

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Universal Pre-Kindergarten

University Governance

Class Size Reduction

August 2002

Proposed Constitutional Amendment: Voluntary Universal Pre-Kindergarten Education

Reference

Article IX, Section I

Ballot Title

Voluntary Universal Pre-Kindergarten Education

Ballot Summary

Every four-year-old child in Florida shall be offered a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity by the state no later than the 2005 school year. This voluntary early childhood development and education program shall be established according to high quality standards and shall be free for all Florida four-year-olds without taking away funds used for existing education, health and development programs.

Full Text

Article IX, Section 1, Florida constitution, is amended to read:

Section 1. Public Education.-

(b) Every four-year-old child in Florida shall be provided by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered

according to professionally accepted standards. An early childhood development and education program means an organized program designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the development of language and cognitive capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral capacities through education in basic skills and such other skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

(c) The early childhood education and development programs provided by reason of subparagraph (b) shall be implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school year through funds generated in addition to those used for existing education, health, and development programs. Existing education, health, and development programs are those funded by the State as of January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult education, health care, or development.

Sponsor

- ◆ Pre-K Committee (Parents for Readiness Education for Our Kids)
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Contact

- ◆ Alex Penelas, Chairperson

Signatures

Required for review by Attorney General:	48,869
Required to have initiative on the ballot:	488,722
Number currently verified:	514,667

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Approval Date:	01/25/2002
Undue Burden:	
Made Review:	04/17/2002
Attorney General:	04/17/2002
Sent to Supreme Court:	05/02/2002
Supreme Court Ruling:	Constitutional
SC Ruling Date:	07/11/02
Made Ballot:	07/30/02
Ballot Number:	8
Election Year:	2002

Cost Estimate

The state will incur costs as the amendment is phased in. The estimated annual cost to the state is between \$425 million and \$650 million in today's dollars, depending on the extent to which funding for existing school readiness programs for 4-year-olds is used to reduce the cost of the new program.

COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT (CEPRI)

Analysis of Proposed Constitutional Amendments

**Access Voluntary Universal Pre-Kindergarten Brochure and
Complete Report at:**

<http://www.cepri.state.fl.us>

PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS IN SELECTED STATES

STATE	PROGRAM	TARGET	COSTS	TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	RESULTS/IMPACT
FL	<p><i>Proposed Voluntary Universal Pre-Kindergarten Education</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>Pre-Kindergarten Early Intervention Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established in 1987 ➤ Repealed in 2001 ➤ Full-day ➤ 10:1 ratio 	<p><i>All 4-year-olds</i></p> <p>-----</p> <p>At-risk 3- and 4-year-olds (4-year-olds had priority)</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>About \$3,500 per child</p>	<p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Child Development Associate Credential 	<p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better overall readiness for school ➤ Fewer behavioral problems and improved attendance through grade 4 ➤ Less grade retention and higher achievement test scores through grade 4
CA	<p>State Preschool Program (California Department of Education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established in 1966 ➤ 1:8 ratio ➤ School district or contracted programs ➤ Half-day 	<p>Serves low-income 3- and 4-year olds</p> <p>1999-2000: 82,638 children served</p>	<p>2001-2002: \$295 million; \$2,577 per child</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Certification in Early Childhood <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Twelve (12) college credits in Early Childhood Education; 2 years experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ California Department of Education monitors fiscal and program compliance every 3 years
GA	<p>Pre-Kindergarten Program (Office of School Readiness)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established in 1992 ➤ Full-day (6.5 hours) ➤ 10:1 ratio ➤ Max class size 20 <p>Operated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public schools ➤ Private schools ➤ Community agencies ➤ Child care providers ➤ University providers ➤ 	<p>1991-1992: At-risk 4-year-olds</p> <p>1994-1995: All 4-year-olds</p> <p>1999-2000: 62,500 children served (63%)</p> <p>2000-2001: 63,500 children served</p>	<p>Financed by state lottery</p> <p>About \$3,600 per child</p> <p>1999-2000: \$220 million</p> <p>2001-2002: \$238 million; with an additional \$4 million in supplements for teachers to increase their educational levels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Child Development Associate Credential ➤ In 2003-2003, at least an Early Childhood Associate Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better overall readiness for school ➤ Improved attendance through grade 2 ➤ Higher scores on achievement tests through grade 2 ➤ Less chance of students repeating a grade through grade 2 <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Necessary collaboration with and initial concerns of child care and Head Start overlooked ➤ Scarcity of facilities and shortage of suitable space in low-income areas

