

**Annual Report of the Federal Relations Network Subcommittee
Annual Summer Conference ~ June 2014**

Because of the decision to schedule our Federal Issues & Advocacy Conference in the Fall in odd-numbered years and in the spring in even-numbered years, our Federal Relations Network Subcommittee orchestrated two FIA Conferences this year – the first was held in September 2013 and the second was in February 2014. For both of these Conferences, about 15 school board members, lobbyists, and others attended issue briefings and meetings with senators, representatives, key committee staff, US DOE staff, and/or White House staff to advocate on issues that are vital to the education of Florida's children.

In addition, our September 2013 FIA Conference included our participation in a Sequestration "Bake Sale" that highlighted the damaging effects of sequestration. Several national education leaders were featured speakers at this event, including our own FSBA President, Patty Hightower. Our February FIA Conference was held in conjunction with NSBA's Advocacy Institute – the new and improved replacement for NSBA's Federal Relations Network Conference. We found that the new format and content of the Advocacy Institute provided broader and more meaningful workshops and offered an excellent "springboard" for our FSBA FIA Conference.

Though we sometimes encountered a lack of responsiveness from some of those with whom we met, overall, participants in these FIA Conferences found them to be informative and worthwhile, particularly with regard to building relationships with policy-makers and key staff. The next FIA Conference will be held in the Fall of 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Bev Slough
FRN Subcommittee Chair
St. Johns County School Board