



GREATER FLORIDA CONSORTIUM OF SCHOOL BOARDS' 2020 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Constitution of the State of Florida, Article IX - - Section I.

“The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is therefore a paramount duty of the State to make adequate provision for the education of all the children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high-quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high-quality education....”

GOAL: TO INCREASE, ON A PHASED-IN BASIS, THE AVERAGE PER STUDENT FUNDING TO ENSURE THAT FLORIDA IS IN THE TOP HALF OF THE STATES AND CAN PROVIDE A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION TO ENABLE ITS STUDENTS TO COMPETE AND ACCEL IN THE GLOBAL MARKET PLACE.

ENSURE THAT, IN ALL CASES, LEGISLATION BE EVALUATED TO PROVIDE THAT IT DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND HOME RULE AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS TO “OPERATE, CONTROL, AND SUPERVISE” ALL PUBLIC SCHOOLS WITHIN THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

PRIORITY ISSUES

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION/KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Enhance the state investment in **developmentally appropriate, high quality** early learning and Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) **full-day programs**.

Rename the education statute to include Pre-Kindergarten, allowing certified pre-school teachers to be included in **incentives and retirement** afforded only to K-12 teachers.

Revise School Readiness Pre-School **application** to permit funding for school-day and after-school services for Pre-Kindergarten students.

*Andy Griffiths
President
Monroe County*

*Jane Goodwin
President-Elect
Sarasota County*

*Bob Segur
Secretary/Treasurer
Charlotte County*

STUDENT SAFETY/MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Determine and fully fund the state mandate of one officer per school by increasing the **Safe Schools allocation**.

Redirect any unused **Aaron Feis Guardian Program Funds** to the Safe Schools allocation.

Continue the investment for **mental health services** by providing funding to increase mental health personnel (such as **school counselors, social workers, and psychologists**) to expand and enhance mental health services available through school and community-coordinated services, and to provide enhanced wrap-around services.

FUNDING

Continue funding for **school safety infrastructure** enhancements to schools.

Allocate sufficient total funds with flexibility to enable school districts to support: guaranteed continuation budgets that provide for enrollment changes; inflationary increases; competitive salaries and benefits for teachers and other personnel; and, quality program improvements by increasing the **Base Student Allocation (BSA)** for FY 2019-20 at least five percent per student.

Restore the full calculation of **Required Local Effort (RLE)** to include new construction and property reassessments.

Fully fund any **new mandates**, without transferring money from the Base Student Allocation (BSA) or Discretionary Local Effort (DLE).

Require all schools that receive taxpayer dollars to have the same **financial and academic accountability measures**.

Extend the lifespan of the **locally voted millage levies** from four (4) years to a maximum of 10 years.

Expand the **Turnaround School Supplemental Services Allocation** to all Title I schools for wrap-around services.

Recognize school board's authority to control **Local District Capital Outlay** spending without any required diversion.

Restore the **discretionary 2.0 mill levy** for capital purposes such as security enhancements endorsed by the Marjorie Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Commission, school maintenance, pay property and casualty insurance premiums, technology needs (including online testing), or other critical capital needs.

RESPECT THE CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY OF SCHOOL BOARDS

“The school board shall **operate, control and supervise all free public schools** within the school district and determine the rate of school district taxes within the limits prescribed herein. Two or more school districts may operate and finance joint educational programs.” – The Florida Constitution, Article IX, Section 4(b).

2020 POSITION STATEMENTS

ACCOUNTABILITY AND STATE ASSESSMENT

- Extend the option of **paper/pencil exams** for expansion to grades 7-10 for Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics.
- Continue to streamline and reduce the amount of **state-required student assessment**, such as 5th and 8th Statewide science assessments to bring it in line with requirements of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), also ensuring the FLDOE concordance with SAT/ACT exams with FSA is completed; and provide state funds to cover the cost of SAT/ACT test administration in districts.
- Provide the **statewide assessment**, including the General Equivalency Diploma (GED), in multiple languages to **English Language Learners (ELL)** who have received instructions for less than three (3) years, which is allowed by Federal Regulations.
- Move the June 30th **FLDOE reporting deadline** for FSA tests back to June 8th.
- Give districts greater flexibility in determining **third grade retentions and promotion criteria** to measure each student's progress and customize his/her education plan.
- Enhance state funding for **educator professional development and training** on Florida State Standards, the related assessments, required use of technology.
- Create an **“innovative school district” program** that a district, state-rate “B” or higher, may apply to the State Board of Education as a five-year agreement for fiscal and program flexibility in meeting state standards in return for improved student performance and use of fiscal resources.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION/KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Provide quality programs that address:

- Greater access for all students;
- Kindergarten Readiness;
- Professional development;
- Instructional personnel qualifications;
- High quality developmentally appropriate standards; and,
- Equitable accountability of public and private providers.

WORKFORCE EDUCATION

- Maintain the **dual education delivery system** that allows both the local school district and community/state college to offer post-secondary career, technical and adult education programs.
- Accurately align our funding model and provide additional dollars to reflect **student enrollment growth** in career, technical, and adult education programs throughout Florida.
- Create incubator **Workforce Education Grant Program**, adjunct to Workforce Education categorical funding, of \$60 million for school districts to start new career academy and Postsecondary Adult Vocational programs (PSAV) that provides funding for equipment and initial operations, including instructor recruitment bonuses.
- Modify the funding formula for workforce development programs to reimburse institutions experiencing growth by funding EITHER the most recent year's enrollment or a three-year rolling average.

