The Briefing for Tuesday, August 18, 2026

The Last Briefing was Sunday, August 16, 2026

What's the weather outlook?

10-Day Weather Forecast for Tallahassee, FL – The Weather Channel

Are you ready for some Football?

Here's the complete 2026 NCAAF season schedule.

Here are the Final Pre-season Rankings

Election Night Returns

Florida voters have until 7 p.m. local time tonight to cast ballots in the primary elections.

I'll be tracking results through the evening – here's the site I use-

Link to County Election Offices

Please text or email me the results in your local races.

I will be updating the lists where the primary determines who will serve the next four years.

Text – 850-508-5492

Email – cdoolin@doolinandassoc.com

The following lists contain sitting small county commissioners and school board members along with a list of the positions that are to be determined.

Small County Commissioners comparing 24-26 and 26-28.docx

Small School District Board members – 24-26 compared to 26-28.docx

Impacts of Amendment 3

Amendment 3 - Community Organization Request_.docx

Survey to identify Community Groups that may be interested in more information!

There are organizations working to share information, understanding and communicating the impact of the proposed Property Tax Amendment. Amendment 3 will be on the ballot on November 3rd General Election. If you know of any community group that may wish to have the topic – "Impact of Amendment 3" discussed at an upcoming meeting of the organization – please complete the link above and return it to cdoolin@doolinandassoc.com. Requests will be passed on to attempt scheduling a presentation. (Note – there are 77 days until Nov. 3.)

Byron Donalds speaks about a more limited approach to Tax Relief "If Amendment 3 fails!"

Gubernatorial candidate Donalds is acknowledging that broad-based relief for homestead property taxes may be stonewalled if Amendment 3 doesn't pass in November. The likely Republican nominee acknowledges that it might not pass, and that if it doesn't, the second attempt at relief under a Donalds administration may be limited. "Whether this passes or fails this November, we are going to bring this back through the Tax and Budget Commission next year. We are going to study all taxes and fees in Florida. ***We're going to set a goal of finally eliminating homestead property taxes in our state. And if we can't get there, because the math has still got to math, then we are going to target that relief to seniors on fixed income and working families in our state."***

GOP Gubernatorial Candidate Jay Collins picks Kevin Guthrie for his Lt. Gov.

Old Adage – "Some people say, "it's better late than never!" Others say, "Its better never late!"

GOP gubernatorial candidate and Lt. Gov. Jay Collins rolled out his running mate yesterday, announcing that Florida's executive director of emergency management Kevin Guthrie would be on the ticket with him. The 11th hour announcement on the eve of the primary comes as Donalds continues to lead in the polls. Because it's so late in the game, the name won't appear on voters' ballots today

Guthrie oversaw the response to half a dozen hurricanes and to the Surfside partial condo collapse. He also oversaw the management of the now-shuttered "Alligator Alcatraz" immigration detention center. He's a former police officer and in emergency preparedness before handling emergency response for Flagler then Pasco County.

Former Lawmaker Caruso Arrested on Child Sexual Abuse Charges

Palm Beach County Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller Mike Caruso, a former Republican legislator, was arrested by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and local police on child sexual abuse charges Tuesday. Attorney General James Uthmeier made the announcement on social media. Following Uthmeier's post, Gov. Ron DeSantis suspended Caruso from office, which came one year after he appointed him as clerk on Aug. 18, 2025. DeSantis' suspension order detailed the charges: kidnapping; lewd or lascivious molestation; lewd or lascivious exhibition; luring or enticing a child; and child abuse. The charges were filed in Orange County, where the victim's family lives.

Caruso was first elected in 2018, winning the general election by 32 votes after a recount. He was reelected subsequently and became a staunch supporter of DeSantis, often clashing with

House leadership by doing so. DeSantis appointed Caruso to the clerk position after Joe Abruzzo, a former Democratic lawmaker, left the job to be Palm Beach County Administrator.

As clerk, Caruso made $212,385 per year. Caruso was running to keep his constitutional office, but it's unclear how Tuesday's arrest will affect his placement on the November ballot. Yvette Drucker, a Democrat, is running against him.

