



CAPITOL ISSUES February 6, 2026

2026 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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In the third full week of the 2026 session of the General Assembly, we are starting to see significant movement with education bills from both chambers. There have been several bills that VASSP is monitoring that did not advance. Some were tabled, and some were continued to the 2027 session. We have gotten some clarification on several bills that we had concerns about that have made them more acceptable to VASSP and other administrators across the Commonwealth. Here is a list of bills that have seen some major changes over the course of the past week:

HOUSE BILLS

[HB31](#)-this was a bill that would have created incentives to help retain teachers and encourage more people to enter the profession. VASSP supported this bill, but unfortunately, it was tabled.

[HB410](#)-this bill would have required high schools to participate in the SAT Day program for juniors and seniors. VASSP had concerns about the funding for this bill. It was tabled and should not return.

[HB428](#)-this bill would have created alternative pathways to a standard diploma for students with disabilities. We flagged this bill as a concern because we were not sure how it would affect high schools. The bill was continued to the 2027 session.

SENATE BILLS

[SB102](#)-this bill would have created dual enrollment options for certain health care professions, such as nursing. VASSP supported this bill, but it was continued to the 2027 session.

[SB234](#)-this bill would have altered the definition and policies of bullying and disciplinary procedures. VASSP had flagged it as a bill of concern, but it was passed by indefinitely and should not return.

[SB560](#)-this bill would require students to participate in sports based on their gender at birth. It was passed by indefinitely.

[SB561](#)-this bill was similar to SB295, but dealt with bathrooms and locker room areas. It was passed by indefinitely.

There were several bills that passed out of both the House and Senate that VASSP is still monitoring closely. These bills have passed their respective chambers and will now crossover to the opposite chamber on February 18.

BILLS THAT HAVE PASSED THE HOUSE THAT VASSP HAS CONCERNS

[HB38](#)-Public schools; mental health awareness training and instruction; requirements. Requires each teacher and other relevant personnel, as determined by the applicable school board, employed on a full-time basis to complete mental health awareness training that addresses the needs of youth populations that are at a high risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders in accordance with evidence-based best practices developed by the American Psychological Association. Current law requires such teachers and personnel to complete mental health awareness training but does not contain any requirements relating to the specific topics such training must address. The bill prohibits any of its provisions or any policy adopted in accordance with its provisions from being construed to permit biased or discriminatory treatment of any youth population deemed to be at a high risk of experiencing mental health challenges and disorders.

[HB201](#)-School board policies; parental notification; safe storage of prescription drugs and firearms in the household. Requires each local school board to develop and implement a policy to require the annual notification of the parent of each student enrolled in the local school division, to be sent by email and, if applicable, SMS text message within 30 calendar days succeeding the first day of each school year, of (i) the importance of securely storing any prescription drug, as defined in relevant law, present in the household and (ii) the parent's legal responsibility to safely store any firearm present in the household. The bill requires each school board to make such parental notification available in multiple languages on its website.

BILLS THAT HAVE PASSED THE SENATE

[SB19](#)-Department of Education; policies relating to instructional material that contains sexually explicit content; applicability; construction. Amends current law requiring the Department of Education to develop model policies and each school board to adopt policies consistent with the Department's model policies for ensuring parental notification of any instructional material that includes sexually explicit content by (i) defining "instructional material" as any material, regardless of its format, assigned and provided to a student by a public school teacher directly for the completion of an assignment or curricular objective and clarifying that "instructional

material" does not include any book or audiovisual material available in a public school library unless specifically required or assigned by a public school teacher directly for completion of an assignment or curricular objective and (ii) providing that nothing in the applicable law or any model policy or amendments thereto adopted by the Department or any policy or amendments thereto adopted by a school board pursuant to the applicable law shall be (a) construed to permit the censoring of books in any public elementary or secondary school or (b) utilized as a rationale or basis for the removal of books from any public elementary or secondary school.

[SB108](#)-School boards; student cell phone and smart device possession and use policies; prohibition. Amends the requirements for the student cell phone and smart device possession and use policies that each school board is required to develop and each public elementary and secondary school is required to implement pursuant to applicable law to require such policies to, except as provided in applicable law, prohibit student cell phone and smart device possession and use on school property from bell to bell. Current law only requires such policies to restrict student cell phone and smart device possession and use on school property from bell to bell.

[SB109](#)-School board policies; parental notification; safe storage of prescription drugs and firearms in household. Requires each school board to develop and implement a policy to require the annual notification of the parent of each student enrolled in the school division, to be sent by email and, if applicable, SMS text message, of (i) the importance of securely storing any prescription drug, as defined in relevant law, present in the household and (ii) the parent's legal responsibility to safely store any firearm present in the household. The bill also requires each parental notification to include information on (a) relevant state laws and regulations relating to safe firearm storage and child access to firearms and (b) firearm-related accidents, injuries, and deaths, including the role of firearms in suicides, tips and resources for seeking help for a child that may be a danger to himself and others, and current statistics published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on youth firearm fatality rates. Finally, the bill requires each school board to make such parental notification available in multiple languages on its website.

VASSP will update the actions of the General Assembly after each meeting. You can find the current House bills [HERE](#). Senate bills are [HERE](#).

Please try to find some time and peruse the bills listed. Tuesday, February 17th is the last day for bills to be acted upon in their chambers of origin, other than the budget bills. Bills must "cross over" to the opposite chamber by Wednesday, February 18. In reviewing these bills, please do not hesitate to share with me your thoughts or ask any questions about the proposed legislation. I can be contacted at dellena@vassp.org. *Thank you!*





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There will be a session dedicated to the actions of the General Assembly and the effects on school administrators during the School Law Clinic at the 98th Annual Virginia Middle and High School Principals Conference & Exposition at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel in Williamsburg, June 22- 25, 2026.



To register for the annual conference
click [HERE](#).