

**THE
SMALL SCHOOL DISTRICT
COUNCIL CONSORTIUM**

*A Statewide Legislative Network of
Small School Districts*

-Founded 1983-

**Legislative Priorities
For the 2013 Regular Session
of the Florida Legislature**

**Adopted
November 29, 2012**

Legislators Representing Small School Districts

(Districts with 24,000 Students or less)

Senate Districts

15 Senate Districts Include Small School Districts

Senate District 1 – Don Gaetz	Holmes, Jackson, Walton, and Washington
Senate District 3 – Bill Montford	Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Hamilton, Jefferson, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla
Senate District 4 – Aaron Bean	Nassau
Senate District 5 – Charlie Dean	Baker, Citrus, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Lafayette, Levy, Suwannee, and Union
Senate District 6 – John Thrasher	Flagler, and Putnam
Senate District 7 – Rob Bradley	Bradford
Senate District 11 – Alan Hays	Sumter
Senate District 16 – Thad Altman	Indian River
Senate District 18 – Wilton Simpson	Hernando and Sumter
Senate District 21 – Denise Grimsley	Highlands, Martin, and Okeechobee
Senate District 26 – Bill Galvano	Charlotte, DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, and Highlands
Senate District 28 – Nancy Detert	Charlotte
Senate District 30 – Lizbeth Benaquisto	Charlotte
Senate District 32 – Joe Negron	Indian River, and Martin
Senate District 39 – Dwight Bullard	Hendry and Monroe

House Districts

18 House Districts Include Small School Districts

House District 5 – Marti Coley	Holmes, Jackson, Walton, and Washington
House District 7 – Halsey Beshears	Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jefferson, Lafayette, Liberty, Madison, Taylor, and Wakulla
House District 8 – Alan Williams	Gadsden
House District 10 – Elizabeth Porter	Baker, Columbia, Hamilton, and Suwannee
House District 11 – Janet Adkins	Nassau
House District 19 – Charles Van Zant	Bradford, Putnam, and Union
House District 21 – Keith Perry	Dixie, and Gilchrist
House District 22 – Charlie Stone	Levy
House District 24 – Travis Hutson	Flagler
House District 33 – Marlene O’Toole	Sumter
House District 34 – Jimmie Smith	Citrus and Hernando
House District 35 – Robert Schenck	Hernando
House District 54 – Debbie Mayfield	Indian River
House District 55 – Cary Pigman	Glades, Highlands, and Okeechobee
House District 56 – Ben Albritton	DeSoto, and Hardee
House District 80 – Matt Hudson	Hendry
House District 82 – Mary Lynn Magar	Martin
House District 120 – Holly Merrill Raschein Monroe	

Small School District Council Consortium

Background

Established in 1983, the Small School District Council Consortium is a statewide consortium of local elected school officials for the purpose of implementing a coordinated statewide effort by and for small school districts. The SSDCC's primary focus is to promote small district issues with the Florida Legislature, state elected-officials and state agency leadership.

The SSDCC is a membership organization that represents school districts with 24,000 students or less. Membership also includes State University Lab schools and regional educational consortia established in the statutes.

Each participating school district adopts a resolution and is involved in statewide activities through an adopted legislative program implemented on behalf of the membership.

The SSDCC elects officers and each member district is represented on the Board of Directors through the school superintendent and one school board member designated by the School Board of each member county.

SSDCC OFFICERS

Chairman Rick Shirley - Superintendent of Schools – Sumter County
Vice Chairman Paul Dyal – Superintendent of Schools – Taylor County

Executive Committee Members

Tim Alexander – School Board Member - Dixie County
Wally Cox – Superintendent of Schools - Highlands County
Reginald James - Superintendent of Schools – Gadsden County
Mike Pressley – School Board Member - Glades County
Sherrie Raulerson - Superintendent of Schools – Baker County
Jerry Taylor – School Board Member – Suwannee County
Linda Wood – School Board Member - Gulf County

PRIMARY ISSUES FOR THE SSDCC

Public Education Funding through the FEFP
Public Education Capital Outlay Funding
Protection and Full funding of the Sparsity Supplement
Funding for the Regional Education Consortia Program
Support for Special Facility Construction Account Program
Full Funding of Class Size Requirements
Equalization and Compression of Tax Roll Value
Protection of Local Millage Authority
Funding for State Decisions Impacting Local Tax Roll
Provide Statutory Flexibility to Accommodate Local Flexibility
Support Authority of Local Elected Officials
Funding for School Transportation

The SSDCC is represented in Tallahassee by the Governmental Relations firm of Robert P. Jones & Associates. Chris Doolin and Bob Jones provide consulting services to the SSDCC in Tallahassee.