STATE	PROGRAM	TARGET	COSTS	TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	RESULTS/IMPACT
NY	Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program (State Education Department) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established in 1997 ➤ Phase-in implementation (delayed due to 9/11) ➤ Voluntary, districts choose to participate ➤ 1:9 up to 18 kids; 3:20 	All 4-year-olds 1999-2000: 27,412 children served Priority during phase-in given to economically disadvantaged <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Served 13% in first year ➤ Currently serving 25% 	\$275 million for pre-kindergarten Over \$1 billion for early childcare and education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Certification in Elementary Education 	
NY	----- Experimental Pre-Kindergarten Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established in 1966 ➤ Offers comprehensive early childhood services ➤ 1:8 ratio ➤ Max. class size 16 	Low-income 3- and 4-year-olds 1999-2000: 19,600 students served	----- 1999-2000: \$50.2 million	----- Certification in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elementary Education ➤ Elementary with the early childhood annotation ➤ Bilingual Elementary or Early Childhood Education 	----- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Positive gains for students ➤ Reduced special education placement ➤ Reduced grade retentions ➤ Increased parental educational expectations
NC	Smart Start (NC Partnership for Children, private nonprofit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established 1993 ➤ Comprehensive public/private initiative ➤ Help children enter school healthy and ready to succeed ➤ No required ratios 	Children from birth to age 5	2000-2001: \$260 million <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Needs-based allocations to county level partnerships ➤ Scholarships, salary incentives, and health care for workers ➤ \$3.9 Head Start supplement 	No state requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nationally recognized for coordinating early childhood initiatives, improving quality of child care workforce, and increasing access to quality programs for disadvantaged children ➤ Improved child care ➤ Improved collaboration among child care, health, and education agencies ➤ Children more prepared for kindergarten ➤ Programs to improve compensation being duplicated in at least 17 states

STATE	PROGRAM	TARGET	COSTS	TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS	RESULTS/IMPACT
OK	<p>Early Childhood 4-Year-Old Program (State Department of Education)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established 1980 for children in poverty ➤ Expanded 1998 to include all 4-year-olds ➤ Free, school district-run or contracted (Head Start or child care centers) program ➤ First-come, first-served 	<p>All 4-year-olds</p> <p>2000-2001: 23,438 children served</p>	<p>2001-2002: \$56.7 million</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ \$2,448 per child ➤ State funding on formula basis (.7 FTE for half-day and 1.3 FTE for full-day) ➤ Adopted NC programs ➤ TEACH (pays 90% of tuition; release time to go to school; awarded 1,500 scholarships in 2000-01) ➤ REWARD (pays bonuses for staying in the field) ➤ \$3.3 million Head Start supplement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Certification in Early Childhood Education <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Special early childhood certificate (CDA credential, 5 years experience in Head Start, and passing the early childhood certification test) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 80% of districts participating ➤ Department of Education Regional Accreditation Officers provide fiscal and program monitoring annually to district programs
TX	<p>Public School Pre-Kindergarten (Texas Education Agency)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Established 1984 ➤ Half- and full-day ➤ 15:1, 18:1, and 22:1, depending on program 	<p>At-risk 3- and 4-year-olds (4-year-olds have priority)</p> <p>1999-2000: 140,639 children served</p>	<p>2000-2001: About \$2,000 per child</p> <p>1999-2000: \$269.2 million</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grants available to expand hours/days ➤ 50% higher than previous years due to movement to full-day ➤ \$7.5 million Head Start supplement 	<p>State teacher certification with Early Childhood Education or Kindergarten Endorsement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Better overall readiness for school ➤ Higher scores on achievement tests through grade 3 ➤ More likely to be reading on grade level ➤ Less chance of repeating a grade or being placed in special education through grade 3

Proposed Constitutional Amendment: Local Trustees and Statewide Governing Board to Manage Florida's University System

Reference:

Article IX, Section 7

Ballot Title:

Local Trustees and Statewide Governing Board to Manage Florida's University System

Ballot Summary:

A local board of trustees shall administer each state university. Each board shall have thirteen members dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, and service to community. A statewide governing board of seventeen members shall be responsible for the coordinated and accountable operation of the whole university system. Wasteful duplication of facilities or programs is to be avoided. Provides procedures for selection and confirmation of board members, including one student and one faculty representative per board.

