

# FLORIDA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION, INC

203 South Monroe Street ~ Tallahassee, FL 32301

Phone: 850/414-2578 ~ Fax: 850/414-2585

[www.fsba.org](http://www.fsba.org)

PRESIDENT  
BEVERLY SLOUGH  
SWITZERLAND

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
DR. WAYNE BLANTON  
TALLAHASSEE

## Budget Recommendations December 2008

The Florida School Boards Association realizes that the Legislature is committed to fulfilling the constitutional mandate calling for the state to make adequate provision for a “uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education.” FSBA is equally committed to ensuring that elected school boards carry out their constitutional obligation to “operate, control and supervise all free public schools within the school district.” In difficult economic times, it is essential that the state and local school boards cooperate to ensure that, to every extent possible, these constitutional obligations are not compromised. It is in that spirit of cooperation that FSBA offers our recommendations for reductions and flexibility in both funding and policy. It is important to note, however, that some of these recommendations will curtail, limit, or otherwise negatively impact, educationally desirable programs and services and, thus, are intended to be implemented only as needed to avoid additional disastrous cuts to education funding and/or to mitigate the effects of funding reductions that have already occurred.

### *Class Size Reduction*

- Support a constitutional amendment to maintain the class size calculation at the school level while ensuring that the number of students in any individual class may not exceed the constitutional limit for each grade grouping by more than five students
- Support modifications to statutory provisions to maximize flexibility, support practical implementation, and avoid disruptions
- Hold class size reduction penalties in abeyance until 2010-2011

### *Personnel*

- Eliminate, hold in abeyance, or provide local flexibility in implementing statutory requirements to recognize prior years of service for new hires
- Eliminate, hold in abeyance, or provide local flexibility in implementing state required bonus payment programs, including, but not limited to funds associated with:
  - \* School Recognition
  - \* Merit Award Program
  - \* Excellent Teacher Program
  - \* Differentiated Salary Programs
  - \* AP/IB/AICE Bonuses
  - \* Teacher Lead

### *Unfunded / Underfunded Mandates*

- Support constitutional and/or statutory provisions to ensure that the state cannot mandate or assign any new, expanded, or modified programs or responsibilities to any political subdivision in such a way as to necessitate additional local expenditures by the political subdivision unless such programs or responsibilities are fully funded by the state or unless such programs or responsibilities are approved for funding by a vote of the local legislative body of the political subdivision
- Eliminate, hold in abeyance, or provide local flexibility in the implementation of current requirements that are not specifically funded, including but not limited to:
  - \* Elementary and Middle School PE requirements
  - \* Reading Coaches
  - \* Math Coaches
  - \* Career Academies / Industry Certified Programs / Ready To Work
  - \* Major Areas of Interest
  - \* New High School Grading System
  - \* Elimination of Summer FCAT Retakes
  - \* Development of End of Course Exams
  - \* New Virtual Instruction Programs
  - \* Expanded School Breakfast and Lunch Programs
- Eliminate, hold in abeyance, or provide local flexibility in providing transportation to a higher performing public school as a sanction under NCLB
- Delay adoption of Next Generation Standards until sufficient funds are available to ensure appropriate teacher training and revisions of FCAT

### *Capital Outlay Funding*

- Restore the full 2 mill capital outlay levy
- Continue the policy that permits school districts to pay property and casualty insurance costs from the proceeds of this levy
- Permit the purchase and upgrading of analytical and operational software and the purchase of maintenance vehicles and equipment from the proceeds of this levy
- Oppose any additional shifting of capital millage authority to the general operating fund

### *Operating Funding*

- Increase – from \$100 to \$150 per student – the cap the amount generated from the local .25 discretionary millage
- Eliminate the allocation of \$5 per student to School Advisory Councils
- Examine the time frame for adoption of new instructional materials and adoption of new standards to determine if there may be savings in delaying the adoption schedule
- Freeze the Corporate Income Tax and McKay Scholarship Programs at current level

### *New Funding Options*

- Give full and open-minded consideration to identifying new state and local revenue sources to support education and/or to diversity Florida's revenue structure. New revenue options may include, but are not limited to:
  - \* Sales Tax Collections on Internet Sales / Streamlined Sales Tax Project
  - \* Close Sales Tax Loopholes
  - \* Intangibles Tax
  - \* Cigarette Tax
  - \* Beverage Tax
  - \* Gross Receipts Tax
  - \* Motor Fuel & Diesel Fuel Tax
  - \* Mortgage Transfer Fee
- Oppose any efforts to cap, reduce, eliminate, or direct the distribution of school impact fees, local sales tax levies, and/or local operating millage levies
- Authorize school districts to levy, without referendum, local sales tax and/or millage

### *Local Control and Governance*

- Provide school districts with complete flexibility in the expenditure of all appropriated funds, including flexibility to dedicate capital funds for operating purposes
- Provide school districts with maximum flexibility in designing the school calendar, including flexibility to set the school start date and to determine the number of school days per week and per year
- Extend flexibility provided to high performing districts to all districts