the process of student participation in activities.

### **Fiscal or Economic Impact:**

None

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The bill provides school districts and school communities additional flexibility relating to the [compensation of athletic coaches](#). First, the bill authorizes, but does not require, school districts to adopt policies allowing the use of voluntary donations and revenues generated by authorized [booster clubs or associations](#) to provide funds to athletic coaches or activity sponsors of an extracurricular activity supported by the booster club or association. The bill requires that any policy authorizing payment by booster clubs or associations may not control the provision of funds except that such funds may not be used for severance pay. (Section [1](#)).

Secondly, the bill allows school district superintendents, at the request of an athletic director or coach, to designate the individual as an athletic administrator who may negotiate individual compensation in excess of compensation otherwise awardable pursuant to statute. The bill caps such compensation at the salary of the highest paid administrator in the district. (Section [3](#)).

Additionally, the bill standardizes the criteria for approving [transfer student](#) participation in sports by transferring policy and decision-making authority from school districts to governing associations. The bill maintains existing authorization for the following transfer students to be immediately eligible:

- Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders.
- Children who have been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone.
- Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent. (Section [2](#)).

To minimize the impact on student participation in activities, the bill requires that the governing association provide a determination of eligibility to the otherwise eligible student within 14 days after such a request is made. A student who was denied eligibility may appeal the decision by the governing association pursuant to the bylaws

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of the association. The governing association must adopt bylaws establishing a timeline for appeals that may not exceed 20 days. The bill requires each governing association to adopt [appeals procedures](#) substantially similar to those required of the [Florida High School Athletics Association](#). (Section [2](#)).

Finally, the bill requires any organization that conducts a school-related or school support-related function or activity to comply with statutory requirements governing student participation, including the participation of students not enrolled in public schools. (Section [2](#)).

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2026. (Section [4](#)).

**RELEVANT INFORMATION**

**SUBJECT OVERVIEW:**

**[Florida High School Athletic Association](#)**

The Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) is statutorily designated as the governing nonprofit organization for interscholastic athletics for grades 6 through 12 in Florida public schools. Any high school, middle school, or combination school,<sup>1</sup> including charter schools, virtual schools, private schools, and home education cooperatives,<sup>2</sup> may become a member of the FHSAA. The FHSAA is prohibited from denying or discouraging interscholastic competition between its member schools and non-FHSAA member schools in Florida and may not take discriminatory or retributory action against a member school that engages in interscholastic competition with non-FHSAA member schools.<sup>3</sup> The FHSAA is required to adopt bylaws regulating student eligibility, recruiting, and member schools’ interscholastic competition in accordance with applicable law.<sup>4</sup>

**[FHSAA Appeals Process](#)**

Current law requires the FHSAA to establish a procedure of due process which allows each student the opportunity to appeal an unfavorable ruling with regard to his or her eligibility to compete. The initial appeal must be made to a committee on appeals within the administrative region in which the student lives.<sup>5</sup> The committee on appeals is authorized to consider requests by member schools seeking exceptions to bylaws and regulations, to hear undue hardship eligibility cases filed by member schools on behalf of student athletes, and to hear appeals filed by member schools or student athletes.<sup>6</sup>

A student athlete or member school that receives an unfavorable ruling from a committee on appeals is entitled to appeal that decision to the FHSAA board of directors at its next regularly scheduled meeting or called meeting. The board of directors shall have the authority to uphold, reverse, or amend the decision of the committee on appeals. The decision of the board of directors is final. The FHSAA must expedite the appeals process on determinations of ineligibility so that disposition of the appeal can be made before the end of the applicable sports season, if possible.<sup>7</sup>

**[Student Athlete Transfers](#)**

Current law provides that a student who transfers to a school during the school year may seek to immediately join an existing team if the roster for the specific interscholastic or intrascholastic extracurricular activity has not reached the activity’s identified maximum size and if the coach for the activity determines that the student has the

<sup>1</sup> A “combination school” is any school that provides instruction to students in high school and the middle school grades; elementary, middle or high school grades combined; or elementary and middle grades combined (e.g. K-12; K-8; 6-12; or 7-12). Bylaw 3.2.2.3, FHSAA.