Full Text:

Article IX of the Florida Constitution is hereby amended to add the following as Section 7:

TEXT: State University System.-

- a. **Purposes.** In order to achieve excellence through teaching students, advancing research and providing public service for the benefit of Florida's citizens, their communities and economies, the people hereby establish a system of governance for the state university system of Florida.
- b. **State University System.** There shall be a single state university system comprised of all public universities. A board of trustees shall administer each public university and a board of governors shall govern the state university system.
- c. **Local Board of Trustees.** Each local constituent university shall be administered by a board of trustees consisting of thirteen members dedicated to the purposes of the state university system. The board of governors shall establish the powers and duties of the boards of trustees. Each board of trustees shall consist of six citizen members appointed by the governor and five citizen members appointed by the board of governors. The appointed members shall be confirmed by the senate and serve staggered terms of five years as provided by law. The chair of the faculty senate, or the equivalent, and the president of the student body of the university shall also be members.

d. **Statewide Board of Governors.** The board of governors shall be a body corporate consisting of seventeen members. The board shall operate, regulate, control, and be fully responsible for the management of the whole university system. These responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, defining the distinctive mission of each constituent university and its articulation with free public schools and community colleges, ensuring the well-planned coordination and operation of the system, and avoiding wasteful duplication of facilities or programs. The board's management shall be subject to the powers of the legislature to appropriate for the expenditure of funds, and the board shall account for such expenditures as provided by law. The governor shall appoint to the board fourteen citizens dedicated to the purposes of the state university system. The appointed members shall be confirmed by the senate and serve staggered terms of seven years as provided by law. The commissioner of education, the chair of the advisory council of faculty senates, or the equivalent, and the president of the Florida student association, or the equivalent, shall also be members of the board.

Sponsor:

- ◆ Education Excellence for Florida
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(407) 423-7336

Contact:

- ◆ Joan Ruffier, Chairperson
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Signatures:

Required for review by Attorney General:	48,869
Required to have initiative on the ballot:	488,722
Number currently verified:	499,903

Status: Active

Approval Date:	09/28/2001
Undue Burden:	
Made Review:	02/11/2002
Attorney General:	02/12/2002
Sent to Supreme Court:	03/04/2002
Supreme Court Ruling:	Constitutional: Initiative petition and proposed ballot title and summary meet the legal requirements of article XI, section 3 of the Florida Constitution, and s. 101.161(1), F.S.
SC Ruling Date:	05/23/2002
Made Ballot:	08/06/2002
Ballot Number:	11
Election Year:	2002

Cost Estimate:

The fiscal impact of this measure, if any, cannot be reasonably determined at this time.

COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT (CEPRI)

Analysis of Proposed Constitutional Amendments

**Access Governance of University System Brochure and Complete
Report at:**

<http://www.cepri.state.fl.us>

Proposed Constitutional Amendment: Class Size Reduction

Reference

Article IX, Section I

Ballot Title

Florida's Amendment to Reduce Class Size

Ballot Summary

Proposes an amendment to the State Constitution to require that the Legislature provide funding for sufficient classrooms so that there be a maximum number of students in public school classes for various grade levels; requires compliance by the beginning of the 2010 school year; requires the Legislature, and not local school districts, to pay for the costs associated with reduced class size; prescribes a schedule for phased-in funding to achieve the required maximum class size.

Full Text

Article IX, Section 1, Florida constitution, is amended to read:

Section 1. Public Education.-

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 and for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning and other public education programs that the needs of the people may require. To assure that children attending public schools obtain a high quality education, the legislature shall make adequate provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2010 school year, there are a sufficient number of classrooms so that:

1. The maximum number of students who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for prekindergarten through grade 3 does not exceed 18 students;
2. The maximum number of students who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for grades 4 through 8 does not exceed 22 students; and
3. The maximum number of students who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for grades 9 through 12 does not exceed 25 students.
4. The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to extracurricular classes. Payment of the costs associated with reducing class size to meet these requirements is the responsibility of the state and not of local school districts. Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the legislature shall provide sufficient funds to reduce the average number of students in each classroom by at least two students per year until the maximum number of students per classroom does not exceed the requirements of this subsection.

Sponsor

- ◆ Coalition to Reduce Class Size
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Tallahassee, FL 32317-0000
(850) 877-0307

Contact

- ◆ Kendrick Meek, Chairperson

Signatures

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Required to have initiative on the ballot:	488,722
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Approval Date:	04/13/2001
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Made Review:	10/04/2001
Attorney General:	10/11/2001
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Supreme Court Ruling:	Constitutional
SC Ruling Date:	04/25/2002
Made Ballot:	08/01/02
Ballot Number:	9
Election Year:	2002

Cost Estimate

The state will incur costs as the amendment is phased in. Estimated cumulative costs through 2010 range from \$20 billion to \$27.5 billion, depending on how classrooms are built. Once fully implemented, each year's operating costs are estimated to be \$2.5 billion in today's dollars.

COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT (CEPRI)

Analysis of Proposed Constitutional Amendments

Access Class Size Reduction Brochure and Complete Report at:

<http://www.cepri.state.fl.us>

Class Size Reduction Constitutional Amendment

WHITE PAPER

Florida Association of District School Superintendents

August 2002

INTRODUCTION

In November 2002 Florida voters will decide whether to add a maximum class size for all public school classrooms to Florida's state constitution. The concept of smaller classes is compelling and as of August 2002 the public support for the constitutional amendment on class size appears to be strong. (Some estimate the approval rating as high as 80%.) It is difficult to question a proposal that sounds so good on its surface. Who could oppose smaller classes? However, this proposed constitutional amendment raises serious public policy issues that must be addressed if the class size language is added to the Florida constitution:

1. What is the current status of public education in Florida and why is it a predominant political issue for Florida?
2. What are the requirements of the constitutional amendment?
3. How much will the implementation of a class size maximum cost the state and is it cost-effective? Are Floridians willing to pay for it?
4. What are the obvious and less obvious implications of this constitutional amendment?
5. Is it good public policy?

This white paper is not designed to be an exhaustive analysis of every issue surrounding this constitutional amendment but it is an attempt to broaden the debate beyond the class size issue in isolation. Hopefully, others will research this issue from different perspectives so that more factual information can be injected into this extremely significant issue in our state.

THE STATUS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN FLORIDA

According to the Florida Chamber of Commerce's New Cornerstone report published in 2001-2002, Florida's population expanded rapidly in the 1990's from 13.1 million to almost 16 million in 2000, a gain of nearly 18%. (p.1-1, New Cornerstone.) During the same period, Florida's per capita personal income decreased from 3% above the national average to 5% below the national per capita personal income. Based upon these and other data, Florida's robust job growth during the 1990's was concentrated in lower wage, lower skilled jobs, thereby explaining the decrease in relative national per capita income.

The Chamber of Commerce's interest in the status of public education in the state was primarily motivated by the need for the state to compete in a global economy. Since the quality of Florida's workforce determines that competitiveness and since the quality of the workforce is largely determined by the public schools in the state, the New Cornerstone report did an in-depth analysis of the status of our public schools. The Chamber reported the following:

- ◆ **Between 1991 and 2001, the K-12 expenditures in Florida did not keep pace with inflation and the rate of student population growth, falling from \$4,900 per student to \$4,600 per student (in 1991 dollars). The New Cornerstone report cited data from the U.S. Department of Education to determine this decrease in support. (p.3-3)**
- ◆ **Florida's national ranking for K-12 expenditures decreased from 21st in 1991 to 42nd in 2001. (p.3-3)**
- ◆ **Florida's adult population (ages 25 and over) with a high school diploma increased from 80% in 1991 to 84% in 2001. However, Florida's growth in this area did not keep pace with the rest of the nation, causing Florida's relative national ranking in this area to decrease from 27th to 34th.**
- ◆ **Between 1990 and 1999, Florida's 4-year high school graduation rate dropped from 61% to 56%. During that time period, Florida dramatically increased graduation requirements and the level of testing in earlier grades causing the retention rates in grades to increase.**

Based upon these and other data, Florida was faced with public policy challenges in the decade of the 1990's and public education did not fare well in that competition. The state has not kept pace with student population growth and inflation and as a direct result, the state is less competitive for higher wage industries as we enter the 21st century. With the economic downturn that began in early 2001, a special session of the state legislature was called to reduce the 2001-2002 budget in order to maintain the legal requirement of a balanced state budget. Unlike the federal government, it is not legal for the state to have a deficit in its annual budget. Correspondingly, school districts were required to make mid-year reductions in their budgets during the 2001-2002 school year. These mid-year reductions further exacerbated the existing financial challenges facing public schools in Florida.

To address the status of K-12 public education in Florida, the Chamber of Commerce report outlined a comprehensive implementation plan for the next decade. Chief among these were the following recommendations:

- ◆ **Increase education funding.** According to the New Cornerstone report, the Legislature should develop a strategy to bring education funding per student at all levels (pre-K through graduate school) closer to the national median. The state's budget should reflect the critical role that education plays in Florida's future. (p.3-7)
- ◆ **Education funding should be more focused and flexible.** Greater flexibility is needed so that local communities can tailor programs to meet their specific needs. (p.3-6)

To summarize the status of K-12 public education and its overall importance to Florida, the Chamber of Commerce report confirmed concerns raised by the education community over the last 10 years. Florida is losing ground nationally in its financial support of public schools. A one-size-fits-all approach to funding through laws, rules and budget language (called proviso language) does not recognize the unique needs of the diverse communities in Florida. Therefore, increased funding **and** increased flexibility are required. Without both funding and flexibility, Florida will continue to lose competitiveness in the global economy to produce high skilled workers who attract high wage industries.

Does a constitutional amendment on class size address these fundamental issues? For all the reasons listed in the following pages, the Florida Association of District School Superintendents opposes this constitutional amendment.

WHAT DOES THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT REQUIRE?

