

**GREATER FLORIDA CONSORTIUM
OF
SCHOOL BOARDS'
20223 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 EXCEL IN **THE UNIVERSAL MARKETPLACE.**

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.” The Florida Constitution, Article IX, Section 4(b).

FUNDING

Provide for an annual increase in the Base Student Allocation commensurate with **the rate of inflation** and cost of living increases (**but no less than 7 percent**), to ensure school systems can meet the rising costs in every aspect of their business.

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

~~Timely disburse federal funds with the maximum flexibility available to school districts.~~

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

*Nora Rupert
President
Broward County*

*Dr. Sue Woltanski
President-Elect
Monroe County*

*Mary Foreman
Secretary/Treasurer
Manatee County*

Provide for an optional summer school program for all students.

Fully fund class size and provide a penalty waiver process under certain emergency conditions.

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 up to a maximum of 10 years with voter consent.

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 Marjory 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.

Require the local offices of emergency management to first consider the use of non-K12 public facilities that meet hurricane-rated construction, ~~other than K-12 schools~~, to be utilized as hurricane shelters and post storm support.

CONSISTENCY AND PREDICTABILITY IN K-12 FUNDING

Any proration for FY 2022-2023 should be covered by the Florida Legislature.

Ensure the projection and full cost of the increases for the Voucher and Scholarship programs be specifically detailed in each calculation for budget development.

Change the funding process for vouchers to align to the School District's FEFP allocations more accurately after each calculation and ensure the integrity of categorical funds is maintained.

TEACHERS/PERSONNEL

Provide adequate funding to significantly increase mid-career teacher and support staff salaries, on a recurring basis and minimize the negative impacts of the current employee retention crisis, including dealing with the compression resulting from recent legislative increases to minimum salary levels.

Minimize the vacancy crisis without the need for any additional monetary commitment by waiving or shortening the existing reemployment limitations for retirees and adjusting the DROP extension program.

Fund an apprenticeship program that provides bonuses to experienced teachers (with at least 3 years teaching experience) for mentoring aspiring teacher candidates as they gain hands-on teaching experience.

Require post-secondary institutions to allow teacher candidates to be compensated during their student teaching experience.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY/SECURITY SERVICES ENHANCEMENTS

Increase the investment in mental health services by providing funding to enhance training for and increase the number of ~~mental health~~ personnel providing services within schools (including but not limited to school counselors, mental health professionals, school social workers, school psychologists and school nurses and/or emergency medical personnel). ~~to expand and enhance~~

~~mental health services available through school and community coordinated services, and to provide enhanced wrap-around services.~~

Increase the Safe Schools Categorical allocation by at least \$100 million to narrow the funding gap associated with the mandate to staff one “safe school officer” per school and ensure sustainable funding for school districts.

~~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.

Provide funding to school systems to upgrade and strengthen cybersecurity controls.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND STATE ASSESSMENT

- Provide sufficient funding to support efficient implementation of the FAST assessment at the school district level.
- Continue to refine the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) progress monitoring system to ensure equity and fairness in the application of State Accountability.
- Ensure that results from the FAST progress monitoring system are meaningful and can be exported to other student information systems within one week after testing window has closed.
- Ensure student data privacy is provided for all state-mandated computer assessments.
- ~~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 2021-2022, 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.~~
- ~~Give districts flexibility in use of state and federal funds including, but not limited to school recognition, turnaround, SAI, reading, federal stimulus, ESEA/Title 1, and ESSER to provide for extended instructional time (days/hours).~~
- ~~Hold teachers harmless for the calculation of VAM in 2021.~~
- ~~Continue provision of progress monitoring tool in 2022-23 and beyond, transitioning to the B.E.S.T. standards, and expanding to EOC eligible course content.~~

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

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

Revise 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 wrap-around services for Pre-Kindergarten students.