<sup>2</sup> A “home education cooperative” is a parent-directed group of individual home education students that provides opportunities for interscholastic athletic competition to those students and may include students in grades 6-12. Bylaw 3.2.2.4, FHSAA.

<sup>3</sup> Section [1006.20\(1\), F.S.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Section [1006.20\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>5</sup> Section [1006.20\(7\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>6</sup> Section [1006.20\(7\)\(d\), F.S.](#)

<sup>7</sup> Section [1006.20\(7\)\(e\) and \(f\), F.S.](#)

requisite skill and ability to participate. The FHSAA and school district or charter school may not declare such a student ineligible because the student did not have the opportunity to comply with qualifying requirements.<sup>8</sup>

However, the student may not participate in a sport if the student participated in that same sport at another school during that school year, unless the student meets one of the following criteria:

- Dependent children of active duty military personnel whose move resulted from military orders.
- Children who have been relocated due to a foster care placement in a different school zone.
- Children who move due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation or divorce, or the serious illness or death of a custodial parent.
- Authorized for good cause in district or charter school policy.<sup>9</sup>

A student who participates in an interscholastic or intrascholastic activity at a public school and who transfers from that school during the school year must be allowed to continue to participate in the activity at that school for the remainder of the school year if:

- The student continues to meet the standard eligibility requirements in statute.
- The student continues to meet the same standards of acceptance, behavior, and performance which are required of other students participating in the activity, except for enrollment requirements at the school at which the student participates.
- The parents of the student participating in the activity provide for the transportation of the student to and from the school at which the student participates. The school the student attends, the school at which the student participates in the activity, and the district school board are exempt from civil liability arising from any injury that occurs to the student during such transportation.<sup>10</sup>

### **School Teacher Collective Bargaining**

The State Constitution guarantees that “the right of employees, by and through a labor organization, to bargain collectively shall not be denied or abridged.”<sup>11</sup> To implement this constitutional provision, the Legislature enacted statutory provisions providing that the purpose of collective bargaining is to promote cooperative relationships between the government and its employees and to protect the public by assuring the orderly and uninterrupted operations and functions of government.<sup>12</sup> Public employees have the right to form, join, participate in, and be represented by an employee organization of their own choosing, or to refrain from forming, joining, participating in, or being represented by an employee organization.<sup>13</sup> Regardless of union membership, each employee is subject to the negotiated collective bargaining agreement that is applicable to the employee’s position. Through collective bargaining, public employees<sup>14</sup> collectively negotiate with their public employer<sup>15</sup> in the determination of the terms and conditions of their employment.<sup>16</sup> The Public Employees Relations Commission is responsible for assisting in resolving disputes between public employees and public employers.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Section [1006.15\(9\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

<sup>9</sup> Section [1006.15\(9\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

<sup>10</sup> Section [1006.15\(10\), F.S.](#)

<sup>11</sup> Article 1, s. 6, Fla. Const.

<sup>12</sup> Section [447.201, F.S.](#)

<sup>13</sup> Section [447.301\(1\) and \(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>14</sup> Section [447.203\(3\), F.S.](#), defines the term “public employee” to mean any person employed by a public employer except for specified exceptions, including Governor appointments, elected officials, employer negotiating representatives, specified managerial or confidential employees, employees of the Florida Legislature, inmates, specified vegetable inspectors, PERC employees, and part-time student workers at a state university.

<sup>15</sup> The term “public employer” means the state or any county, municipality, or special district or any subdivision or agency thereof that the commission determines has sufficient legal distinctiveness properly to carry out the functions of a public employer. Section [447.203\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>16</sup> Section [447.301\(2\), F.S.](#)

<sup>17</sup> Section [447.201\(3\), F.S.](#)

The certified bargaining agent and the chief executive of the public employer must bargain collectively and in good faith in the determination of wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment of the employees.<sup>18</sup> Any collective bargaining agreement reached between the parties must be put in writing and signed by the chief executive officer and the bargaining agent.<sup>19</sup> Such agreement is not binding on the employer until the agreement has been ratified by the employer and the employees in the bargaining unit.<sup>20</sup>

A district school board or charter school governing board that is unable to meet the annual reporting requirements of classroom teacher and other instructional personnel salary increases due to a collective bargaining impasse must provide written notification to the Department of Education or the district school board, as applicable, detailing the reasons for the impasse with a proposed timeline and details for a resolution.<sup>21</sup>