The proposed constitutional amendment proposes that the **average class size** for all academic classes in Florida be limited to the following:

$\frac{K-3}{17}$	$\frac{4-8}{21}$	$\frac{9-12}{24}$
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The concept of establishing an average class size is not new in Florida. Through legislative action in the mid-1990's, a **goal** was established relative to the **average class size** for grades K-3. The goal was funded through a specific allocation (a categorical fund) for two years. Most school districts made significant progress in reducing class size in these grades while the funding existed. When the funding was rolled into the regular funding program, school districts struggled with maintaining these smaller classes in the face of huge population increases in some areas of the state and facility needs.

However, the proposed constitutional amendment also contains reference to a **maximum class size** as well:

$\frac{K-3}{18}$	$\frac{4-8}{22}$	$\frac{9-12}{25}$
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Unlike previous attempts to address class size, the definition of class size is based upon the assumption that the use of teacher assistants or paraprofessionals will not be included in the class size calculation to achieve the amendment's goals. Further, implementation language allows the state time to reach the maximum class size requirement: By the 2009-2010 school year or seven years from the amendment's passage, all classrooms serving regular curriculum students in academic classes will have this enrollment cap. The amendment does not define regular curriculum students or academic courses.

WHAT WILL THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT COST?

It is important to review some of the assumptions used to develop the cost estimates for the amendment. Based upon a state analysis using the average class size data for 2000-2001, it was assumed that the target could be reached by reducing the average class size by two students per

year beginning in the 2003-2004 school year through 2008-2009. The state model also assumes maximum utilization of all facilities, which means that school districts without open enrollment plans in place would need to rezone schools so that every classroom is filled.

Overall cost estimates are subject to debate. However, on June 27, 2002, state economists estimated the need for 30,000 additional classrooms and 31,000 new teachers to achieve the class size maximums in the amendment. The state's estimated cumulative costs through 2010 ranged from \$20 billion to \$27.5 billion. The lower estimates are based on a small amount of new construction by relying mostly on the use of additional portables; no inflationary costs for supplies and materials; no additional operating and maintenance expenses for the additional square footage of facilities/portables; nor pay raises for current employees or those newly hired to reach the class size limits. When all of the assumptions are included, this cost estimate is conservative.

The cost estimates use a long-range projection of the budget to capture recurring costs for salaries and other expenses. However, once implemented the new system would cost an extra \$2.5 billion annually in 2002 dollars. (p.2, Florida Tax Watch Briefing, July 2002.) In other words, the 2003 Legislature will need about \$2.5 billion additional dollars on top of the \$1 billion in non-recurring costs in the 2002 budget in order to balance next year's budget.

To put this cost into perspective, the entire state budget for education for K through graduate school in 2002-2003 is in the range of \$16 billion. The \$20 billion to \$27.5 billion estimates to implement this constitutional amendment is 1.5 times or double the annual state budget for all education, just for K-12 class size reduction alone. This size increase raises the following questions: Is limiting class size the most cost-effective means in improving per pupil expenditures or improving student achievement in this state? Does the constitutional amendment allow for the diverse needs of communities as expressed in the New Cornerstone report by the state's Chamber of Commerce?

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE CLASS SIZE AMENDMENT?

Before the Florida constitution is amended, it is important to analyze both the intended outcomes and the unforeseen consequences of the proposed amendment.

According to a 1999 survey by National Public Radio, the Kaiser Family Foundation and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, 75% of parents strongly favored reducing class size as a way to improve public schools in their communities. For most parents, according to this survey, reducing class size makes intuitive sense. (Sizing Things Up: A Report from Public Agenda, 2002, p. 32) When surveyed, most of the respondents may not have considered the unintended consequences on current teachers.

There are proponents and opponents related to the question of academic benefits to children in smaller classes. This issue has been researched repeatedly over the last two decades and there are research reports or anecdotal evidence available to support a multitude of positions on this question. With the public and others, support for reduced class size appears to be more intuitive than research-based. Factual evidence has little significance in a debate on intuitive issues. However, two critical unintended consequences directly impact teachers, facilities and student programs. Each of these must be carefully reviewed.

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Florida is expected to need close to 200,000 new teachers in the next ten years to address normal growth in student population and to replace an aging work force in schools. Florida's public and private universities are able to produce about half of the current demand for new teachers, which requires school districts to recruit extensively out of state, with some school districts recruiting in foreign countries in 2001. Reducing class size will increase the number of new teachers needed each year in the next ten years when the supply is already scarce. If past history is any predictor, an increase in demand for educators of this magnitude translates into the hiring of teachers who are less prepared or uncertified teachers which leads to a decrease in quality in the classroom. Many areas of California experienced a similar result in their recent efforts to reduce class size in that state.

