



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2023 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.

2023 LEGISLATIVE CRITICAL PRIORITIES

FUNDING

Increase the state's investment in K-12 education by increasing the Base Student Allocation (BSA) commensurate with the rate of inflation or by at least 7 percent and maintain the full calculation of the Required Local Effort (RLE).[‡]

Ensure that any changes to the District Cost Differential take into account cost differences integral to an educational institution's operations, reflecting such costs as average teacher salaries, health insurance for employees, property insurance per FTE, housing, and transportation costs per FTE.

Extend the authorization of the locally voted levy for operating purposes from four years to up to 10 years.

Oppose any further compression of the Discretionary Millage.

Ensure the Funding Compression established during the 2018 legislative session sunsets on June 30, 2023.

Ensure Districts that receive students from storm impacted areas are provided FTE funding necessary to support all student services.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT REFORM

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 student data privacy is provided for all state-mandated computer assessments.[‡]

GOVERNANCE

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

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

**Denotes priority item*

‡ Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

TEACHERS/PERSONNEL

Continue to invest in teacher salaries by continuing to fund the Teacher Salary Increase Allocation as a separate categorical as well as implement and fund strategies such as teacher fellowships and loan forgiveness programs to encourage and attract talented students to enter the field of education. †

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. †

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

Amend F.S. 1012.21 (2) to include Pre-K staff in the definition of “Instructional Personnel.”

Amend F.S. 1012.584 to provide the necessary mental health training to those practitioners who care for students affected by a natural disaster and dealing with hardships.

CAPITAL FUNDING

Support the state fully funding charter school capital outlay and ensure that sharing school board’s Local Discretionary Capital Outlay levy revenue with charter schools is permissible and not required for school districts.

SCHOOL /STUDENT SAFETY

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. †

ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENTS

Increase funding significantly for mental health services for students to facilitate the hiring additional school counselors, social workers, psychologists, school nurses, and/or emergency medical personnel.

Expand funding for the Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Education Program sufficient to cover the cost of a full-day Pre-Kindergarten Program. †

Expand VPK to include program options for three-year-old students.

Provide state funding for 2 administrations of college entrance exams, SAT and/or ACT, during school days.

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

Expand education programming for young adult ESE high school students transitioning out of the K-12 setting by providing tuition exemption for workforce pathways operated by school district career and technical education programs.

**Denotes priority item*

† Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

ADDITIONAL ISSUES

FUNDING

Fund programs taken by students beyond the 1.0 FTE cap or 25 hours a week such as virtual classes outside the traditional school day and year.

Implement a moratorium on new programs or requirements without the allocation of new and adequate funding.

Fully fund Class Size Reduction and provide a penalty waiver process under certain emergency conditions. †

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 Dual Enrollment courses taken beyond the school day, above the 1.0 FTE or 25 hours/week.

Maintain funding for New World School of the Arts and secure additional funding for Miami Arts Studio 6-12 at Zelda Glazer.

Provide for an optional summer school program for all students.

Support additional flexible funding to offer an extended school day and the year beyond 180 days for all students.

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. †

Ensure PreK-12/school districts are included in the allocation of new sources of revenue.

TEACHER/PERSONNEL SHORTAGE

Allow school districts to re-employ personnel after one month of retirement without penalty to the employee's pension to address labor shortage issues.

Amend F.S. 1012.22 to stipulate that performance-based salary adjustments are annual and not recurring.

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

**Denotes priority item*

†Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

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

Incentivize universities to partner with local school districts for the purpose of allowing the school districts to hire student interns, who are enrolled in a teaching program, as resident teachers of record and compensate them during their teaching internship at a district school.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT REFORM

Provide flexibility within the State's school accountability system to hold districts harmless for students who chose to attend voucher programs and then return to the district with minimal educational preparation.

Require all publicly funded educational delivery methods to adhere to the same regulatory and funding standards.

Ensure that the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) test is offered in Haitian Creole.

Realign the responsibility to administer the Civic Literacy Assessment Requirement established during the 2020-2021 Legislative Session from school districts to state colleges/universities.

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.[‡]

CHOICE

Allow school districts with at least 15 percent of student enrollment in charter schools to analyze the need for additional charter 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 a specific academic need the school district is not addressing.

Require that charter schools enrollment lotteries be transparent to all stakeholders and that processes are auditable and driven by governing board adopted school policy.

Require a standardized enrollment window for all public school's choice programs, including charter schools.

SCHOOL /STUDENT SAFETY

Amend F.S. 316.172 to allow local school boards to install cameras on school buses to aid in the enforcement of school bus safety laws and authorize the enforcement of such by local certified law enforcement agencies.

Continue to provide funding for safety infrastructure needs, inclusive of school campus hardening, lightning detection, alert systems, and cameras in school buses and on bus stop-arms.

