

# Senator Givens— Week four of the 2026 Regular Session



**Senate report**  
State Sen. David Givens

Week four of the 2026 Regular Session began with a brief delay due to severe winter weather across the Commonwealth. Legislative proceedings resumed Tuesday, allowing lawmakers, staff, and the public to travel safely to Frankfort. As a citizen legislature, many members commute long distances, and I am grateful to local officials, road crews, and first responders who helped ensure the people's business could continue.

As the General Assembly reached the one-quarter mark of the session, much of our work this week centered on education, an area where Kentucky has both a profound responsibility and a significant opportunity. With bil-

ions of taxpayer dollars invested each year in our public school system, the Senate is focused on ensuring those resources are managed responsibly, transparently, and in ways that genuinely support student success.

That conversation is especially timely as the House of Representatives filed House Bill (HB) 500 this week, its initial draft of the Commonwealth's biennial budget. The Senate will now begin its review of the proposal, taking a deliberate and disciplined approach to evaluating how public dollars are allocated. Education represents one of the largest investments in the budget, and it deserves careful scrutiny to ensure funding decisions are aligned with outcomes and long-term stability.

Education Priority Legislation Advances

Education remains a top priority for the Senate this session, and the Senate Educa-

tion Committee took up two key measures this week aimed at strengthening governance, accountability, and transparency in Kentucky's school systems.

I presented Senate Bill (SB) 1, which focuses on modernizing governance in extremely large and complex school districts. As school systems grow, governance structures must evolve to match their scale and responsibility. SB 1 clarifies roles by sharpening the board of education's focus on long-term strategy and oversight, while establishing clear executive authority for superintendents to manage daily operations. The bill is narrowly tailored, preserves local control, and avoids state takeover, while aligning authority with accountability in districts operating at a scale unlike any other in Kentucky.

The committee also heard SB 3, sponsored by Sen. Lind-

sey Tichenor, which strengthens transparency and accountability in local school district budgeting. SB 3 establishes clear timelines for budget development, ensures school boards receive full financial information in advance, and expands public access to financial reports and contracts. These are common-sense measures that allow parents, taxpayers, and board members to better understand how education dollars are being spent and how decisions are made.

Together, SB 1 and SB 3 reflect a broader effort to improve how school systems are governed and how public resources are managed, not through quick fixes, but through clearer structure, better oversight, and greater transparency.

**Additional Education Bills Filed**

In addition to the bills heard in committee, the Senate filed

two additional priority education-focused measures this week that will soon receive further discussion.

SB 2 addresses educator compensation by ensuring school district administrators do not receive percentage pay increases that exceed those provided to classroom teachers within the same district. The bill reinforces the principle that our education system should prioritize classrooms and the professionals working directly with students.

SB 4 focuses on strengthening school leadership by creating a structured development program for new principals. The goal is to better prepare school leaders for the complex responsibilities they face, without imposing additional costs on local school districts.

Each of these bills approaches education improvement from a different angle, but all share a common goal: making sure Kentucky's education

system is structured to deliver results and make responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

As we move into the next phase of the session, education policy and budget discussions will continue to intersect. The Senate remains focused on thoughtful, innovative solutions that strengthen our school systems, protect students, and respect the taxpayers who fund them.

Kentucky's students deserve a system that works, and that starts with clear governance, transparency, and a commitment to continuous improvement.

As always, it is an honor to serve you in Frankfort. If you have questions or ideas, feel free to contact my office at (502)-564-8100 or email me at David.Givens@kylegislature.gov. You can learn more about bills, committees, and the work of the Kentucky General Assembly by visiting [www.legislature.ky.gov](http://www.legislature.ky.gov).

# Rep. Bivens: Committees meet despite the ice, snow



**State Representative**  
Ryan Bivens

Despite snowfall and icy roads across much of the Commonwealth, lawmakers continued their work in Frankfort, showing up to meet in committees and keep the legislative process moving forward. More than 500 bills and resolutions have been filed so far, and we expect to see several hundred additional measures added before the March 4 filing deadline.

While budget review subcommittees continue the detailed and deliberative work of shaping the state's two-year budget, House standing committees remain fully engaged, meeting regularly to consider and advance legislation. I want to take a moment to highlight some of the important work moving forward through our committee process:

**Banking and Insurance:** Members discussed and considered HB 3, which would require Medicaid and KCHIP to reimburse pharmacies using the same fair and consistent payment standards as private insurance plans. Members considered HB 164, which would improve access to hearing aids for Kentucky children

by increasing insurance coverage to up to \$2,500. The committee considered HB 169, which would require insurance plans to cover the diagnosis and treatment of eating and feeding disorders as serious medical conditions and prohibit insurers from denying or limiting care based on factors such as body mass index.

**Elections, Constitutional Amendments, and Intergovernmental Affairs:** Lawmakers met to hear testimony on HB 139 and HB 356. HB 139 would strengthen Kentucky's election laws, improving voter list accuracy, election security, and transparency while preserving voter access. HB 356 would move testing required for those interested in serving as a property valuation administrator (PVA) to KCTCS assessment centers, increasing access to PVA testing for potential candidates. Members approved both bills.

**Health Services:** Legislators discussed HB 385, which would require the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) to provide care that includes emergency and other medical care provided outside of a state facility for patients in state-operated mental health facilities. Members then discussed HB 388, which would update statutes related to pre-

scription drugs. Lastly, members discussed HB 393, which would require the dementia services coordinator to prepare an annual report on the operations of the Office of the Dementia Services and the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Advisory Council.

**Judiciary:** Members sent several measures

to the House for consideration. HB 4 would criminalize grooming of minors. HB 84 seeks to protect Kentuckians and their property during riots and hold local governments accountable. HB 143 allows fiduciary bonds to be notarized rather than attested in Circuit Court. HB 188 supports physical and mental health in jails, expands

peer-support programs for peace officers, and increases protections for jail employees against assault. These measures reflect the committee's focus on public safety, accountability, and well-being.

**Local Government:** Lawmakers approved the following measures: HB 103, which addresses water fluorida-

tion programs; HB 108, which proposes updates to solid waste management; and HB 194, which pertains to the regulation of cigar bars. The committee also approved HB 276, which would allow keeping chickens on residential property, and legislation regarding county law libraries (HB 290).

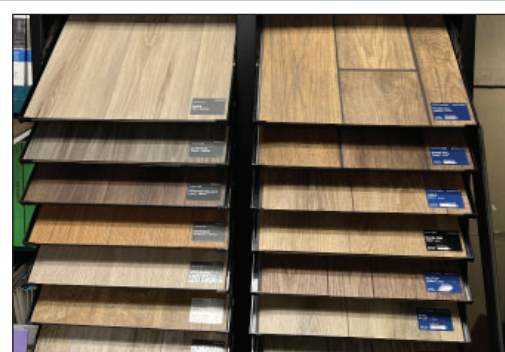
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