



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2025 STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**



MISSION/GOAL STATEMENT

The Florida Legislature should establish a five-year strategic plan to restore, stabilize, and increase funding through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) to achieve at least the national average in per pupil expenditures to provide the highest quality education and to enable all of our students to be empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENTS

Florida's commitment to Early Childhood Education:

- Expand funding for the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) education program sufficient to cover the cost of a full-day Prekindergarten program for all students.
- Expand VPK to include program options for three-year old students.

FUNDING

Redefine cost factors within the FEFP beyond the comparative wage factor to include factors which disproportionately impact high-cost counties such as housing, transportation, health, and property insurance cost, which ultimately raise educational institutions operational costs.

Increase the state's investment in K-12 education by increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) commensurate with the rate of inflation and cost-of-living increases, but no less than 5 percent new funding, and maintain the full calculation of the Required Local Effort (RLE).

Allow school districts to manage the Florida Empowerment Scholarship (FES) vouchers.

Assist with the reconciliation of potential duplicate cases associated with the Florida Empowerment Scholarships (FES) vouchers and the reporting of FTE.

Ensure that the full cost of increases expected for the Family Empowerment Scholarships (FES) is accounted for during the FY 2025-2026 budget development and that the FTE associated with that projection remains transparent.

Maintain the Education Enrollment Stabilization Program (EES) in an amount necessary to prevent proration as a result of anticipated enrollment increases (FES, immigration, natural disasters, demographic shifts).

Eliminate compression within the FEFP formula.

Increase the Safe Schools Categorical allocation by at least \$40 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.

Increase the mental health allocation to expand services to students and facilitate the hiring of additional school counselors, social workers, and/or psychologists; or to implement other effective mental health strategies.

Continue to invest in teacher and instructional personnel compensation improvement by providing sufficient funding to the Classroom Teacher and Other Instructional Personnel Increase Allocation to ensure salary increases beyond the prior fiscal year amount.

Increase per pupil funding for all students with exceptionalities (Gifted/SWDs) to account for both student population growth and inflationary costs related to services/programs.

Support funding to enhance community resources and post-secondary opportunities such as community-based life skills and transitional programs for young adults with disabilities, including those on the Autism Spectrum who are transitioning out of the K-12 environment.

Provide funding for Dual Enrollment courses or virtual classes outside the traditional school day, above the 1.0 FTE or 25 hours/week.

CAPITAL FUNDING

For purposes of calculation and distribution of capital outlay funds, include PK and Post-secondary/CTE FTE membership counts in the methodology calculation of eligible students for capital outlay funds. (October v. February FTE).

Establish that when distributing 1.5 mill capital outlay funds to charter schools, the total discretionary millage revenue available for distribution shall be reduced by the school district's annual debt service obligation incurred as of June 30 of each prior fiscal year

Support the establishment of a dedicated fund to assist school districts in implementing measures to improve operational efficiency, including the use of alternative energy sources such as solar, the acquisition of electric buses and fleet vehicles, and necessary infrastructure and technology upgrades to support their use.

Request flexibility on the use of Impact Fees for school renovations to better serve new students.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT REFORM

Remove the requirement for the State Board of education to automatically annually adjust the school grading scale.

Establish maximum flexibility to provide for students to achieve concordance for graduation purposes (i.e. PERT, ACT).

GOVERNANCE

Amend F.S. 1001.372(1) to allow school boards to omit one regular monthly meeting during the summer period (June, July or August).

Allow exemption to the school starting times by 2026 for middle and high school students pursuant to F.S. 1001.42(4)(f)(2). However, each school district may, after providing all the previous referenced information through the community, annually exempt a school or schools from these start times, and publicly noticed and discussed by the school board at a publicly noticed meeting. However, no start time may be before 7:15 a.m. Any such waiver shall be annually reported to the Florida Department of Education.

Support the streamlining of statutory and State Administrative Code requirements in order to enhance the efficiency of public-school operations.

Remove restrictions on the disposal of surplus school board owned property.

TEACHERS/PERSONNEL

Amend F.S. 1004.85 to enable more relevant and aligned teacher preparation programs, better serving the needs of districts and students by ensuring better teacher preparation programs (Educator Preparation Institutes).

Amend the teacher apprenticeship program to allow eligibility based on an Associate's degree or 60 credit hours from an accredited higher education institution.

