



# Florida School Boards Association

*The voice of education in Florida.*

## 2017-2018 PROPOSED BUDGET TALKING POINTS

- By investing state funds elsewhere and once again adopting the roll back rate on the RLE millage, the state has chosen to pursue an austerity budget rather than make the investment in public education that is sufficient to sustain current operations as envisioned in the Florida Constitution.
- The proposed budget provides for total Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) funding of \$20,428,201,731 – an increase over the current year of \$241,431,317 or 1.20% on a statewide basis. Even so, 17 school districts will see a decrease in total FEFP funding and, for the remaining school districts, this is not sufficient to cover the costs associated with enrollment growth and the necessary related operating expenses.
- The proposed budget provides \$7,220.72 in total FEFP funds per student – an increase over the current year of \$24.49 or 0.34% on a statewide basis. Even so, 20 school districts will see a decrease in total FEFP funds per student. Further, this leaves Florida's per-student funding levels firmly mired in the nation's bottom quartile and at least \$1,500 below the national average.
- The proposed budget calls for a reduction in the Required Local Effort (RLE) millage rate from the current 4.638 mills to 4.322 mills. This removes more than \$500 million in potential funding for education programs and services. The budget makes no significant effort to replace these local funds with state funding.
- The proposed budget provides the smallest increase in the state's investment in K-12 education since the Recession, including an unwarranted and unnecessary decrease in the Base Student Allocation.
- The proposed budget fails to meet inflation or make significant progress to fill remaining post-recession funding gaps for programs such as Supplemental Academic Instruction, Safe Schools, Student Transportation, Instructional Materials, and related services for all students.
- The proposed budget fails to foster the economic prosperity that occurs when education funding flows back into the community as the natural result of the school district often being the largest public employer in each district.
- The proposed budget fails to provide adequate funding for competitive salaries that advance efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified and effective teachers and school administrators.
- The proposed budget fails to make an equal investment in ALL public school students – including charter school students – by focusing, instead, on subgroups of students rather than benefiting all students.

*The mission of the Florida School Boards Association is to increase student achievement through development of effective school board leadership and advocacy for public education.*