Catholic Bishops Assert Authority on Vaccines for Catholic Schools

The Florida Conference of Catholic Bishops on Monday made public a letter written to Attorney General James Uthmeier saying his demand that Florida's Catholic schools implement religious exemptions on vaccines oversteps his authority and infringes on First Amendment protections.

Earlier this month Uthmeier told Catholic schools their eligibility for state-funded voucher scholarships would be vulnerable if they did not accept the state's policy, which allows for parental opt-out for vaccines based on religious reasons. FCCB executive director Michael Sheedy acknowledged the ongoing debate and shifting perspectives surrounding vaccines but said the bishops' policy is to protect their students, staff, teachers and parents from preventable diseases. Citing the bishops' teaching authority he added, "Government officials may no more determine the content of Catholic teaching than Church officials may determine the content of Florida law."

Last Friday Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami described Uthmeier's correspondence as a "not-so-veiled threat" and said that the bishops, not state government officials, decide how to understand and apply Catholic doctrine.

Over 500,000 students statewide participate in Florida's universal school voucher program, with about 86,000 of those recipients attending Catholic schools, according to the Florida Catholic Conference.

U.S. DOE revised guidelines - Race cannot be considered in student discipline

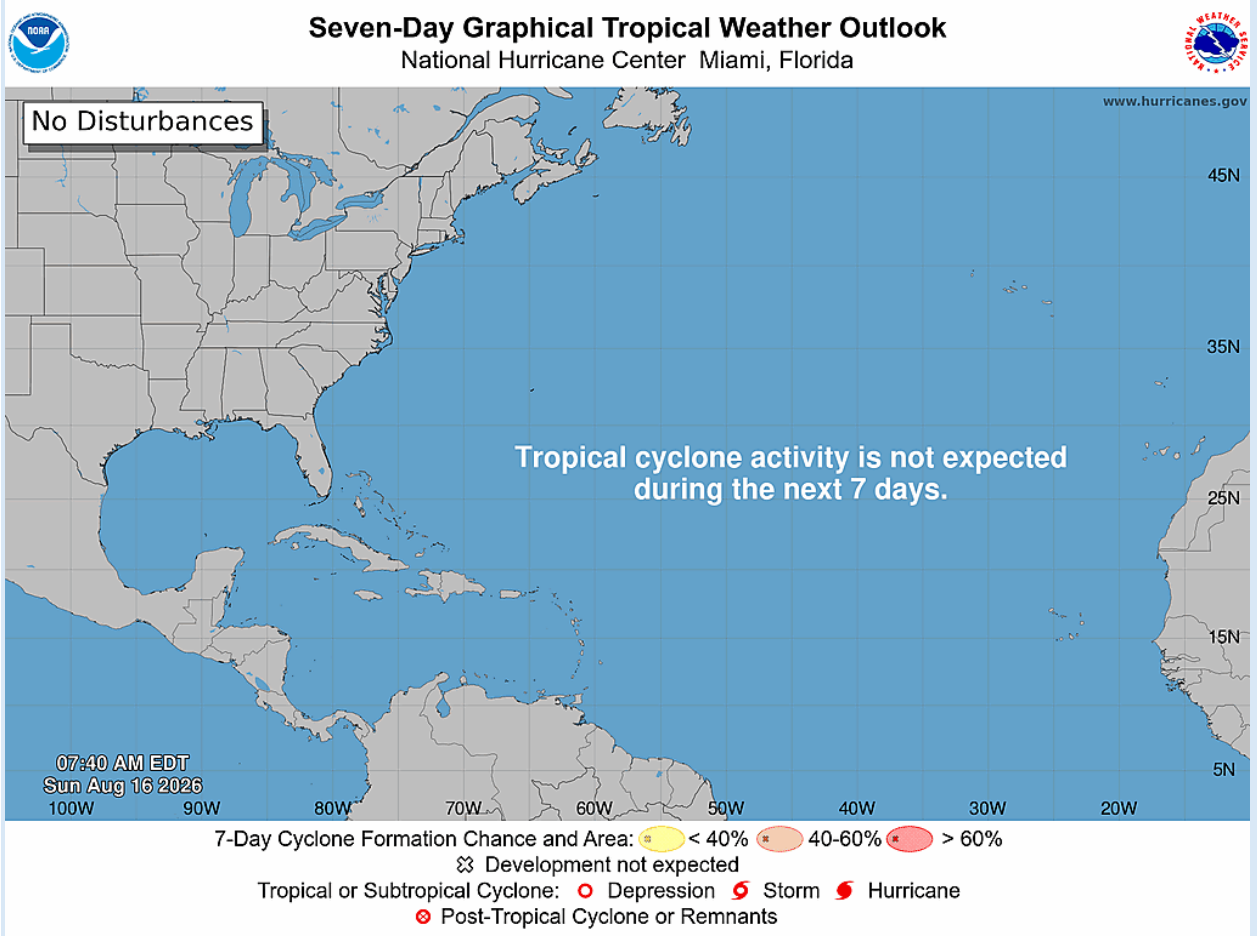
The Education Department on Tuesday rolled back the consideration of race in disciplinary policies and practices, dealing a blow to efforts to protect students of color from being disciplined at greater rates than their white classmates.