Additionally, if a district school superintendent appears before the State Board of Education (SBE) to provide an update on an impasse, the SBE must require that the president of the school district bargaining unit also appear.<sup>22</sup>

**Athletic Coaches Compensation**

In general, athletic coaches are hired as teachers and are provided a salary supplement for performing duties of a coach. All salary supplements provided to teachers, including supplements for coaches, are negotiated through collective bargaining.<sup>23</sup> Because of the collectively bargained nature of coaches’ stipends, there is also variation between school districts. For example, the average stipend for a head football coach in Broward County was \$3,038 while the average stipend for the same positions in Collier County was \$7,000.<sup>24</sup>

By comparison, head football coaches in neighboring states receive significantly more compensation, with many receiving more than \$100,000 annual salary and even one example receiving \$219,214.65 in annual compensation.<sup>25</sup>

**Supplemental Support Organizations**

The approval and management of supplemental support organizations, such a booster clubs, generally falls within the constitutional authority of district school boards to operate control and supervise all free public schools within the school district.<sup>26</sup> For statutorily created districts such as developmental research schools or the Florida Virtual School, the governing statutes provide the necessary authorization for the creation and management of supplemental support organizations.<sup>27</sup>

Current law outlining district school board supplemental powers related to fiscal management authorizes school boards to adopt policies governing sales by booster clubs, marathon fundraisers, and student sales of candy, paper products, or other goods authorized by the district school board.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Section [447.309\(1\), F.S.](#)  
<sup>19</sup> *Id.*  
<sup>20</sup> *Id.*  
<sup>21</sup> Section [1011.62\(14\)\(e\), F.S.](#)  
<sup>22</sup> Section [1012.22\(3\)\(b\), F.S.](#)  
<sup>23</sup> Dr. Andrew Ramjit, Executive Director, Florida Coaches Associations, *Coaches Compensation in Florida*, pp. 20-22, available at <https://flsenate.gov/Committees/DownloadMeetingDocument/7891>.  
<sup>24</sup> *Id.* at 30.  
<sup>25</sup> *Id.* at 31.  
<sup>26</sup> Article IX, s. 4, Fla. Const.  
<sup>27</sup> See ss. [1002.32\(6\)](#) and [1002.37\(2\)\(e\), F.S.](#)  
<sup>28</sup> Section [1001.43\(2\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

RECENT LEGISLATION:

| YEAR | BILL #/SUBJECT                                                                                                      | HOUSE/SENATE<br>SPONSOR(S)      | OTHER INFORMATION                                                  |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2025 | <a href="#">CS/CS/SB 248</a> - Student Participation in Interscholastic and Intrасchoolastic Extracurricular Sports | Abbott/ <i>Simon</i>            | The bill became law on July 1, 2025.                               |
| 2025 | <a href="#">CS/CS/HB 443</a> - Education                                                                            | Snyder, Rizo/ <i>Rodriguez</i>  | The bill became law on July 1, 2025.                               |
| 2024 | <a href="#">CS/SB 7002</a> - Deregulation of Public Schools                                                         | Rizo/ <i>Hutson</i>             | The bill became law on July 1, 2024.                               |
| 2023 | <a href="#">CS/CS/HB 225</a> - Interscholastic Activities                                                           | Hawkins, Canady/ <i>Collins</i> | The bill became law on July 1, 2023.                               |
| 2023 | <a href="#">CS/SB 676</a> - Level 2 Background Screenings                                                           | Trabulsky/ <i>Grall</i>         | The bill became law on July 1, 2024, except as otherwise provided. |

BILL HISTORY

| COMMITTEE REFERENCE                                   | ACTION    | DATE      | STAFF<br>DIRECTOR/<br>POLICY CHIEF | ANALYSIS<br>PREPARED BY |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <a href="#">Student Academic Success Subcommittee</a> | 16 Y, 0 N | 1/13/2026 | Sanchez                            | Wolff                   |
| <a href="#">PreK-12 Budget Subcommittee</a>           | 15 Y, 0 N | 1/20/2026 | Potvin                             | Bailey                  |
| <a href="#">Education &amp; Employment Committee</a>  |           |           |                                    |                         |