Introduction

The Florida Legislature recognizes the impact that being small and rural has on the delivery of quality education for its citizens.

- The low tax base impacts funds available for instruction and capital outlay needs;
- Access to Technology and High-Speed Internet are limited, or non-existent, in certain areas;
- Implementation of new and complex state and federal initiatives – like Common Core Standards and STEM is extremely challenging because of the few district-level staff available to manage the task required
- Transportation costs are increased in sparsely populated areas; and,
- Grants are harder to obtain in smaller districts.

Over the years, the Florida Legislature has responded with several initiatives to assist small and rural districts overcome these challenges.

- Compression and Equalization of millage provisions is provided within the Florida Education Funding Program;
- Sparsity funding is provided to offset to economy of scale issues;
- Regional Consortium Service Organization funding has assisted with important training and program assistance to small, rural districts; and
- Special Facility Construction funding to address construction projects where districts demonstrate critical need and insufficient revenues.

The SSDCC is appreciative of the Legislative support and submits the following requests in an effort to assist small and rural districts over-come challenges and provide for a quality education.

Specific Priorities for the 2013 Legislative Session

Support Full funding of the Sparsity Supplement - F.S. 1011.62 – The Sparsity Supplement is the most important FEFP provision providing critical funding to small districts. Current funding is at 80% of full funding. Full funding would cost an additional \$8 million. Additional Sparsity funding is requested.

2012-13 funding level for Sparsity formula -	\$35,754,378
Full funding of Wealth Adjusted Sparsity formula in FEFP -	\$45,754,378

Funding for the Regional Consortia Service Program – F.S. 1001.451 – The Regional Consortia Program has been an instrumental asset for training, technical assistance and the implementation of complex education initiatives in the small and rural districts. The Regional Consortia are a critical tool in the successful implementation of Common Core Requirements; End of Course Exams; and STEM programs.

The Florida Legislature has appropriated funding to the Regional Consortia Service Program since 1994-95, however, in 2012-13 the \$1,445,390 legislative appropriation was vetoed. Leadership of the three regional consortia has worked closely with representatives of the Department of Education and the Governors Office to clarify and assure alignment with DOE priorities and State of Florida Education priorities. The Small School District Council Consortium recommends the restoration of funding for the Regional Consortia Service Program.

2013-14 Funding Requested -	\$1,445,390
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Funding for the Special Facility Construction Account Program - FS 1013.64 - The Special Facility Construction Account Program is a critical tool in providing quality education in Florida and eligible projects that meet all statutory and administrative criteria should be funded as recommended by the State of Florida – Department of Education - Special Facility Construction Committee.

The Small School District Council Consortium supports the Florida Department of Education’s Special Facility Construction Committee recommendations regarding critical need findings, priority rankings and funding for the following school projects:

1. New Dixie County Middle/High Grades 6-12 \$49,961,785
2. New Glades County Middle/High Grades 6-12 \$23,612,738

The Legislature is requested to appropriate funding for these projects to the Special Facility Construction Account as recommended. The Legislature is also requested to modify the payback provision in 1013.64(2)(a)8. to allow a portion of the 1.5 mills to be retained for other priorities authorized in 1011.71(2). The payback of 4.5 mills could be accomplished over a period longer than 3 years.

Public Education Capital Outlay Funding - Public Education Capital Outlay funding sources have generated less revenue and traditional local funding sources have been reduced making funding for public school construction, maintenance, repair, renovation and remodeling a critical issue for the 2013 Legislative Session.

The SSDCC requests the restoration of .5 mills for Local Capital Outlay Millage authority. (F.S. 1011.71(2)). In addition, the SSDCC requests the following:

- State and Local Capital Outlay funding programs should ensure funding for identified construction needs of the school districts.
- Local Capital Outlay revenues generated pursuant to F.S. 1011.71 should continue to be distributed in accordance with Local School Board authority.
- Funding for other entities should be addressed, over and above, the identified needs of the school districts.
- All recipients of state or local capital outlay dollars should be evaluated and prioritized along with all other public school facility projects.

Increased Funding for School Transportation - F.S. 1011.68. – The Small School District Council Consortium requests the Legislature to increase funding for School Transportation. State funding for school transportation in 2012-13 equaled \$420,264,335. This amount is \$63 million less than the \$483,592,820 appropriated in 2007-08. Insufficient transportation funding requires all school districts to subsidize local school transportation programs with revenues from their general funds. State funding for school transportation should be substantially increased.