Amend the teacher apprenticeship program for the mentor teacher to have two (2) years of "Highly Effective" teacher ratings, within the last five (5) years in districts identified as "Highly Effective."

Provide incentives and/or funding to facilitate the development of workforce housing specifically for public school personnel.

Include Pre-K staff in the definition of "Instructional Personnel" if employed by a Public School or Charter School.

Provide a bonus in the amount of \$50 to compensate teachers for every student who earns a "C" or higher on an IB Theory of Knowledge subject examination.

SCHOOL/STUDENT SAFETY/WELLNESS

Amend F.S. 316.1896(5) to read, "seventy-seven dollars (\$77) per violation must be distributed to the county for any violations" occurring in any unincorporated areas of the county or to the municipality for any violations occurring in the incorporated boundaries of the municipality in which the infraction occurred or the school district responsible for capturing the violation.

Provide increased funding for safety infrastructure needs, inclusive of school campus hardening, lightning detections systems at schools with outdoor play fields, and/or facilities where no other such device exists within a one-mile radius, and alert systems.

Provide funding to school districts to upgrade and strengthen cyber security controls.

Provide funding to support at least one nurse or emergency medical technician at each school.

Amend F.S. 1003.572 to require collaboration between public and private providers and require private providers to adhere to school board policies and procedures while on school property.

Amend F.S. 1003.572 to require the development of a standardized behavioral support plan.

Allow Districts to establish parameters for service providers which limit disruption to the instructional environment.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

FUNDING

Provide an optional summer school program for all students.

Ensure PK-12 School districts are included in the allocation of any new sources of revenue and that such funds do not supplant existing state support.

Provide sufficient funding necessary to cover increased costs to school districts for annual consumable materials associated with state-adopted texts.

Support increased funding to meet the demands for workforce skills development programs.

Provide school districts with greater flexibility in use of Title I funds by separating the indirect cost from the 10% allowable administrative set-aside and increasing the allowable educational services set-aside to a set 10%.

Provide supplemental funding to offset additional costs of ESE screenings and consultations associated with both FES (formerly UA) evaluations and private service providers engagement and coordination.

Allow for dual enrollment classes taken outside the 1500-minute funded week to generate funding for workforce development/higher education notwithstanding the recalibrated 1.0 FTE.

TEACHER/PERSONNEL SHORTAGE

Restore the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) that was suspended from the Florida Retirement System (FRS) defined benefit calculation in 2011, with commensurate funding.

Permit local districts to design a differentiated pay plan for teachers, inclusive of a performance pay measure, based on local needs.

Implement and fund strategies such as tuition reimbursement, scholarships, flexibility or credit equivalency towards the 600 internship hours, and/or other incentives for talented individuals pursuing a postsecondary degree in School Counseling.] Revised

Allow school district personnel to redeem accrued leave days/time towards down-payment assistance for the purchase of a primary residence.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT REFORM

Provide flexibility within the State's school accountability system to hold districts harmless for students who transition from voucher programs back to the district with limited academic preparedness.

Ensure all recipients of K-12 public funding are subject to the same regulatory and accountability standards.

Ensure that the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) test is offered in Haitian Creole and/or provide translation assistance or tools.

Realign the responsibility to administer the Civic Literacy Assessment Requirement associated with the college requirement established during the 2020-2021 legislative session from school district to state colleges/universities.

Define goals for English Language Learners (ELL) and Exceptional Student Education (ESE) subgroups based on achieving learning gains on state assessments as opposed to achieving proficiency.

Modify F.S. 1008.34 (3)(d)(1) to provide an exemption in the school grade calculation to the home school for students assigned to an alternative school or a department of juvenile justice program for the entirety of the same academic school year, in which the assessment is administered, or for students who have never attended the home school.

Modify F.S. 1008.34(3)(d)(2) to clarify that only students who have attended the home schools in the same academic year should be included in the school grade calculation.

ACADEMICS

Amend F.S. 1009.534 related to the Florida Academic Scholars Award to include student eligibility for the award for those recognized by the National African American Recognition Program as a scholar recipient, consistent with language included in 1009.534 (1)(e) which grants eligibility for students that have been recognized by the National Hispanic Recognition Program as a scholar recipient.

Support adding the attainment of the Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma as one of the eligibility pathways for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

SCHOOL/STUDENT SAFETY

Support full funding for required water safety and swimming instruction in all public schools.

Require charter schools to report their SESIR incident data independently of school districts.

FACILITIES

Allow a public school in the workplace to be established inclusive of exemptions from State Requirements for Education Facilities (SREF) requirements.