According to the State Chamber of Commerce Cornerstone Report, Florida is ranked in the lower tier of states in relation to average teacher salaries, behind other southern states such as Georgia and Alabama. School districts have worked hard to increase the level of teacher pay across the state in recent years, especially beginning salaries. In spite of these efforts, Florida's teacher salaries are depicted as below the national average in almost every recent report by government and private agencies. If all available state funds are used to hire new teachers to reduce class size, little or no movement in average teacher salaries can occur for the next seven to ten years. Thus, Florida's national position related to teacher salaries will degenerate further and make recruitment and retention of quality teachers even more difficult. Again, at a time when a well documented teacher shortage exists in school systems around the state, districts will be forced to hire less prepared, uncertified teachers to meet the constitutionally mandated class sizes and thereby lower the quality of instruction throughout the state. Little or no funds will be available to improve salaries of current teachers to retain them in the profession if all available funds are being used to hire additional teachers.

School Facilities

Currently, Florida has a backlog in school construction to meet the growing student population that resulted from the 18% increase in overall population in the last decade. The 1997 special session of the Legislature was designed to address the need for new school construction that existed at that time. However, the rate of growth in student population and other factors have increased that need for new schools far beyond those projected for the 1997 legislative session, causing school districts to utilize more portables for classroom space. To address this unmet need, as of August 2002, 8 school districts have also passed special bond referendums to fund their large growth in student population.

Further, with a number of schools exceeding 50 years of use, many districts have been unable to address the renovation needs of older schools through these special revenues. Therefore, reducing class size significantly in this climate has major implications related to the number of additional portables that school districts will be required to purchase for the foreseeable future regardless of the capital outlay funding levels. It should be noted that recent changes in the building codes have made the cost per square foot for portables almost equal to that of permanent construction. With the legal and due diligence requirements for new construction and the cost of portables, even if the funds to build new schools were available today, it would take years to build enough schools to meet the reduced class size requirements and address the current construction backlog and renovation needs simultaneously.

Finally, maximum utilization of current facilities assumes that almost every school district will rezone to utilize spaces that may be currently underutilized. In some districts, especially larger urban districts, neighborhoods in which schools were built 30 or 40 years ago have changed and therefore, few children live in some neighborhoods where current schools are located. However, it would be necessary to draw new attendance boundaries to utilize all classroom spaces to the maximum, an assumption in the state's cost estimates to implement the amendment's requirements. Full building utilization will generally require longer bus routes to transport students from more distant locations to available classroom spaces. Therefore, the need for additional space may be understated in all estimates if school districts do not redraw attendance boundaries.

Impact on Student Programs

Students will also feel the impact of the proposed amendment. On the positive side, their classes may be a few students smaller. However, there are other considerations.

The programmatic impact of the amendment will vary somewhat from district to district depending on district size, student population and growth patterns. If the Legislature does not appropriate a significant increase in state revenue for schools (estimated at \$3.5 billion more dollars in the next fiscal year alone if the amendment passes), school districts will have limited new resources to implement the amendment and will, therefore, have to reduce current programs. At a minimum, school districts will have to focus remaining resources on core academic subjects tested on the state test (FCAT) at the expense of other programs such as art, music, athletics, guidance, counseling, library/media services and foreign language instruction. Some have lamented that this retrenchment is already occurring in some schools but passage of the amendment will accelerate these reductions enormously.

Other consequences could include the limiting of advanced course offerings. Establishing rigid class sizes decreases a school's ability to serve all students. With staffing flexibility, school districts have a greater ability to meet the needs of all segments of the student population. For example, if a normal class size in a high school is 27 today, a chemistry II class could be offered in which 28 students enroll. Under the class size restriction, the school would have to remove three students to satisfy the legal requirements of the constitution or offer a second class (which most districts could not afford). It is debatable as to the impact of 28 versus 25 students in a class of this caliber. Offering "singletons" (one period of a class) in a high school can create some larger or smaller classes. The class size amendment makes these offerings illegal if they exceed the maximum by one student and therefore, course offerings to students will be limited.

In fact, with the short supply of science and math teachers along with the lack of classroom space in high growth districts, a number of schools will need to go on double sessions to implement the requirements of this amendment.

To summarize, a constitutional requirement to decrease class size is a popular idea that will have an enormous impact on the state budget for education. This need for new funding will either generate the need for new taxes or reduce all other state services to meet this enormous demand.

