

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY

2010 LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

FUNDING

Adequacy

Adequate Funding is defined as having appropriate resources to insure that every preK-12 student has access to the technology, innovative programs, high quality teachers and support staff that will enable him/her to meet the state-mandated requirements for high school graduation and, further, that the educational programs and services are delivered in a modern, safe and secure physical environment.

State Revenue Source

The 2010 Legislature must establish a financially stable and expanding source of *state* funding for preK-12 education that will generate sufficient revenue to:

- Provide at least the same level of funding, adjusted for the three-year rate of inflation, that was appropriated for the 2006-07 school year which is the threshold year used to determine eligibility for a state to receive federal State Fiscal Stabilization Funds without seeking a waiver;
- Prevent any further funding cuts to public education;
- Stop the erosion of state funding for public education and the increasing reliance on local property taxpayers to fund public schools. (The percent of local funding within the Florida Education Finance Program has increased from 38.16 per cent in 1999-2000 to 49.87 per cent in 2009-2010.);
- Allow school districts to restore some of the programs and services they have been forced by budget shortfalls to eliminate;
- Support the new unfunded programs mandated by the 2008 Legislature (school grading changes) and the 2009 Legislature (Differentiated Accountability);
- Insure that new revenue will be available for the 2011 Legislature to fill the funding hole that will result from the scheduled demise of federal stimulus funds, and
- Continue to fund Class Size Reduction but ***not*** at the expense of the basic education program.

Fiscal Impact Information

Require that any legislation that would create a new education program or expand an existing program must include a statement of the program's additional fiscal impact on Florida's taxpayers.

CAPITAL OUTLAY

Optional Capital Outlay Levy (2 mills)

Restore the school boards' local 2 mill capital outlay levy authority.

Oppose any additional shifting of local capital outlay millage to the general operating fund.

State Support for Construction/Technology

Provide state funding for capital outlay needs including: technology; building replacement, renovation and remodeling and maintenance, and replacing worn, inefficient ventilation systems and aging school buses.

Portables

Allow, but do not require, local governments and school boards to include the capacity of temporary relocatable facilities in their level of service calculations.

CLASS SIZE REDUCTION

Modify the interpretation of the Class Size Reduction constitutional amendment to give school boards some flexibility in meeting this mandate in the 2010-2011 school year.

Mitigate the funding penalty that is to be implemented against school districts who do not meet the class-by-class cap in 2010-2011, and

Support asking voters to modify the class size amendment in order to provide schools some flexibility in meeting the mandate, such as calculating it on a school-wide average while prohibiting any single class from exceeding a specific cap.

DIFFERENTIATED ACCOUNTABILITY

Replace the severe negative consequences that will be imposed on schools that fail to meet the Differentiated Accountability standards with positive incentives that recognize student gains.

Urge the Legislature to press for changes to the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), specifically to limit school choice under the Act only to those students who have failed.

CATEGORICAL PROGRAMS

Instructional Materials

Give school boards discretion to determine the types of instructional materials to be purchased with all of their Instructional Materials categorical funds including: online textbook and digital curriculum, hard-backed and soft-backed textbooks;

Allow districts that make online textbook and digital curriculum available to their students to use a portion of their Instructional Materials funds to purchase laptops and other digital devices; and Authorize school districts to forgo a scheduled textbook adoption cycle provided the district can demonstrate that relevant and appropriate instructional materials will be available for every student.

Flexibility

Provide flexibility in the use of all categorical funds including those that have been rolled into the FEFP and those that remain separate from the FEFP. (Examples: Supplemental Academic Instruction, Safe Schools, Reading Instruction.)

School Recognition Program

Hold the School Recognition Program in abeyance until the economy improves (\$130 million in state funds allocated to this program in 2009-10; \$10.7 million to Broward.)

FLORIDA RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Reinstate re-employment of instructional personnel and administrators after one month of retirement upon recommendation of the superintendent and approval of the school board

WAIVER AUTHORITY

Restore the authority of the Commissioner of Education to waive statutes, except for those dealing with life safety issues, upon request of the local school board. (Example: end-of-course exams waived for students meeting certain eligibility standards.)

FCAT

High School Assessment Standard

Give school boards the option of using the ACT or SAT, in lieu of the FCAT, as the assessment standard for high school graduation.

Use of Concordant Assessments

Support revising the FCAT assessment program to provide that a student who has not earned passing scores on the grade 10 assessment does *not* have to participate in a minimum number of retakes of that assessment provided he or she achieves a score on a different standardized assessment that has passing scores concordant to those of the FCAT such as the ACT or SAT.

Dates of Administration

Adopt legislation prohibiting the FCAT testing period from being scheduled during a week in which major religious holidays are to be observed.

CIVICS EDUCATION

Support integrating civics education and Florida History in the appropriate K-12 curriculum.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Expand the statute dealing with truancy to include “Educational Neglect“ which is the failure of a parent or guardian to ensure that a student regularly attends school or who keeps a student out of school for reasons that are not permissible.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Revise the statute governing the composition of school advisory committees to stipulate that a majority of the members of each school committee cannot be employees of that particular school rather than the current prohibition which stipulates that a majority of the members cannot be employed anywhere in the school district.

PUBLIC MEETING NOTIFICATIONS

Permit school boards to satisfy the state law that requires notices of regular and special school board meetings, of meetings of advisory committees, and of proposed and amended school board policies by posting such notices on school district websites as an alternative to posting notices in newspapers.

BECON FUNDING

Amend the statute providing a definition of public television stations to include “non-commercial stations licensed solely for educational programming” to allow BECON to be eligible for a portion of the state funds annually allocated to public television and radio stations.

OPPOSE:

1. **Implementing any new programs**, whether funded or unfunded, until there is sufficient revenue to adequately fund the basic program;
2. Legislation that subverts or bypasses the **constitutional authority of school boards** and superintendents;
3. Further equalizing the **Local Discretionary Millage**;
4. Expanding any type of **voucher program** including the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program which is a form of a voucher program;
5. **Dividing** large school districts into smaller ones;
6. Imposing any minimum level of **operating fund expenditures** on direct classroom instruction;
7. Further reducing **Advanced Placement /International Baccalaureate** funding, and
8. Eliminating impact **fees**.

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