



2015 State Legislative Program

Broward County Public Schools

GOAL STATEMENT

As the 6th largest school district in the Nation, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) educates 10 percent of Florida's student population. BCPS champions educational policies that not only impact students within their District but affects students in every classroom across the state of Florida from cradle to career. The Florida Legislature should boost funding and adopt policies that educate today's students to succeed in tomorrow's world.

2015 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

1. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

Broward County Public Schools opposes high stakes testing and supports legislation that will focus on increasing student achievement by providing an appropriate transition timeline for implementation of the Florida Standards holding students and teachers harmless.

2. CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY/ GOVERNANCE:

Broward County Public Schools supports legislation that would preserve school board constitutional and home rule authority and opposes legislation that would subvert, bypass or undermine that authority.

3. CHARTER SCHOOLS:

Broward County Public Schools supports legislation that creates parity between traditional public schools and public charter schools by extending the same statutory flexibility to all K-12 public education schools.

4. EDUCATION FUNDING:

Broward County Public Schools supports a state budget that will re-invest in public education, restoring state funding to pre-recession levels.

For more information please contact
the Legislative Affairs Department at 754-321-2608.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT:

- Support the delay of utilizing student standardized test results for teacher performance evaluations and modify current laws to give districts a one year moratorium from making personnel decisions based on student test scores.
- Support District and School accountability by aligning District report card criteria and School report card criteria.
- Support a modification of End-of-Course exams (EOC) weights from 30 percent to 15 percent of a student's total grade and allow students to retake the exams necessary to pass for graduation
- As an alternative to Florida Standards Assessment, permit the option of portfolio assessments to demonstrate mastery in all grades.
- Repeal requirements for districts to adopt End-of-Year exams in every subject not covered by the state assessment program; if not, fully fund the development of End-of-Year exams.
- Modify Florida's Value Added Model so that student performance represents 25% of a teacher's evaluation instead of 50% as specified in Florida Statue 1008.22(8).
- Require the same accountability for students utilizing the Florida Tax Credit and John McKay Scholarship Programs as is required for students attending traditional public schools.
- Authorize Technical Colleges to offer Career and Technical Education programs as credit hour instead of clock hour as appropriate and necessary.
- Authorize Technical Colleges to award college credit certificates and/or limited AAS degrees from the program inventory maintained by the DOE as approved by the governing board of the institution.
- Permit Technical Colleges to designate from 10% to 15% of their student tuition collected for financial aid purposes as specified in Florida Statute 1009.22 (5).

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES:

- Preserve school board constitutional and home rule authority and oppose legislation that would subvert, bypass or undermine that authority.
- Amend the vendor pre-qualification criteria set forth in the State Requirements for Educational Facilities (SREF) Section 4.1 to allow reciprocity between school districts.

CHARTER SCHOOLS:

- Oppose the submission of additional charter school applications by any charter governing board, Management Company or consulting group named as providing oversight or services to a charter school in either financial or academic corrective action, as noticed by sponsor.

- Prohibit the submission of additional charter school applications for any new unrelated charter school for the first three years of operation. Prior performance can be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation of a charter school application.
- Allow district/sponsors to require a certificate of occupancy by the 30th day prior to the first day of school. If the charter school is unable to meet the requirement then the first year shall revert to a planning year, in which the school may not enroll students and;
- Allow the sponsor to grant an extension of receipt if the charter school can show good cause for failure to provide a certificate of occupancy 30 days prior to the first day of school. Such extension shall not exceed 15 days and the Sponsor should have the sole discretion as to the granting of an extension and;
- Should a charter school have exhausted a planning or deferral year, the charter shall terminate without action by the sponsor.
- Require all approved charter school applicants to provide verified evidence of a surety bond or secured escrow account in an amount equal to or great than the reasonably anticipated cost of total operations to include all salaries, leases and purchase services for the first year of operation.
- Require background checks of all charter applicants to include information regarding prior association with charter governing boards, management companies, or as an independent consultant providing services to charter schools for a fee.

EDUCATIONAL FUNDING:

- Florida is ranked 42nd in the nation in K-12 spending. At a minimum the state should increase per pupil funding through the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), restoring the per student allocation to pre-recession levels.
- Support the rate of local tax roll collections from 96 percent to 94 percent for Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) calculation purposes.
- Restore local school boards authority to levy allowable discretionary capital outlay millage by .25 mills over a two (2) year period until full restoration of 2 mills for capital outlay needs.
- Oppose any effort to redirect Capital Improvement Millage from local school districts.
- Modify calculations for non-compliance with the constitutional class size requirement to be calculated by the school-wide average for all public schools and;
- Require Class Size non-compliance funds to be expended on the lowest performing elementary schools based on the state reading assessment for which an additional hour of instruction is required pursuant to 1011.62 (1)(f) FS.
- Create a new Categorical Program to fully fund the 300 lowest performing elementary schools and allow the school districts the flexibility in providing the additional time.

- Extend the deadline for student funding allocation, which will allow funding to move with students coming into the district or returning to the district.
- Fund the costs associated with the Dual Enrollment program.
- Allow for partial Full Time Equivalent (FTE) funding for the administrative oversight of students participating in Home Education.
- Allow Districts to waive the \$30 per semester fee for adult education basic or GED courses offered to K-12 eligible and ESE students in jails, stockades or DJJ facilities and;
- Allow Districts to waive the \$38 ACT fee as an alternative to the Florida State Assessment for W08, W8A and W09 students within the first 12 months of the cohorts' graduation.
- Fund critical technology needs including infrastructure and portable delivery devices, resulting from the rapidly expanding requirements for the use of online assessments, digital and virtual instruction and data collection which Districts must meet by 2015 or delay that deadline.
- Support additional technology funding that allows schools to meet the minimum computer operating system requirements set for using the Florida Standards Assessment test.
- Fund all costs associated with hurricane/ disaster shelter maintenance and provide for the cost of construction for Enhanced Hurricane Protection Areas (EHPA).

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