It is debatable as to the impact of smaller classes on student achievement. Florida is currently experiencing a shortage of qualified teachers and a significant increase in the demand for more teachers will jeopardize instructional quality. Florida is already behind in meeting the

construction and renovation needs to support the current student population. Requiring even more classrooms through a constitutional amendment will increase the use of high cost portables in high growth districts or lead to double sessions or both. Maximum utilization of classroom spaces will require students to spend longer times on buses to transport students to available classrooms when school districts are forced to redraw attendance boundaries. The financial requirements to hire new teachers to reduce class size will mean that little, if any, funds will be available for raises for current teachers at a time when Florida is lagging behind the national average in teacher salaries. That fact will make it more difficult to recruit teachers from other states. Finally, there are negative consequences to students if the amendment passes such as fewer course offerings, potential double sessions and fewer opportunities for the arts, athletics and support services from guidance counselors and media specialists.

ARE THERE MORE COST EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVES TO REDUCING CLASS SIZE?

Part of the public support for the constitutional amendment to reduce class size may be attributable to a lack of trust in the legislative process. Almost every candidate in the last two elections listed education as a top priority. Yet, as indicated in the Chamber of Commerce report and the U.S. Department of Education data, public schools in Florida have lost ground financially. That public feeling is further reinforced by the fact that the state lottery was passed in the late 1980's based upon the idea of enhancing education funding. Since that has not happened effectively, a constitutional amendment is viewed by some as a way to circumvent the legislative process to fund K-12 education priorities. In spite of this expression of public concern or frustration, the electorate needs to answer the question if class size reduction is the most cost-effective response.

If the goal is improved student achievement, one research-based concept that has been proven to do so is increased time on task. Therefore, increasing the number of days and/or hours that students spend in school will improve student achievement and is much less expensive than reducing class size.

Extending the school year also has another important benefit to parents. Parents in families where both parents work outside of the home or single parent families have child care issues and expenses when school is not in session. Extending the school year addresses this need while improving student achievement.

Another area that gets little discussion is the area of teacher training. Education is one of the most personnel intensive professions and a sizeable number of these professionals began their careers in the 1960's and 1970's. Much has changed in the world since the 1960's and we have expected our professional staffs to stay current through a few hours of staff development activities each year. Therefore, if the goal is improved student achievement, then by increasing the length of the teacher work year by five days for intensive staff development is a reasonable approach. Teachers should be compensated for the additional time and school districts could work with their local universities, community colleges and other entities to improve the skills of the current work force in our schools. Improved student achievement would result and teacher salaries could be improved simultaneously.

Furthermore, an area that is addressed infrequently is the current shortage of quality school-based and district-level administrators. There are a number of reasons for these shortages beyond the scope of this paper. However, increasing the need for additional principals and assistant principals to manage the new schools created as a result of the reduced class sizes will only exacerbate the shortage of quality administrators.

In summary, there are a number of less costly measures available to address the need for improved student achievement while improving the quality of the public school workforce and increasing educator pay levels. The unintended consequences to students, teachers and support personnel make the less costly alternatives even more attractive.

IS THE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT GOOD PUBLIC POLICY?

A state constitution is generally used to define the structure of state government and establish the legal authority for entities such as the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of state government. Since education is a paramount state duty, state constitutions generally establish the structure of the educational system and vest operational decision making authority in the Legislature and school boards.

Recently, in 1998, the constitution was amended to reorganize the state cabinet and increase the authority of the Governor. Another 1998 amendment redefined the structure of education governance in Florida by eliminating the Board of Regents that governed state university operation and creating a state board of education to oversee the operation of a K-20 education structure in Florida. Funding priorities are vested in the Legislature through the Florida constitution.

Generally, the constitution defines the process by which the public elects representatives who are charged with the operational decisions of the state. However, there is a mechanism for the public

to amend the constitution and establish new priorities or structures in which state government may operate. Florida has had several new constitutions since the creation of the state. By contrast, the US Constitution defines the principles upon which our nation was founded and has been amended fewer than 30 times in more than 200 years.

The real question is whether class size limitations are on the same scale as defining the authority of cabinet officers or school boards. A constitutional provision is difficult to change. Therefore, if there are unforeseen consequences or some unpredictable, major event happens in the state, the state legislature is not able to make changes in a constitutional provision. If the class size limitation was a state law instead of a constitutional amendment and these unforeseen circumstances occurred, adjustments could be made in the next regular session of the Legislature or if an extreme emergency required, through a special legislative session.

Addressing current operational issues through a constitutional amendment is not good public policy. In a representative form of government, when the public has a priority, the Legislature is the appropriate forum to debate, fund and address these priorities.

CONCLUSIONS

Voters in Florida will decide the issue of adding a constitutional limit to class size in November 2002. Given the popularity of this issue, it is difficult for political leaders to openly oppose or debate the soundness of this idea.

