

Ms. Ana Rivas Logan, Board Member

**SUBJECT: 2008 FLORIDA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**

**COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**

**LINK TO DISTRICT
STRATEGIC PLAN: ESTABLISH GREATER ALLIANCE WITH LEGISLATIVE
BODIES**

As an Executive Director for the Florida School Boards Association (FSBA), it is my responsibility and duty to report legislative outcomes and priorities at the State level that impact Education to our local School Board. The FSBA believes that the State has a clear constitutional obligation to provide a “uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education” and endorses the report of the bi-partisan Constitutional Accountability Commission calling for the state to fulfill this paramount duty. In pursuit of this objective, the FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Support property tax reform initiatives that safeguard local control and flexibility, that improve fairness and equity among all classes of taxpayers, and that specifically hold school districts harmless from operating and capital revenue losses;
- Support a constitutional amendment to revise class size requirements to provide that compliance is based on the average class size at each school for each of the grade groupings and that the number of students in any individual classroom may not exceed the constitutional limit for any grade grouping by more than five students;
- Correct conflicts and inconsistencies in statutes relating to school concurrency, including clarification to ensure that school districts are exempt from providing off-site infrastructure, and restore and increase earmarked funding to accomplish school concurrency; and
- Repeal all provisions relating to the Florida Schools of Excellence Commission.

The FSBA's position on issues of continuing concern include the following:

- Funding - FSBA believes that a strong and consistent financial investment in education is critical to the success of public schools. Such an investment must be stable, equitable, and sufficient to meet the needs of all students. At a minimum, education appropriations must fully fund enrollment and inflation costs and must not shift funding responsibilities to local school districts. All mandates must be fully funded.
- Facilities - FSBA believes that ample, equitable, and stable funding must be available to provide a sufficient number of well constructed and well equipped school facilities that offer environments that incorporate new technology, encourage and enhance teaching and learning, and allow for teacher to student ratios that are in keeping with class size reduction initiatives.
- Assessment and Accountability - Work must continue on both the federal and state level to improve alignment of accountability systems and compliance plans so that they are consistent, accommodate individual student needs, and accurately reflect student achievement and progress.
- Curriculum and Instructional Programs – FSBA believes that Florida's citizens, economy, and general welfare are best served through the provision of highest quality public educational programs that cater to the general and individual needs of all students – pre-kindergarten through adult.
- Personnel – FSBA recognizes that excellence in student achievement depends upon having dedicated educators who are highly skilled, effective, thoroughly trained, and fairly compensated. In order to attract and retain topnotch instructional and administrative personnel, each school district must have the control and flexible use of adequate funds for locally bargained competitive salaries, professional development, and programs to support and mentor personnel. Creative incentives, such as loan repayment, access to affordable workforce housing, and reimbursement for relocation costs, should be authorized and funded.
- Local Control and Governance – The constitutional authority of elected school boards to “supervise, operate and control” public schools must be honored through support for local control and flexibility. Legislative encroachment on the constitutional authority of school boards must be avoided, particularly with respect to determining school calendars, establishing the powers and duties of the school board officers, or the sub-division or reapportionment of schools districts. In addition, the distribution of school impact fees and 2 mill revenue must remain at the discretion of the school board.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
MS. ANA RIVAS LOGAN:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, accept the report of the Florida School Boards Association.