This guidance builds on the department's decision to rescind several disparate impact provisions in July. Disparate impact is a legal theory that has been used in education policy to address systemic inequalities and protect students of color from unintentional discrimination and disproportionately negative outcomes under Title VI, the federal law that bars race-based discrimination.

Under the new guidance, taking race into account in student discipline constitutes race discrimination and is unlawful, "unless the school surmounts strict scrutiny, which occurs only in truly extraordinary and rare circumstances."...

Tropical Outlook

https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/



Headlines Around The State

Politico: Florida's wildlife icons face uncertain future post-Endangered Species Act rollbacks

Ledger: Fort Meade recall advances for 2 of 3 commissioners

The Hill: Gov. DeSantis latest to not support Rep. Mills ahead of Florida primary

NBC 6: City of Miami sides with residents in fight against short-term renters

Democrat: Report: FSU faces federal probe over scholarships amid DEI crackdown

Floridian: DeSantis Optimistic of Amendment 3 Passage After State Rewrite

Florida Phoenix: Groups invest in campaign to 'move on from Moms for Liberty'

TCPalm: Florida fire district faces major budget shortfall with tax reform

NBC 6: Florida Attorney General Uthmeier rewrites property tax cut ballot summary

Floridian: Kevin Steele Fires Back At Mike Beltran, Brings Up Disproven Voting Scandal

Floridian: Paul Renner Calls for Special Session on Medical Freedom Act, AI Bill of Rights

On The Docket This Week

MONDAY, AUGUST 17

- FLORIDA CITY GAS - Monday, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. - The Florida Public Service Commission is holding a virtual hearing on Florida City Gas's request to adjust natural gas rates provided to 125,000 customers in Miami-Dade, Broward, Brevard, Palm Beach, Hendry, Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties. - Select "Watch Live and Archived PSC Events" on the FPSC homepage.
- DUKE LARGE LOAD TARIFF - Monday, 2 p.m. - The Public Service Commission is holding a hearing on a petition for a limited proceeding to approve large load tariff by Duke Energy Florida, LLC. - Betty Easley Conference Center, Room 148, 4075 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 18

- PRIMARY ELECTION DAYPolls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Florida's primary election.
- SILVIA EXECUTION SLATED - Tuesday, 6 p.m. - Florida Death Row inmate William Frances Silvia is scheduled to be executed for the 2006 death of his estranged wife in Seminole County. - Florida State Prison, 23916 N.W. 83rd Ave., Raiford.
- JEA CYCLE GENERATING UNIT - Tuesday, 9:30 a.m. - The Public Service Commission is holding a pre-hearing on a petition by JEA to determine the need for a new combined cycle generating unit and onsite associated facilities located at St. Johns River Power Park Unit 3 in Duval County. - Betty Easley Conference Center, Room 148, 4075 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee.
- USF TEXTBOOK COSTS - Tuesday, 9 a.m. - The University of South Florida Academics & Campus Environment Committee is holding a virtual meeting to discuss tenure as a condition of employment and a report on the affordability of textbooks and instructional material. - A livestream link will be available the day of the meeting, according to the schools website.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19

