



**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

CONSIDER FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS FOR 2006

I recommend that the School Board adopt the list of federal legislative proposals for the 2006 Session of the 109th Congress and authorize School Board Members and designated district staff to work with other school districts, representatives of appropriate state and national organizations, and members of the Florida Congressional Delegation to secure legislative approval.

- The attached proposals are based on actions taken during the 2005 Session of the 109th Congress, including passage of appropriations earmarked for Palm Beach County \$150,000 for a school resource officer training program. These appropriations were obtained by local Congressional Delegation members Mark Foley, Alcee Hastings, Clay Shaw and Robert Wexler and Senators Bob Graham and Bill Nelson.
- Emphasis is placed to restore cuts made for 2006 and increase funding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind), and reauthorization of the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act.
- These recommendations are consistent with the positions expressed by the Florida School Boards Association, the National School Boards Association, American Association of School Administrators, the Council of Urban Boards of Education, and the Council of Great City Schools. District staff will work collaboratively with these organizations on these recommendations.
- These recommendations address issues that are of paramount importance for Palm Beach County. The School Board and staff may identify additional issues for which support is needed, when that occurs a recommendation will be brought to the School Board for formal action while Congress is still in session.
- District staff will work with the School Board's contracted legislative liaisons that include Schoolhouse Consulting Group, Inc. (Vernon Pickup-Crawford) and Alcalde and Fay (former PB County Congressman Skip Bafalis and staff) for federal approval of local priorities.

BOARD GOALS: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8

LEGAL SIGN-OFF: N/A

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FINANCIAL IMPACT - There is no financial impact to the General Fund budget

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

SCHOOL BOARD OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

109TH CONGRESS - 2006 SESSION

Priorities

For the 2006 Session of the 109th Congress, the School Board of Palm Beach County makes the following requests of the Congress and Executive Offices:

General Funding Policy

The School Board of Palm Beach County strongly objects to the 2006 budget cuts made for all of Prek-12 education, particularly ESEA, IDEA, Perkins Vocational Education and Safe Schools. The 2006 Session of the 109th Congress must not only restore those cuts, but return to its prior stated intent of providing \$16 Billion increase for "No Child Left Behind" and to bring the federal share of IDEA to 40% of total cost. The 2006 budget reductions constitute an unfunded mandate which places an unfair and undue burden on state and local education agencies.

2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB—"No Child Left Behind")

1. Rules implementing provisions of HR1, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 ("No Child Left Behind"), should carry out legislative intent and not conflict with existing states' laws concerning performance expectations of students, educators and schools.
2. The current dual system of Florida's NCLB Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) Plan and the Florida A+ Accountability Plan should be replaced with a single state accountability plan for all schools. Accordingly, conflicting federal statutes and US Department of Education Guidance should be modified to allow for such a unified plan. Of particular note is ability to measure all students and all subgroups, particularly special education, limited English proficiency and alternative (at risk) education, on learning gains made from entry into the program to exit or end of year, instead of a static mid-year exam (snapshot).
3. Funding should \$16 Billion as committed by the President and Congress in 2001-2002. For 2006, it should be increased by at least \$2.5 Billion (\$500 Million to make up for Congressional reduction of the President's 2004 \$1.0 Billion recommendation) to meet growth and workload. Under no circumstances does the School Board accept any reduction of federal funds to balance the federal budget or reduce the federal debt.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Funding should be mandatory and reflect 40% of district costs as proposed when IDEA was first adopted. For 2006, provide at least a \$2.5 Billion increase in IDEA funding (\$500 Million to make up for Congressional reduction of President's 2004 \$1.0 Billion recommendation and to move toward full 40% federal funding of IDEA). Under no circumstances does the School Board accept any reduction of federal funds to balance the federal budget or reduce the federal debt.

Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act

1. Reauthorize Perkins Act and maintain funding as an entitlement program, not a competitive grant. Update language to support career academies, workforce development and staff training.
2. Provide a "hold harmless" or other liability protection for businesses and school district personnel who provide for student internships, clinical experiences and apprenticeships.
3. Consider linkage with reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation Act (WIA) for joint training efforts, similar to that in place in Florida between the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) and the Department of Education.
4. Performance accountability should be based on a student's success in meeting industry proficiency standards (or certification).

Head Start Authorization

Support the proposed emphasis on instruction in pre-academic skills and more rigorous education requirements for Head Start teachers contained in both the House and Senate drafts; oppose any effort to permit a block grant of Head Start funds to states and maintain the flow of funding as a locally-based program.

High School Initiatives

The conflicts within NCLB should be removed before further legislation to expand high school test requirements is made. High school graduation requirements should remain the province of the states and not become federal policy unless and until NCLB is funded at the original Administration's 2001-2002 proposal of \$16.5 Billion adjusted for student growth and inflationary costs through 2006.

E-Rate

The Universal Service Fund should remain the funding source for E-Rate. Congress should develop a permanent fix for the government accounting issue that resulted in a slowdown in the processing of E-Rate applications in 2004.

Medicaid

Medicaid should be amended to include specific health related services (s.1903(C) of the Social Security Act related to Parts B and C of IDEA and Section 504) for eligibility of reimbursement of administrative costs associated with funding, screening and evaluating children for health/developmental conditions that may lead to special education identification. Services provided through a child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) should be considered together, not separately, for reimbursement—documentation of each instance of service, now required, is inappropriate.

Palm Beach County Projects

1. Provide \$750,000 to expand Family Literacy education to include English as a Second Language (ESL) for adults and to continue project READ for new high school immigrant students. This grant would implement a computer-software based program to enable adults to achieve their high school diploma in a shorter time than traditional adult basic or GED classes.

2. Provide \$500,000 for the training and equipping of regional (area administrative office) school police support to focus on reduction of gang and violent crimes affecting students.
3. Continue funding of the successful Aggressors, Victims and Bystanders program aimed at preventing school violence and student disruption.
4. Provide \$1.3 million under the "Educator's Support Program" to continue local efforts to implement an effective mentoring support program for Palm Beach County's 1,000 new teachers each year.
5. Support \$500,000 for the Palm Beach County Education Commission for planning and implementation of demonstration QE³ project (Quality Economic Development, Education and Employment) jointly with Workforce Alliance, Business Development Board and educational institutions; to be requested through Department of Labor (Workforce).

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