

FSBA POSITIONS ON ISSUES OF CONTINUING CONCERN

ACCOUNTABILITY & ASSESSMENTS

FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Fully fund all costs to implement the changes in the accountability requirements, including funding for development of local assessments, professional development, and technology needs.
- Pursue alignment of state and federal assessment and accountability requirements to ensure that ELL students are served for at least two years in ESOL programs before their performance is included in the calculation of school and district grades.
- Limit standardized testing and define alternate pathways for assessing student progress and proficiency for all students, including populations of students enrolled in ESE and ESOL programs.
- Remove ESE Center schools from the school grade portion of the state accountability system.
- Revise Florida's assessment and accountability system to:
 - Ensure that students are assessed for grade level proficiency and the progress made from the beginning to the end of the same school year;
 - Ensure that assessment results are returned to students, parents, and teachers prior to the start of the subsequent school year for diagnostic and planning purposes;
 - Ensure that state assessment system is correlated to national and international assessments for comparison of student progress and proficiency;
 - Eliminate the reversion of assessment scores to home schools for those students attending a school or program other than their home school;
 - Create concordant passing scores on the PERT, PSAT, SAT, and ACT for the state developed EOC exams that are required for graduation; and
 - Consolidate high school assessments so that one exam can serve multiple purposes such as college readiness and high school proficiency.
- Reestablish the Special Diploma as an option for special needs students and revise current graduation regulations to include the special diploma students as graduates in the four year rate.
- Revise the school grading system to factor in student demographics such as mobility rates, poverty rates, and percentage of ELL and ESE students.
- Repeal any provisions that require passage of any EOC exam for funding purposes.
- Oppose any effort to impose a turnaround option on a low performing school without the consent of the school advisory council and district school board.

FUNDING

FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Continue to appropriate sufficient categorical funding to fully fund technology needs, including funds necessary for infrastructure, hardware, software, training, online testing, virtual instruction, digital textbooks and content, data management, and other technology needs and authorize complete district flexibility in the use of instructional materials funding to be applied for traditional or digital content and materials.
- Fully fund all costs for student transportation, including the additional funding necessary to address:
 - the calculation of secondary student transportation based on 2 students per seat, rather than 3 students per seat;
 - the maintenance and replacement costs for school buses that must travel over dirt or unpaved roads and for other unusual wear and tear;
 - additional funding necessary for training, equipment, and safety features for the transportation of special needs/ ESE students.
- Restore the funding level for the “ESE Guarantee” categorical fund to pre-recession levels.
- Increase Safe Schools funding to provide for the actual district expenditures for school resource officers and other related expenditures.
- Provide for compliance with Class Size Reduction requirements to be measured at the school average for each grade grouping and ensure that no school district is assessed a penalty for non-compliance with class size reduction requirements if the district school board has expended all class size funding appropriately.
- Authorize the Department of Education to designate, in addition to those industry certifications that have statewide articulation agreements, other rigorous industry certifications as eligible for additional weighted funding.
- Create a categorical to fund the additional costs associated with educating students living in poverty and distribute based on a district’s percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch if above the state average.
- Provide the funding and flexibility for school districts to provide proper psychological and sociological assistance to students and parenting skills for parents.
- Support legislation that enables Florida to collect state sales tax due on remote and internet purchases of goods and services that are currently taxable offline.

PERSONNEL

FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Reduce the weighting of the student learning growth component to no more than 1/3 of a teacher's evaluation.
- Allow local flexibility in the negotiation and design of performance based salary plans.
- Do not require districts to pay into FRS for employees who have already retired but have returned to work and are prevented from receiving retirement pay.
- Add a line item in the General Appropriations Act that lists the employer contribution rate and projected cost for employee pensions, any unfunded liability, administrative costs, and the health insurance subsidy for each class of the FRS.

FACILITIES

FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Ensure that the distribution of state PECO funds is based on need.
- Oppose any efforts to reduce, eliminate, or direct the distribution of school impact fees.
- Provide local control over the use of revenue derived from the local capital outlay millage, including the local decision option to use these funds to cover the cost of technology software required to run the equipment purchased from capital dollars.

SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS

FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Require that approval of charter applications is restricted to applicants that meet a specific academic or space need which the local school district does not or cannot meet or that the district determines to be in the best interest of students.
- Ensure that the district oversight responsibilities are specifically enumerated and require that the authorizing school district is reimbursed for the actual cost of the mandated services the district must provide.
- Oppose any effort to divert any local tax funds to charter schools without the consent of the school board.
- Expand the statutory causes for nonrenewal or termination of a charter school to include the "academic welfare" of students.

- Maintain the current delivery system that allows local school districts and community colleges to offer adult education programs, provide incentive funding for offering and successful completion of Dual Enrollment courses, and limit the number of changes to instructional materials that a college or professor can require school districts to purchase so that each text maintains a minimum of a three year cycle of use.
- Restore funding for the full year VPK program to pre-recession levels, expand eligibility to include younger students, and lower the school age attendance requirement from 6 years old to 4 years old, making prekindergarten and kindergarten mandatory.
- Align drop out prevention statutes with eligibility requirements for virtual instruction so that students who have dropped out of school are eligible for virtual instruction.

LOCAL AUTHORITY

FSBA urges the Legislature to:

- Create a mechanism in law for school districts to request, from the Governor or the State Board of Education, waivers to laws or regulations.
- Prior to implementation of any major education legislation, provide at least a full year interval in order to give the State Board of Education and local school boards sufficient time to pursue rule-making and address the logistics of implementation.
- Reject any attempt to dramatically increase sovereign immunity caps for local governments or to decouple caps for local governments from the caps that apply to state agencies.
- Oppose modification of the school district governance structure without input from the local school board and the residents within the county.
- Clarify that the Statute that exempts school buses from the commercial vehicle PIP liabilities was designed to limit school district liabilities in this regard.
- Oppose any efforts to limit or impede Constitutional duties and authority of local school boards.