- BROWARD COLLEGE PRESIDENT - Wednesday, 8 a.m. - The Broward County Board of Trustees is going to consider a motion from Trustee Michael Caschette to terminate the contract of President Torey Alston "without cause" as the school's nursing program passage rate has dropped nearly 20 percent below the national average of 86.6 percent. - Willis Holcombe Center, 111 East Las Olas Boulevard, Room 1208, Fort Lauderdale.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20

- CAT FUND - Thursday, 1:30 p.m. - The Florida Hurricane Catastrophe Fund Advisory Council is meeting on a proposed rule change involving reimbursement contracts. - Room 116 (Hermitage Conference Room), 1801 Hermitage Blvd., Tallahassee.
- TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION - Thursday, 9 a.m. - The Florida Transportation Commission will get an update on the agency and consider the retainer agreement

renewal. - Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa, Pine Meeting Room, 5001 Coconut Road, Bonita Springs.

- SOUTHWEST FLORIDA PLANNING - Thursday, 10 a.m. - The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council Executive Committee is meeting. - Florida Department of Transportation, 10041 Daniels Parkway, Fort Myers.
- RPOF VICTORY PARTY - Thursday, 5 p.m. - The Republican Party of Florida is holding its RPOF Victory Rally to launch "the final stretch of the 2026 campaign." - TPepin's Hospitality Centre, 4121 N 50th St, Tampa.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 21

- SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIALS - Friday, 9 a.m. - The Florida Department of Education is holding a public bid opening for the adoption of instructional material for K-12 Social Studies. - Florida Department of Education, 325 West Gaines Street, Tallahassee.
- TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING - Friday, 9:30 a.m. - The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council is meeting. - Wolf High Technology Center, Indian River State College - Chastain Campus, 2400 SE Salerno Road, Stuart.
- JULY UNEMPLOYMENT - Friday, 10 a.m. - The Florida Department of Commerce will release the July unemployment report.

Here are key dates for 26-27

2026 Events

August 18 –	Primary Elections
Sept 16-17 –	FAC Policy Conference – Jacksonville
Nov 3 –	General Election
Nov. 17-19-	Rural Summit – Ocala – Sponsored by FREDA
Nov. 30 – Dec. 3	Legislative Committee Meetings
Dec 2-4 –	Florida Association of Counties Legislative Conference
Dec 2 -	Small County Coalition Breakfast –
Dec 2-4 –	FSBA Legislative Conference – Tampa
Dec 3 -	Small District– SSDCC Legislative Meeting in Tampa

2027 Events

January 4 – 7	Legislative Committee Meetings
January 11 – 14	Legislative Committee Meetings
February 1 – 4	Legislative Committee Meetings
February 8 – 11	Legislative Committee Meetings
February 15 – 18	Legislative Committee Meetings
March 2 -	Legislature convenes
March 16 -	Small County Coalition/Small School District Joint Legislative Reception
March 17 -	Small School District Council Consortium Legislative Briefing
March 17 -	Florida Association Counties – Legislative Day

March 17-18-	Rural Days 2027 – Tentative
April 30 -	Legislative Session 60 Days – Sine Die!
June 9 – 11	FSBA/FADSS Annual Summer Conference, Kissimmee, FL
June 10 -	Small School District Council Consortium – Annual Meeting
June 22-25	FAC Annual Summer Meeting - Hilton Orlando
June 22 -	Small County Coalition Annual Meeting Breakfast – Orlando
Nov. 30 – Dec. 3	FSBA/FADSS 82nd Annual Joint Conference, Kissimmee, FL

Briefing is prepared by Chris Doolin

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The Briefing is compiled to provide information to elected officials and staff in counties that are members of the Small County Coalition and the Small School District Council Consortium. It is also sent to Professional Colleagues and Associates. For Questions Email – cdoolin@DoolinandAssoc.com

If you want to see all of the latest briefings – you can go www.smallcountycoalition.org or www.ssdcc.org and click on the red Briefing button