

Kimberly G Jackson

Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter
February 2026

Be Present



February 2026 Legislative Session

Every year parents travel to Tallahassee to advocate for basic rights for persons with disabilities. Basic rights we all strive for, safety, purposeful education, and issues related to affordability.

Last month I witnessed emotional testimony from everyday families who are hopeful someone will listen to them. Regardless of where you stand on these issues we should acknowledge the bravery required to speak your truth.

Here is a list of a few bills that were under consideration for the 2026 Legislative Session

Senate Bill CS/SB 1170

Cameras in the classroom

Education; Deleting references to the Video Cameras in Public School Classrooms Pilot Program; deleting an obsolete definition; authorizing certain parents to submit a written request to the school principal for installation and operation of a video camera in a self-contained classroom; requiring that a video camera be operational within a specified timeframe after approval of a request under the policy; prohibiting a school or school district from concealing the identity of an employee in a video recording, etc.



Senate Bill SB 206 / HB 717

mandatory training for K-12 teachers working with students with autism

Requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules for specialized, mandatory training for K-12 teachers working with students with autism. It also includes the creation of an "Autism Educator Loan Forgiveness Program" to incentivize specialization in the field. Finally the bill revises the legal definition of autism and mandates updated training standards



Bill SB 206 / HB 717 Details

HB 365

Blue Envelope Program

Creates a voluntary "blue envelope" program for drivers with autism spectrum disorder to improve interactions with law enforcement. The bill requires training for police officers regarding this program.



Bill HB 365 Details

HB 969 / SB 1046

Detection of Developmental Delays and Autism

The bill places and emphasis on early detection of developmental delays and autism spectrum disorder, with initiatives for improved screening processes.



HB 969 / SB 1046

The only way to impact the process is to be a part of the process. Reach out to your delegation and let them know how you feel.

Pinellas Delegation

[Adam Anderson](#)

Legislative Aide: Corey Recvlohe
District Aide: Anna Stearns

[Nick DiCeglie](#)

Legislative Aides:
Ashley Colletti and Stephanie Kreps

[Darryl Ervin Rouson](#)

[Berny Jacques](#)

Legislative Aide: Ajay Kumar
District Aide: Benjamin Roy

[Lindsay Cross](#)

Legislative Aide: Andrea Campos
District Aide: Jack Sayer

[Linda Chaney](#)

Legislative Aides:
Nicholas Carper, Ella Coffee, and St.
George Pink

[Ed Hooper](#)

Legislative Aides:
Katie Daniels, Mari Riba, and Anthony
Serge

[Kimberly Berfield](#)

Legislative Aide: Hailie Mondoux
District Aide: Kachine Evans

Legislative Aide: Tristan Sommer
District Aide: Tara Ross

[Michele K. Rayner](#)

Legislative Aide: Alia Leroy
District Aide: Moez Bouazizi

Loots - Autism Diagnosis

Autism is difficult by nature because it is a communication disorder and let's face it - as humans - every day all day we communicate with each other.

- We communicate with our words
- We communicate with our actions
- We communicate with our inactions
- We communicate with our facial expressions
- We communicate with our choices

One of my closest friends shared something impactful with me without even knowing it. She said no matter how much we want to change people's perceptions - we cannot force people to be comfortable with people when they are not. I thought about this statement a lot because - well it is true. We can only educate people and pray they reset their expectations and embrace empathy.

Recently an actor I follow opened up about Autism. Rob Funches is known for his light hearted character on the show, Loots. His stint on a new reality show, Traitors caused him to evaluate his diagnosis.

Rob Funches honesty about his autistic presentation after he experienced real-time harsh treatment for the entire world speaks to how much more work we have to do to embrace and respect differences.

Communication is a global responsibility. We all share responsibility for how we engage with each other.



'Traitors' star Rob Funches reveals autism diagnosis after facing 'cruel trauma' - *NY Post*

[Read the Article](#)

You Have No Idea

Often I share information about autism from people who love us and want to let us know that they are expanding their knowledge about autism. Every journey is

different yet somehow family members who care for loved ones on the spectrum have similar experiences.

The documentary, *You Have No Idea*, provides a window into lives of people with loving and extraordinary circumstances. It is worth a watch.

Please take time to review the [resources on my updated website](#) for more information on supporting persons on the spectrum.



Video documentary - You Have No Idea
The Story of Evan James, diagnosed with
Autism in the 90s

[Watch Video](#)

In case you missed it! [January Newsletter](#)

Kimberly G Jackson

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kimberlygjackson.com | 200 2nd Ave. South #786 | St. Pete, FL 33701 US

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