

FSBA 2015 Federal Platform

PRIORITIES

The Florida School Boards Association (FSBA) calls upon the U.S. Congress to fulfill its role in supporting and promoting a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education. In pursuit of this goal, FSBA urges Congress to:

- Proceed with the reauthorization of ESEA, including:
 - Elimination of sanctions against states and school districts;
 - Revision and alignment of the federal and state definition of the Limited English Proficient (LEP) student entry date to allow for at least a two year period of public school attendance before the LEP student assessment scores are applied to the student, personnel, school, or school district for accountability purposes.
- Provide sufficient federal funding to pursue and implement federal initiatives and mandates, including funding to:
 - Increase the federal investment in IDEA to the guaranteed level of 40% of the increased costs to meet special education mandates;
 - Increase the federal investment in public education to fully fund the government's share of ESEA and avoid provisions that would divert substantial federal resources into competitive grant programs;
 - Provide adequate funding for Enhancing Education Through Technology and other programs that help school districts improve digital learning, assessment, and teaching.
 - Support the Entrant and Refugee Assistance Program under the Targeted Assistance and Immigrant Education allocation that helps offset school district costs to provide immigrant education and provide federal funds for any unreimbursed services needed to address the impact of immigrant unaccompanied minors and ensure operational readiness;
 - Restore Safe Schools Act as a separate non-competitive grant, support increased federal funding, and support the authorized use of these funds to include, but not be limited to:
 - employ well-trained and equipped law enforcement professionals to protect children while in schools;
 - provide capital improvements, fixtures, and equipment that will enhance the safety and security of students and personnel;
 - increase access to comprehensive school counseling and related mental health diagnostic and intervention services.
- Support and monitor FCC implementation of the "ConnectEd" plan for E-Rate and increase overall funding for E-Rate.
- Support legislation that would allow states to collect state sales tax due on remote and internet purchases of goods and services that are currently taxable offline.

ADDITIONAL ISSUES OF CONCERN

FSBA calls upon Congress to:

- Co-sponsor and support the bipartisan Local School Board Governance and Flexibility Act, S. 2451 and H.R. 1386, or similar legislation designed to enhance local school board authority while ensuring that the U.S. Department of Education does not overstep its authority.
- Support the reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act (TRIA) ensuring that the federal government would share some of the losses with the insurance market should a significant event occur, thus ensuring affordable insurance coverage.
- Continue Medicaid reimbursements to school districts.