

Dr. Steve Gallon III, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: PROPOSED 2021 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM OF THE GREATER FLORIDA CONSORTIUM OF SCHOOL BOARDS

COMMITTEE: FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

LINK TO STRATEGIC

BLUEPRINT: EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS PRACTICES

The Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards is a coalition of 11 school boards that have joined to assist each other in advancing educational issues of mutual concern. The member districts include Broward, Charlotte, Collier, Martin, Manatee, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Sarasota, and St. Lucie counties.

In developing the Consortium's legislative platform, member districts submitted legislative proposals for consideration and inclusion in its 2021 legislative platform. On December 10, 2020, representatives of the Consortium met via a zoom meeting, to finalize the draft of their proposed 2021 Legislative Program. The draft program includes only those items which were approved by the school board representatives in attendance. Further, it adheres to the Consortium's policy of including only a select number of issues in order to ensure maximum cohesiveness in programmatic priorities and concentration of Consortium resources.

All 11 Consortium school boards must review the draft program and to take official action on it. Each issue must be supported by *all* Consortium members before inclusion in the final adopted program; only the issues that receive unanimous support will be included in the Consortium's legislative program. If a member school district votes to remove an issue from the proposed program, the issue is removed from the program. Since the 2021 legislative session is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, March 2, 2021, member boards were asked to review and adopt the Consortium's legislative program as soon as possible. Once all member boards have officially adopted the 2021 Legislative Program, the Consortium will print and distribute the document to the Governor, State Cabinet, all legislators, and interested citizen groups.

**ACTION PROPOSED BY
DR. STEVE GALLON III:**

That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, adopt the proposed draft of the Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards 2021 Legislative Program.

**Good Cause
H-15**

**GREATER FLORIDA CONSORTIUM
OF
SCHOOL BOARDS'
2020-2021 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

RESPECT AND ADHERE TO 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).

FUNDING

Provide PreK-12 funding for VPK and FEFP programs no less than that recommended by the State Board of Education (9/23/20) to the Governor for the 2021-2022 school year.

*Jane Goodwin
President
Sarasota County*

*Bob Segur
President-Elect
Charlotte County*

*Nora Rupert
Secretary/Treasurer
Broward County*

Allowing the forecasted FTE for FY 2020-2021 to remain as our funded FTE in the FEFP through all 2020-2021 calculations, in lieu of the traditional FTE actual counts for Survey 2 and Survey 3, through June 30, 2021, including all FEFP funding and, if necessary, through the FY 21-22 school year.

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 use of **Turnaround School Supplemental Services Allocation** to include 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 or operational needs.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES

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

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

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

ACCOUNTABILITY AND STATE ASSESSMENT

- Use State Assessments in the 2020-2021 school year as a baseline for accountability measures for FY22 and to be used by each district as deemed helpful for school and student purposes.
- For 2020-2021, waive the sanctions related to third grade promotion, end-of-course calculations, graduation test requirements, and reinstate the no more than one letter grade drop provision established in 2012.
- Provide the **statewide assessment**, including the General Equivalency Diploma (GED), in multiple languages to **English Language Learners (EL)** who have received instructions for less than three (3) years, which is allowed by Federal Regulations.

- 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.
- Give districts flexibility in use of state and federal funds – school recognition, turnaround, SAI, reading, federal stimulus, ESEA/Title 1, etc. – to provide for extended instructional time (days/hours).

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

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

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

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

DRAFT