Amend the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Safety Act to facilitate the requirement of charter schools reporting their SESIR incident data independently of school districts.

FACILITIES

Modify the utilization factor for K-8 centers as follows: 100% of Florida Inventory of School Houses for elementary school student stations, and 95% for middle school student stations.

**Denotes priority item*

‡ Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

Exempt school districts from paying ad valorem tax for leased properties similar to charter schools' exemption.

CYBERSECURITY

Provide funding to school districts to upgrade and strengthen cybersecurity controls.‡

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Amend F.S. 1003.42 (1)b. to require instructional materials related to reproductive health and disease education be approved by the local school board whenever new material is considered for adoption or placed on a five-year adoption cycle, rather than annually.

POLICY STATEMENTS

FUNDING

Fully fund the Florida Education Funding Program components, class size reduction requirement while providing increases to the BSA and other components of the FEFP.

Oppose the imposition of unfunded, state-mandated expenditures.

Maintain the integrity of the FEFP and equity of funding among school districts.

Support an FTE bi-annual method of calculating funding for VPK classrooms.

Oppose any prescribed expenditure such as the "65 percent solution" as a mandate in the Florida Constitution and further oppose any such legislation, unless established as a spending goal with the definition of expenditures, to include all instructional support expenditures.

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

Commit to long-term funding stability for teacher performance pay and teacher evaluation systems.

Allow school districts to locally establish contract provisions inclusive of cost structures with postsecondary 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.

Fully fund school districts' instructional materials needs.

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

**Denotes priority item*

‡Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

Require advertising a tax increase only when the cumulative tax millage is greater than the prior levy and not simply because the ad valorem tax basis generates more proceeds.

Eliminate the arbitrary cap on the number of gifted high school students funded.

Support supplemental funding to create community-based networks that develop, coordinate, and provide quality education, parental training, accessible health care, housing, youth development programs, and employment opportunities to ensure safe neighborhoods for children and their families.

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

Preserve funding that allows M-DCPS to assist refugee and immigrant students and their families or that negatively impacts our students' ability to obtain an education in Florida.

Allocate funds directed to provide supplemental services and support to at-risk students.

Restore funding for the Digital Classroom Allocation to address new secondary school computer science requirements and other school technology needs.

Oppose any further expansion of the Family Empowerment Scholarship (FES) or similar voucher programs.*

Support capping the annual increase of the Family Empowerment Scholarship*

Support funding to enhance community resources and postsecondary 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.

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.

Fully fund the Public Education Capital Outlay Program that involves construction and maintenance programs for public school districts and ensures that school districts receive their fair share.

Oppose any further reduction in capital millage available to school districts for the purpose of balancing the operating budget.

Oppose any attempt to equalize the capital outlay levy.

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

Expand the allowable use of a locally voted upon sales tax to include operating expenses that maintain, renovate, or repair existing school facilities or maintain, secure, or upgrade school technology equipment.

*Denotes priority item

† Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

GOVERNANCE

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

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.

Restore school board authority over travel providing greater flexibility to carry out its duties.

CHARTER SCHOOLS

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

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

Support capital funding for charter schools that:

- Creates neither a reduction of funding to traditional public schools in operating or capital funding nor a requirement for additional taxing mandate on the local school district;
- Requires public input; and
- Protects taxpayers' investment ensuring that capital funding be spent only on assets that can be returned to the public school district.

CHOICE

Support increased accountability measures for all publicly-funded school choice options.

Oppose all publicly funded programs that lack equitable and sufficient accountability measures.

Require more accountability from schools receiving Family Empowerment Scholarship (FES) funding and cap annual increases.

Require all public choice schools to follow a "school choice" enrollment policy, which could include but would not be limited to: common application window(s), universal choice application, universal enrollment platform, public and auditable lottery process.

ACADEMICS

Oppose legislation that would limit offering gifted programs to eligible high school students.

Require the state to provide a minimum of one-year lead time on new state requirements for school districts.

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

**Denotes priority item*

† Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards

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

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT

Revise the current accountability assessment system to:

- Provide a waiver from the passage of the English Language Arts (ELA) requirement for ELL students who have passed all other high school graduation requirements and have been enrolled in school less than two consecutive years; and
- Define goals for ELL and Exceptional Student Education (ESE) subgroups based on achieving learning gains on state assessments as opposed to achieving proficiency.

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.

Ensure that the sale of low-THC edibles is precluded within 1,000 feet of a school.

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

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Restore performance-based incentive funding for postsecondary CAPE Industry Credentials.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Amend state statutes to clarify that meeting with legislators to advocate for the Board’s legislative priorities is not a violation of the Sunshine.

**Denotes priority item*

† Denotes priority of Greater Florida Consortium of School Boards