POLICY STATEMENTS

FUNDING

Oppose the imposition of unfunded, state mandated expenditures.

Oppose any further compression of the Discretionary Mileage.

Oppose legislation that increases the sovereign immunity liability limits on governmental agencies.

Allow school districts to locally establish contract provisions inclusive of cost structures with post-secondary institutions related to the delivery of Dual Enrollment.

Maintain the current required employers' contribution rate to the Florida Retirement System by absorbing any planned increase in local employers' contribution.

Support funding for Adults with Disabilities.

Ensure districts that receive students from legal immigration or disaster-impacted areas are provided supplemental funding as may be necessary to support all student services.

Restore school districts' discretionary lottery funds to pre-recessionary levels.

CAPITAL FUNDING

Provide adequate school construction funding to support new and existing facilities, technology, maintenance, land acquisition, and class size reduction needs through the establishment of long-term, stable, and recurring revenue sources to fulfill the state's educational facility needs.

Oppose the deletion of impact fees unless replaced with another revenue source.

GOVERNANCE

Support constitutionally elected school boards and elected or appointed superintendents' authority to supervise all public schools.

Establish a level playing field for traditional public schools by extending the current statutory flexibility such as the exemption from State Requirements for Education Facilities (SREF), categorical funding, accountability, class-size reduction compliance, and related penalties assessed on charter schools.

Support maximum flexibility and autonomy for school board operated Early Childhood and VPK Programs.

Oppose legislation that subverts district governance on constitutionally elected school boards and elected or appointed superintendents.

Oppose any legislation that reduces school board authority over charter schools.

Oppose legislation that modifies the governance structure of The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Oppose legislation that breaks up large school districts.

Oppose legislation that negatively impacts the salaries of school board members.

Oppose any changes to current requirements regarding charter conversion of traditional public schools, including conversion by municipalities or that dilute the role of parents, teachers, and community stakeholders.

Support equitable accountability measures for all publicly funded school choice options.

ACADEMICS

Clarify and protect policies, practices, and procedures that govern and legislate the teaching of African American history as stipulated in F.S. 1003.42, adopted in 1994, which requires instruction of history, culture, experiences, and contribution in the state's K-12 curriculum.

Ensure that state-defined principles of individual freedom, if applicable to K-12 curriculum, are applied equally to all special topics such as Women's History, Hispanic Heritage, Holocaust Education and Character Education.

Provide a one-year lead time on the implementation of new state academic requirements for school districts.

Support restoration of the textbook supplement to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program.

Support legislation that expands incentives and provides flexibility to individuals entering the school counseling profession such as creating teacher to counselor pathways or other programs.

STUDENT SAFETY/WELLNESS

Support legislation that increases penalties for firing a gun within 1,000 feet of a school and that establishes penalties for the unsupervised possession of a firearm by a minor.

Support legislation and state funding to increase awareness of opioid drug use and its impact.

Support funding to provide training for students, parents, teachers, school administrators, counseling staff, and volunteers to learn how to recognize behaviors that lead to bullying and harassment.

Support legislation to ensure that the sale of low-THC edibles is precluded within 1,000 feet of a school.

PROJECT REQUESTS

Provide funding to expand the annual Cuban American Studies Institute established by Miami-Dade County Public Schools and implemented in partnership with Florida International University.

Provide funding for the annual African American Studies Institute established by Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Secure supplemental funding for Miami Arts Studios 6-12 @ Zelda Glazer, Arthur & Polly Mays 6-12 Conservatory of the Arts, Classical Education, Aerospace Academies at Hialeah Miami-Lakes Senior High School and Booker T. Washington High School, and Baker Aviation Aerospace (South Dade Campus).

Secure supplemental funding to expand Visual & Performing Arts programs for district schools in areas where these opportunities may be limited or unavailable.

} Added

Secure supplemental funding for the establishment of community hubs to deliver educational and family support, resources, and services in Miami-Dade County.

Allocate funding for a universal mental health screening pilot in Miami-Dade County for all students in grades K-3.

Provide funding for a multi-year demonstration afterschool enrichment program for ESE students at a district elementary or K-8 center.

Request flexibility in project funding to include non-capital uses of funds (personnel, training, etc.).

Provide funding to support the new AI Project established by Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

Provide funding to each public high school that currently offers or plans to offer Early Childhood Education, to support the establishment of an Early Childhood Lab.