Public Education Funding through the FEFP - Total funding within the FEFP for 2012-13 is \$17,576,532,046, almost \$1.2 billion below total funding appropriated in 2007-08. The Florida Legislature is requested to fully fund all components of the FEFP and, at a minimum, appropriate funding sufficient to restore prior funding levels. In addition:

- New initiatives requiring set aside funding should be avoided until prior funding levels are restored.
- New funding should be provided with maximum flexibility for local school districts to address local priorities.
- The Legislature should continue to Class Size Reduction.

- The Legislature should ensure FEFP Weighted Cost Factors represent actual program cost and restore the Declining Enrollment Supplement to 50%.

Ad Valorem Millage for Public Education - There are a number of components relating to utilization of millage authority that generate revenue for public education. The following statements are provided for guidance:

- The SSDCC recommends continued utilization of Equalization and Compression of local ad valorem revenues where the amount generated at the local level is less than the statewide average.
- The SSDCC requests the restoration of the .25 Local Millage authority provided previously by F.S. 1011.71(3) through Super Majority Board Approval or Public Referendum.
- The SSDCC requests the Protection of Local Millage Authority.
- The SSDCC requests that the Legislature provide funding for legislative decisions that reduce revenue generated from Local Millage Authority.
- The SSDCC requests the restoration of .5 mills for Local Capital Outlay Millage authority. (F.S. 1011.71(2)).

Education Technology Modernization Initiative – The SSDCC recognizes the importance of addressing enhanced technology in our schools, however, there are acknowledged gaps in both access and capabilities in each of the districts. Gaps in technology access and capabilities in Florida’s small school districts is not based on the willingness of the district but more on limited revenue capacity and the availability of service providers in rural areas. These gaps need to be addressed in a statewide plan and the distribution of funding should be based on an approach that closes identifies technology gaps, enabling all districts the opportunity to meet the state objectives of the Initiative.

General Statements

Statutory Flexibility - The SSDCC requests that any legislation include provisions for Statutory Flexibility to accommodate local conditions avoiding “One Size Fits All” requirements that impact program development and implementation.

Support for Local Elected Officials - The SSDCC requests that the Florida Legislature support the authority of Local Elected Officials by opposing unfunded mandates or other proposals that would cause undue burden or negatively impact local elected officials.

Florida Retirement System - The SSDCC requests that the Florida Legislature protect the Florida Retirement System and Retiree Benefits. Any changes should be implemented on new hires.

A Review of FEFP Funding

from 99-00 through for 12-13

Including DOE/SBE Legislative Budget Request for 13-14

(1) Year	(2) State funding within the FEFP	(3) Local Funding within the FEFP	(4) Federal Funding within the FEFP	(5) Total Funding
99-00	\$6,918,358,522	\$4,269,553,580	NA	\$11,187,912,102
00-01	\$7,401,942,945	\$4,543,526,312	NA	\$11,945,469,257
01-02	\$7,327,271,855	\$4,882,671,612	NA	\$12,209,943,467
02-03	\$7,695,808,666	\$5,338,377,065	NA	\$13,034,185,731
03-04	\$8,260,409,846	\$5,776,691,992	NA	\$14,037,101,838
04-05	\$8,766,990,479	\$6,260,556,290	NA	\$15,027,546,769
05-06	\$9,125,618,593	\$7,129,622,543	NA	\$16,255,241,136
06-07	\$9,695,029,452	\$8,370,937,262	NA	\$17,989,051,919
07-08	\$9,709,211,811	\$9,042,132,786	NA	\$18,751,344,667
08-09	\$8,556,433,157	\$9,363,451,861	NA	\$17,919,885,018
09-10	\$8,079,525,471	\$9,002,863,782	\$907,920,175	\$17,990,309,428
10-11	\$8,903,193,397	\$8,216,789,058	\$872,664,689	\$17,992,647,144
11-12	\$8,709,379,680	\$7,872,211,416	0	\$16,581,591,096
12-13	\$9,553,273,823	\$7,647,719,954	0	\$17,200,993,777
13-14A	\$9,875,268,996	\$7,701,263,050	0	\$17,576,532,046
13-14B	\$10,709,745,802	\$7,763,002,263	0	\$18,472,748,065

