



Orange County Board of Education

Legislative Priorities for the 2026 Legislative Session

The following legislative priorities received the strongest overall support for consideration as the Orange County Board of Education's legislative priorities for the 2026 legislative session.

Competitive Compensation and Workforce Recruitment/Retention

Advocate for increased state funding to provide competitive salaries for certified and classified staff, restore advanced degree pay incentives, and improve the recruitment and retention of educators and support personnel. The Board recognizes that attracting and retaining high-quality teachers, administrators, and support staff remains one of the most significant challenges facing public education. Competitive compensation is essential to maintaining a strong workforce and ensuring students have access to highly qualified professionals in every school and classroom.

Student Support Services and School Staffing

Increase recurring state funding for student support services, including counselors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, teaching assistants, and other critical staff. Support full-time K–3 teaching assistants and expanded staffing for exceptional children and multilingual learner programs. The Board recognizes that students' academic success is closely connected to their social, emotional, behavioral, and physical well-being. Adequate staffing levels are necessary to provide comprehensive support services and ensure schools have the personnel needed to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Public School Funding and Accountability

Prioritize investment in public schools by limiting the expansion of private school vouchers and requiring all publicly funded schools to meet consistent accountability, transparency, health, safety, and academic standards. The Board supports a strong and equitable public education system and believes that public funds should be accompanied by consistent accountability measures. Ensuring transparency and accountability for all publicly funded educational options helps protect taxpayer investments and supports student success.



Board Members also identified the following priorities, which may be considered.

Topic	Description
Local Calendar Flexibility	Grant local boards of education the authority to establish academic calendars that best meet the needs of their students, families, staff, and communities.
Special Education and Student Services Funding	Increase state funding for exceptional children services and remove funding caps or limitations that create unfunded mandates for local school districts.
School Nutrition and Early Childhood Education	Expand state support for universal school meals and increase access to high-quality early childhood education opportunities, including Universal Pre-K programs.
State Funding Formula and Fiscal Policy	Ensure school districts are actively engaged in the development of any new state education funding models and assess the impact of proposed funding changes on local districts before implementation.
School Facilities and Capital Needs	Expand state assistance for school construction, renovation, maintenance, and capital improvement projects through grants, bonds, or other funding mechanisms.
Student Privacy and Responsible Use of Technology	Strengthen student data privacy protections and establish clear safeguards regarding the use of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies in schools.
Graduation Requirements and Workforce Readiness	Review and increase flexibility in state graduation requirements, including computer literacy requirements, while maintaining workforce readiness and digital competency goals.