

**KEEPING  
YOU INFORMED**  
**DTU: We Are in This Together!**

**Special Legislative Edition**  
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**2020-2021 Issue 7:**

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**Duval Teachers United:  
Representing Paraprofessionals,  
United Office Personnel of Duval, and  
Teacher Unit Members  
Team DTU!**

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**Special Legislative Session Edition:**

**Letter from the DTU President and Executive Vice-President**



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*Affiliated with the Florida Education Association, American Federation of Teachers, Local 3326, National Education Association, and AFL-CIO*

Fellow DTU Members,

The first day of the Florida 2021 Legislative Session is March 2, 2021. **The session is scheduled to run from March 2, 2021 to April 30, 2021.** DTU has been providing you with updates on pre-session committee meetings where proposed bills impacting education are being discussed and voted up or down out of committee. We will continue the updates once the official Legislative Session is convened. There will be many issues decided during the session that will impact Florida's students, educators and public education.

In addition to the DTU Updates, you may also visit the FEA website for the most up-to-date information on the priority bills, what to expect each week, and links to other helpful information AND action alerts. Please make **<https://feaweb.org/session>** a Monday morning habit for the next 67 days of the session.

DTU is an advocate for its members during the Legislative Session. DTU and FEA priorities have been established as follows.

**DTU and FEA Legislative Priorities:**

1. Preserve and expand the financial investments in public school employees and schools that are required to keep our students and staff safe and able to learn, particularly during the pandemic.
2. Create a more stable workforce through opportunities to earn multi-year contracts.
3. Protect the Florida Retirement System without burdening employees with additional costs.

4. Promote the use of formative assessments and learning over time spent on standardized testing as the disruptions caused by the pandemic invalidate the already questionable accountability system.
5. Reaffirm the need for local decision-making. School boards and affiliates must have the freedom to negotiate fair and equitable salary plans and working conditions that will best serve the school community. Districts must also be able to determine the best way to minimize the impact of Covid-19 on our schools and communities.

### **Become Active Advocates for Education:**

DTU needs all members to become and stay active during the Legislative Session by keeping themselves informed on pending bills. Legislators need to hear from you on those bills and whether you support or oppose them. Don't hesitate to contact your Duval County representatives during the session. Watch for DTU email alerts to contact Legislators on specific bills. Below are some of the bills you should watch closely.

#### Bills to Watch:

- **SB 48** expands education savings accounts as a way to funnel more public dollars into private schools without the eligibility restrictions of other voucher programs. It also merges the Hope Voucher with the Florida Empowerment, and Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program. New name: Florida K-12 Education Funding Tax Credit Program (EFTCP). EFTCP has an annual automatic escalator of 1% of state's student population (excluding students already in EFTCP). EFTCP increases income eligibility to 300% of poverty for all programs using income as a qualification. SB 48 will have its final committee stop in the Senate Appropriations Committee. We'll let you know when SB 48 is placed on the agenda.
- **SB 886** would pause certain punitive consequences associated with standardized tests administered during the 2020-21 school year. Tests administered for the current school year would be prohibited from use in teacher evaluations, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade retention or high school graduation. Additionally, no school would be required to implement a turnaround option based on test scores from the 2020-21 school year.
- **SB 84** would destabilize the Florida Retirement System and hinder recruitment and retention by eliminating the pension option for new FRS members, forcing all new hire into a 401(k)-style retirement plan.
- **HB 865** returns local control to decisions about salary schedules which will allow your union to negotiate for fair salaries for all employees and to fix the issues of salary compression that have been resulted from state mandates regarding salaries and raises.
- **SB 78** places a burden on workers who want to remain a member of their unions. Among other things, the bill would require every member to rejoin their union at least every three years and would put the employer in charge of the dues authorization process for the first time in history.
- **SB 1014** specifically targets Education Support Professional unions by requiring 50% membership or face decertification. As if that was not enough, this bill also incorporates elements of SB 78 requiring all members of education unions, and only education unions, to rejoin every two years.
- **SB 220** would remove current public records requirements from searches for university presidents.

- **SB 264** attacks academic freedom by instituting “intellectual diversity” surveys.

DTU wants to thank you in advance for your continuing participation during the session. Legislators listen to their constituents. To that end, you will find the names and necessary contact information for the Governor and members of the Duval Delegation of Legislators within this document. Don’t hesitate to contact them on your issues and concerns relating to proposed legislation. Take time to thank them for their support on your issues as well.

