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2020 Legislative Program



An "A" Rated School District

"The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education . . ."

Florida Constitution, Article 9, Section 1



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Nearly fifty years ago, Florida's citizens voted to enshrine the concept of Home Rule in the state's Constitution. They understood that the best government is that which is closest to the people it represents. Since at least 1983, it has been recognized that only general law and state constitutional law may limit a School Board's exercise of Home Rule power.

In keeping with this important element of Florida's Constitution, the School Board of Alachua County requests that lawmakers halt and reverse the trend of using general law to restrict the power of local School Boards to meet the unique needs of the communities they serve and the citizens who elected them. The Board also requests that lawmakers provide for a 'high quality system of free public schools' as called for in Article 9, Section 1 of the Constitution by taking the following steps

- Hold the current Required Local Effort (RLE) constant to allow school funding to benefit from increasing property values rather than imposing the roll-back rate and restore the authority of elected school boards to levy, by a simple majority vote, up to 2.0 mills for capital purposes.

- Fully fund the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Act, because school safety is of paramount importance.
- Halt the further privatization of public education through such means as the corporate tax credit scholarships and end the use of public funds to support voucher programs that are not held to the same educational and accountability standards as public schools.
- Support the authority of school boards to make decisions in the best interests of their communities, including the appropriate expenditure of revenues and the evaluation of teachers.

Did you know...?

- The owner of an Alachua County home valued at \$125,000 ten years ago will pay \$52 *less* in school property taxes this year than in FY 2009-10, despite the fact that the taxable value of that home has increased by nearly \$25,000.