(6) Year	(7) % of State Funding in FEFP	(8) % of local Funding in FEFP	(9) % of Federal \$ in FEFP	(10) Base Student Allocation	(11) Number of UFTE	(12) Total Funding Per UFTE
99-00	61.84	38.16	-	\$3,227.74	2,328,851.08	\$4,804.05
00-01	61.96	38.04	-	\$3,416.73	2,388,755.80	\$5,000.71
01-02	60.01	39.99	-	\$3,298.48	2,453,549.71	\$4,976.44
02-03	59.04	40.96	-	\$3,537.11	2,497,968.51	\$5,217.92
03-04	58.86	41.15	-	\$3,630.03	2,557,438.44	\$5,488.73
04-05	58.34	41.66	-	\$3,670.26	2,609,593.94	\$5,758.57
05-06	56.14	43.86	-	\$3,742.42	2,641,121.29	\$6,154.68
06-07	53.47	46.53	-	\$3,981.61	2,638,331.10	\$6,818.35
07-08	51.78	48.22	-	\$4,079.74	2,631,277.10	\$7,126.32
08-09	47.72	52.28	-	\$3,886.14	2,618,006.46	\$6,844.86
09-10	44.90	50.05	5.05	\$3,630.62	2,629,282.97	\$6,842.29
10-11	49.33	45.86	4.82	\$3,623.76	2,642,091.49	\$6,810.10
11-12	52.53	47.66	0	\$3,479.22	2,663,743.54	\$6,224.92
12-13	55.53	44.47	0	\$3,582.98	2,694,617.29	\$6,383.46
13-14A	56.18	43.82	0	\$3,582.98	2,723,363.85	\$6,453.98
13-14B	57.98	42.02	0	\$3,719.76	2,716,978.54	\$6,799.00

A - DOE/SBE Legislative Budget Request – October 9, 2012

B – Governor Scott’s Budget Request for 2013-14.

Millage Authority Compared from 06-07 through 12-13

	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
Required Local Effort	5.01	4.843	5.136 (.25 shifted from 2.0 Capital Outlay)	5.288	5.380	5.446 F.S. 1011.62(4)	5.446 F.S. 1011.62(4)
Maximum DLE – Compression provided up to State Wide Average	.51	.51	.498	.748 (Includes a shift of .25 from Capital Outlay)	.748 Compressed to statewide average up to .498 levy	.748 F.S. 1011.71(1)	.748 F.S. 1011.71(1)
Additional Discretionary Local Effort If per student millage generates less than \$100 – the district received funding to Provide Up to \$100 per FTE	.25	.25	.25	.0 (Note - .25 previously authorized – shifted to RLE. RLE reflects increase of .178 due to statewide value of .25 without compression)	0	0	0
Super Majority Board Approved Millage –No Cap on Value Generated. (compressed provide up to State Wide Average per FTE)	-	-	-	.25 1. Levied by Super Majority Vote of Board 2. Can be used in either Operational or Capital Outlay. 3. If used in Capital Outlay – the district does not receive Compression to State Wide Average if value of .25 is less than State Wide Average).	.25 1. Levied by Super Majority Vote of Board 2. Must have referendum to continue into 11-12. 3. Can be used in either Operational or Capital Outlay. 4. If used in Capital Outlay – the district does not receive Compression to State Wide Average if value of .25 is less than State Wide Average).	0 1. Only School Districts where the .25 was approved by Referendum in Nov. of 2010 may continue to levy the .25 millage for 11-12 and 12-13. F.S. 1011.71(3)	0 1. Only School Districts where the .25 was approved by Referendum in Nov. of 2010 may continue to levy the .25 millage for 11-12 and 12-13. F.S. 1011.71(3)
Total Millage in FEFP	5.77	5.603	5.884	6.286	6.378	6.294	6.294
Capital Outlay Millage Authority F.S. 1011.71(2)	2.0	2.0	1.75 (.25 shifted to RLE)	1.50 (.25 shifted to DLE)	1.50	1.50 F.S. 1011.71(2)	1.50 F.S. 1011.71(2)
Special Facility Districts Required Payback (F.S. 1013.64(2)(a)) from Capital Outlay Millage (F.S. 1011.71(2))	1.5	1.5	1.5 (F.S. 1013.64(2)(a))	1.5 (F.S. 1013.64(2)(a)) Payback Provision Modified for Wakulla, Liberty, and Calhoun by F.S. 1013.64(7)	1.5 (F.S. 1013.64(2)(a))	1.5 (F.S. 1013.64(2)(a))	1.5 (F.S. 1013.64(2)(a))

SSDCC Members for 2012-2013

Baker County School District
Bradford County School District
Calhoun County School District
Columbia County School District
DeSoto County School District
Dixie County School District
Franklin County School District
Flagler County School District
Gadsden County School District
Gilchrist County School District
Glades County School District
Gulf County School District
Hamilton County School District
Hardee County School District
Heartland Educational Consortium
Hendry County School District
Hernando County School District
Highlands County School District
Holmes County School District
Jackson County School District
Jefferson County School District
Lafayette County School District
Levy County School District
Liberty County School District
Madison County School District
Monroe County School District
North East Florida Educational Consortium
Okeechobee County School District
Panhandle Area Education Consortium
Putnam County School District
Sumter County School District
Suwannee County School District
Taylor County School District
Union School District
Wakulla County School District
Walton County School District
Washington County School District

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