Sincerely,

**Terrie Brady**  
DTU President

**Ruby George**  
Executive V.P.

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**Please use the following information to contact your Legislators.**

**Office of Governor Ron DeSantis**  
State of Florida  
The Capitol  
400 S. Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001  
  
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**Duval Delegation: Florida Senate**

**Bean, Aaron District 4 (R)**

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**Gibson, Audrey District 6 (D)**

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**Duval Delegation: Florida House of Representatives**

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**Nixon, Angie District 14 (D)**

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**Tracie Davis District 13 (D)**

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**Fischer, Jason District 16 (R)**

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**Yarborough, Clay District 12 (R)**

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# Stay Up-to-Date This Legislative Session

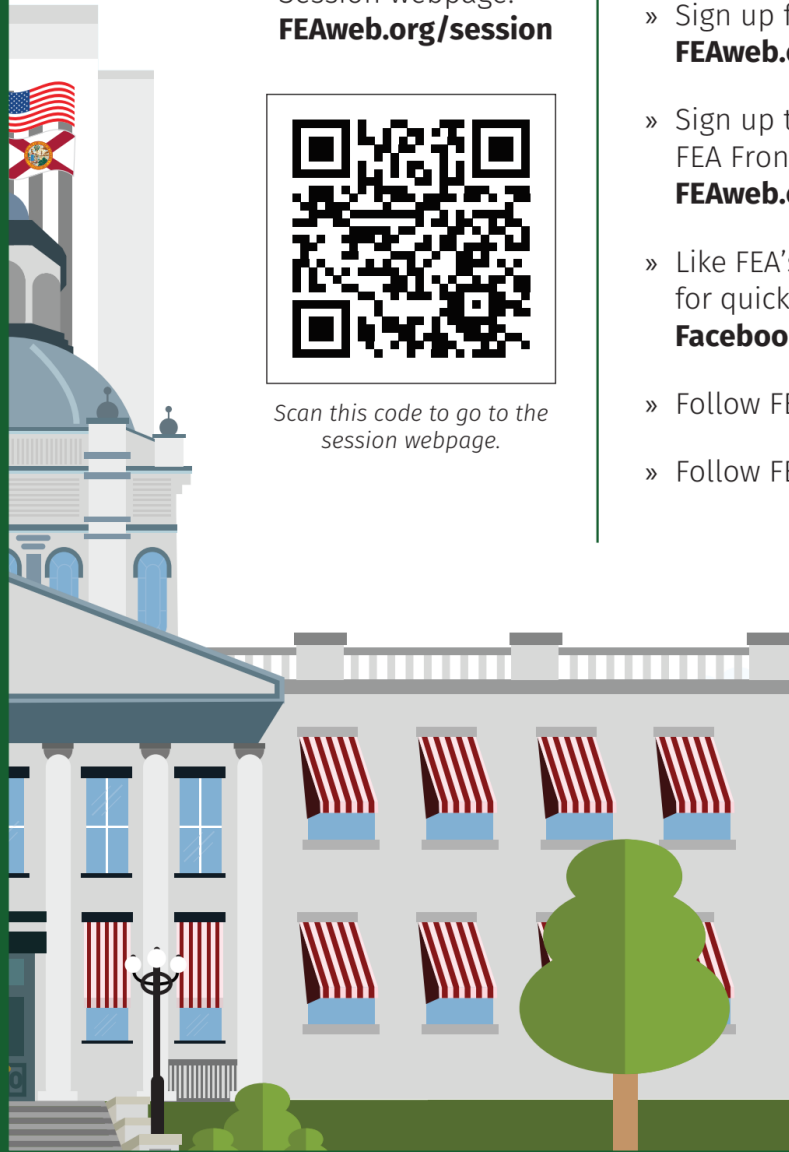
Lots of decisions will be made in Tallahassee during the 2021 legislative session that can impact your job, your retirement, your students and your school. DTU will email you weekly legislative updates, but to stay on top of the issues you can also:

- » Visit our redesigned 2021 Legislative Session webpage: [FEAweb.org/session](https://FEAweb.org/session)



Scan this code to go to the session webpage.

- » Sign up for Action Alert texts: Send **edactivist** to **31996**
- » Sign up for email Action Alerts at: [FEAweb.org/stayconnected](https://FEAweb.org/stayconnected)
- » Sign up to receive the weekly FEA Frontline Report: [FEAweb.org/frontlinereport](https://FEAweb.org/frontlinereport)
- » Like FEA's Facebook Page and watch for quick session updates: [Facebook.com/floridaea](https://Facebook.com/floridaea)
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**DTU**  
DUVAL TEACHERS UNITED

**FEA**  
Florida Education Association  
affiliated with NEA, AFT, AEA, CIO