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Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Historic Bill to Protect Parental Rights in Education

SPRING HILL, Fla. — Today, Governor Ron DeSantis signed [House Bill \(HB\) 1557](#), Parental Rights in Education, which reinforces parents' fundamental rights to make decisions regarding the upbringing of their children. The bill prohibits classroom instruction on sexual orientation or gender identity in kindergarten through 3rd grade and prohibits instruction that is not age appropriate for students and requires school districts to adopt procedures for notifying parents if there is a change in services from the school regarding a child's mental, emotional or physical health or well-being. The bill builds on the Parents' Bill of Rights, which was signed into law in Florida last year, and is part of Governor DeSantis' Year of the Parent focus on protecting parental rights in education.

"Parents' rights have been increasingly under assault around the nation, but in Florida we stand up for the rights of parents and the fundamental role they play in the education of their children," said **Governor Ron DeSantis**. "Parents have every right to be informed about services offered to their child at school, and should be protected from schools using classroom instruction to sexualize their kids as young as 5 years old."

“Parental Rights in Education empowers Florida’s parents and safeguards our children,” said **Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nuñez**. “This bill refuses to allow school boards and teachers unions the ability to hide information about students from their parents. In addition, it prohibits classroom discussion in grades K-3 on gender orientation and sexual identity. Throughout this legislative session, this bill has been maliciously maligned by those who prefer slogans and sound bites over substance and common sense. Fortunately, Governor DeSantis and I believe that parents should have a say. We will not back down to woke corporations and their same tired tactics that are steeped in hypocrisy. As a mother of three, I am committed to protecting the rights of parents.”

“Parents play the #1 role in a child’s life and I am thankful for the Governor, Legislature and so many parents who continue to stand up for parents’ rights to be the foremost authority involving their children,” said **Commissioner of Education Richard Corcoran**. “Greater parental involvement leads to a better quality of life for children and this important legislation helps ensure Florida’s great educators collaborate with parents to ensure students are learning and flourishing, and I am thankful for Governor DeSantis’ commitment to all of Florida’s 2.9 million public school students.”

"Parents have a fundamental right to make decisions regarding the upbringing of their children, and schools should not be keeping important information from parents. Children belong to families, not the state," said **Senate President Wilton Simpson**. "Parents are not the enemy, they are a child's first and best advocate. This legislation strengthens the Parents' Bill of Rights Act, safeguarding the rights and responsibilities of parents to decide how best to raise their children."

“The government should never take the place of a parent,” said **Speaker Chris Sprowls**. “We’re taking a firm stand in Florida for parents when we say instruction on gender identity and sexual orientation does not belong in the classroom where 5- and 6-year-old children are learning. It should be up to the parent to decide if and when to introduce these sensitive topics. This shouldn’t be controversial, and a majority of Americans agree. Only fanatics think the classroom curriculum from kindergarten through 3rd grade should include teaching little children about gender identity.”

“This bill is about protecting our kids, empowering parents and ensuring they have the

information they need to do their God-given job of raising their child,” said **Representative Joe Harding**.

“Today Governor DeSantis is ensuring Parental Rights are honored at our schools,” said **Senator Dennis Baxley**. “We are very grateful to have the greatest Governor in America who is unafraid to lead and protect Florida Families.”

“I want to thank Governor DeSantis who has been steadfast in his leadership and his unwavering support for parental rights in our great state,” said **January Littlejohn, Parent, Leon County**. “When parents are excluded from critical decisions affecting their child’s health and well being at school, it sends the message to children that their parent’s input and authority are no longer important.”

“You never know how you will feel or react to something until it affects you or your family or your children, personally,” said **Erin Lovely, Parent, Palm Beach County**. “Under this bill, it protects the fundamental rights of parents to make choices regarding the upbringing of their children, it prohibits classroom discussion about sexual orientation and gender identity in a second-grade classroom.”

HB 1557 takes three key steps to protect students and put power back in the hands of parents:

- This bill prohibits classroom instruction about sexual orientation or gender identity in K-3 classrooms, and after 3rd grade, these conversations need to be age-appropriate.
- The bill ensures that at the beginning of every school year, parents will be notified about healthcare services offered at the school, with the right to decline any service offered.
- The bill ensures that whenever a questionnaire or health screening is given to K-3 students, parents receive it first and provide permission for the school to administer the questionnaire or health screening to their child.

Following the 2022 Legislative Session, the Governor has signed multiple pieces of legislation that support education and parent’s rights:

- [House Bill 1467, Curriculum Transparency](#)
- [Senate Bill 1054, Financial Literacy Instruction in Public Schools](#)
- [Senate Bill 1048, Student Assessments](#)

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