FUNDING

- Provide state funding for any increased costs to the employer's contribution to the **Florida Retirement System**.
- Maintain **Adults with Disabilities (AWD)** program funding.
- Allow for **voter approval of the half-cent sales tax** for operational as well as capital construction purposes and school bus purchases.
- Reinstate the funding for **251, 252, 253 on a per student basis**, and **eliminate the arbitrary cap on gifted students**.
- Revise the **TRIM notice** to delineate whether a tax increase is due to an increase in the proposed millage rate and/or property reassessments by the property tax appraiser.
- Create a **waiver of tuition** for parents and/or guardians of students at **Title I elementary schools** who take workforce development programs offered by technical colleges or technical centers on the campus of their child's school.
- Collect and earmark the **internet sales tax** for public schools.
- Restore the FTE definition to provide for **six (6) periods** and fund additional instructional time for **dual enrollment, IB, AICE, and virtual programs** up to a maximum of **eight (8) classes** per student.
- Expand acceleration for students on Florida Standard-Access Points (FS-AP) including work-based learning experiences as well as for students earning career dual enrollment credit to count toward school and district grade points.
- Fully fund and provide the flexibility in providing the additional time during **summer school** or a combination to meet the additional 180-hour reading instruction requirement at the lowest-performing elementary school.
- Eliminate the **wealth adjustment** from the sparsity formula.
- Oppose the automatic increase each year for the **Tax Credit Scholarship Program**.
- Ensure that any changes to the **District Cost Differential** reflect the costs of housing, health and property insurance, poverty, teacher salaries, and transportation, rather than wages and oppose any change that would be detrimental to the district's FEFP budget for a three (3) year hold harmless period.
- Allow local school boards the option to double the **Discretionary Local Effort (DLE)** to 1.496 mills.
- Oppose further equalization of the **Local Discretionary Millage (LDM)**.
- Uphold the **90 percent rule** in the FEFP, and **fund state mandates** for Transportation and Instructional Materials entirely from state revenue and do not include this funding when calculating the 90 percent rule.
- Prohibit the **personal enrichment** of charter operators from public funds.
- Establish a **long term, stable, and recurring revenue source** to provide increased school construction funds to support new facilities, renovations, replacement schools, school maintenance, land acquisition, mandated class size reduction, hurricane shelter retrofitting, prekindergarten programs housed in public schools, and the additional costs of constructing environmentally-efficient "green" schools.
- Eliminate the **"may not exceed the cost per student station"** provision as it applies to new construction using any non-state funds including impact fees.

TITLE I FLEXIBILITY

Return full control of Title I spending to local school board discretion to support district improvement efforts for students and allow school districts to stipulate the use of its Title I funding at the local level, especially if it is to address school improvement as intended by the Federal Regulations, excluding the district's indirect rate from the administrative cost.

STUDENT STATION COSTS

Provide for a district or regional index for the **per-student-station cost cap** to keep pace with changing marketplace increases for labor, materials, and code requirements.

HURRICANE/DISASTER RELIEF

Establish permanent **statutory authority** to assist school districts with **hurricane damage** without negatively affecting resources for other districts, including:

- Providing an avenue for school boards to seek necessary **waivers of state law** for up to a year, such as shortening the school year, in order to resolve some of the immediate impact of hurricane damage;
- Funding all costs associated with **shelter operations**; and,
- Increasing the multiplier for the **Declining Enrollment Supplement** as found in the Appropriations Act proviso language for a decline in full-time equivalent students attributable to a major storm/disaster event to .75 (currently .25).

STUDENT SAFETY

Increase penalties for **firing a gun** within 1000 feet of a school.

DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE (DJJ) FUNDING

Allow districts to **waive the \$45 fee** for adult education basic or GED courses offered to students in jails, stockades, or DJJ facilities.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

- Focus the **approval of charter applications** to a specific academic or space need which the local district does not or cannot meet or if the district determines the application is in the best interest of the student.
- Exempt school districts from paying **ad valorem tax for leased properties** similar to charter schools.
- Require a **charter school** to return any and all **public funds**, excluding the Charter School Planning Grant funds, to the sponsor upon the charter school's election of any deferral of opening the charter school.
- Allow school boards to **waive the same laws and rules** that charter schools can waive on a district-wide basis.
- Allow school boards with at least 10 percent of its student enrollment in Charter Schools to determine the **need for additional schools** and/or require new charters to locate in areas to address overcrowding, provide choice opportunities to students/parents zoned to failing schools, or **meet specific academic needs** the school district is not addressing.

- Identify means to assure governance **oversight of charter schools** that is consistent with that required of public agencies.
- Ensure required **sharing of referenda monies** with charter schools remain prospective for any referendum passed after July 1, 2019.

INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL SHORTAGE

- Fund strategies, such as **instructional personal fellowship/scholarship and loan forgiveness programs** in return for a minimum number of service years in the classroom to recruit and retain personnel such as one to three points toward the certification exam.
- Provide for **rehiring** of administrative and instructional personnel, support personnel and law enforcement officers, personnel as substitute teachers, and **hiring** of retired bus drivers on a part-time basis after one month after termination without penalty to their state retirement pension.
- Expand options for individuals to obtain **temporary teacher certification** and, subsequently, full professional certification who demonstrated their work to be highly effective.
- Fund national recruitment fairs conducted collaboratively by the Department of Education and participating school districts.

ELIMINATION OF DUAL ENROLLMENT TUITION FEE

Apply the **tuition and fee waivers** granted private school students in 2018 for dual enrollment to public school students so that students can continue to access college courses without financially penalizing school districts.

PERSONNEL – TEACHER EVALUATION

Support district authority over **teacher evaluations and pay for performance**, including removing the Value-Added Model (VAM) from teacher evaluations, particularly for teachers of disadvantaged students.

CYBER SECURITY

- Expand funding for **protecting local governments**, including school boards, from cyber-attacks and ransomware extortion
- Expand funding to **protect student and employee confidential data**.