

March 2009

Dear Elected Official:

This letter is to express my concern over the current state of funding for K-12 public education in Florida. While I understand that the state is facing massive budget cuts due to decreased sales & property taxes, that does not excuse you or any of us from fulfilling our **Constitutional obligation to maintain education as the paramount duty of the State of Florida**. And while it is true that overall funding of education in Florida has increased over the past 10 years, those increases have not kept up with the increased cost of living, the increased use of categoricals, nor the increased requirements necessary to implement the Class Size Amendment. The actual money to our schools, in the classrooms, has gone down to unacceptable levels.

I would suggest to you the following action steps to support education:

- Do not pass anymore unfunded mandates this year;
- Give school districts temporary relief from current unfunded and underfunded mandates like mandatory PE;
- Give school districts greater flexibility with education dollars. Categorical funding has increased to over 36% of the total school district budget in the last 10 years. Give them the flexibility needed to weather this storm;
- Allow schools to maintain class size amendment at the school-wide level, instead of class by class;
- Find additional sources of revenue through either:
  - Reallocating existing state revenue to education
  - Creating new revenue streams through taxes on cigarettes, gambling, and/or closing exemption loopholes.
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In my county, we have found a way to make public education work and work well. An investment in education is an investment in the economy, and in a bright future for Florida. I look forward to your support.

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I am a:  parent  business person  senior citizen  community member  educator  student

Sincerely,

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(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address