Florida has not kept pace with the growth in student population and inflation during the last decade and as a result the state is less competitive in a global economy of the 21st century. In a study commissioned by the Florida Chamber of Commerce, it was recommended that the state increase the level of funding and increase the flexibility in the use of these funds by local communities. The constitutional amendment will address the need to increase funding but will not address the issue of flexibility.

Based upon a report of state economists on June 27, 2002, the constitutional limitation on class size will cost the state between \$20 billion and \$27.5 billion to implement. Because of the assumptions used to determine these costs, these numbers are conservative. To put these costs in perspective, the entire state budget for education kindergarten through graduate school was in the range of \$16 billion for 2002-2003. The magnitude of this funding increase will likely require increased taxes and a reduction in other state services.

A reduction in class size alone may not improve student achievement, a major goal of the initiative. The evidence on this subject remains debatable. Florida is already experiencing a shortage of qualified teachers and a significant increase in the demand for more teachers will jeopardize instructional quality in classrooms. Florida currently has a backlog in building construction and renovation that will be further exacerbated by the limitation in class sizes. Also, the financial requirements to hire new teachers to reduce class size will mean little, if any, funding for raises for current teachers and administrators, putting Florida further behind the national average in teacher salaries. Equally important is the potentially negative impact on curriculum offerings and support services for students.

There are less costly alternatives to reducing class size. Extending the school year and the school day can increase time on task for students and increase student achievement, much less

expensively than reducing class size. These approaches address other issues such as childcare needs for working parents and improved teacher salaries.

Class size is an important issue to parents, educators and the business community in Florida. However, it is not good public policy to address operational issues like class size in the state constitution. In a representative form of government, if the public perceives a need such as smaller classes, this type of need should be addressed through the legislative process.

Therefore, language to limit class size does not belong in the Florida constitution. For these reasons, the Florida Association of District School Superintendents opposes this initiative.

CSRResearchConsortium

Class Size Reduction in California: Summary of Findings from 1999-00 and 2000-01

Access Capstone Report, June 2002 at:

<http://www.classize.org>

STATE AND NATIONAL CLASS SIZE REDUCTION INITIATIVES

STATE	POLICY INTENT/ ELEMENTS	ALLOCATION/COST	TARGET	IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	IMPACT/RESULTS
<p>Florida (Proposed)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mandatory ➤ Statewide <p>Maximum class size: PK-3 18 students Gr. 4-8 22 students Gr. 9-12 25 students</p>	<p>Through 2012: \$20 - \$27.5 billion, depending on how classrooms are built Once implemented: annual operating expenses are estimated to be \$2.5 billion in today's dollars</p>	<p>Grades PK-12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teacher shortage ➤ Classroom shortage ➤ Equity 	
<p>California Class Size Reduction (CSR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Voluntary ➤ Statewide ➤ Goal is to improve early literacy ➤ Reduce K-3 class size from average of 29 (max 33) to maximum of 20 	<p>Cost: Approximately \$1.5 billion per year</p> <p>1996-97: \$650 per student \$200 million for facilities</p> <p>2000-2001: \$844 per student, full day \$422 per student, ½ day</p>	<p>Grades K-3: 1.8 million students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public pressure to implement quickly ➤ Shortage of qualified teachers ➤ Shortage of classroom space ➤ Enrollment boom ➤ Equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achievement gains, but effect of CSR uncertain ➤ Little effect on minorities ➤ More individualized instruction ➤ Same curriculum and learning activities ➤ Teacher shortage worsened ➤ Increase in unqualified and underqualified teachers, particularly in low income schools
<p>Tennessee (STAR)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Experimental program with randomly assigned students and teachers ➤ Reduce from 22-26 to 13-17 students 	<p>1985-89: \$12 million</p>	<p>Grades K-3: 10,000 students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adequate supply of teachers ➤ Adequate classroom space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Significant performance gains ➤ Larger gains for minority students ➤ Lasting benefits after return to regular size classes

STATE	POLICY INTENT/ ELEMENTS	ALLOCATION/COST	TARGET	IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	IMPACT/RESULTS
Wisconsin (SAGE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improve academic achievement for children living in poverty ➤ Four strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Class size reduction - Extended day - Rigorous curriculum - Professional development 	<p>\$2,000 per low-income student</p> <p>1996-1997: \$4.5 million</p> <p>2001-2002: \$76 million</p> <p>2002-2003: \$95 million.</p> <p>Categorical program to help pay debt service for new classrooms</p> <p>1996-2001 Costs: \$103 million</p>	<p>Grades K-3 (15:1)</p> <p>64,000 students</p> <p>Expansion from 30 schools in 1996 to 600 currently</p>		<p>University of Wisconsin Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performance gains in all grades ➤ Larger gains for minority students <p>Wisconsin Policy Research Institute Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consistent performance gains in 1st grade ➤ Minimal or no impact in 2nd and 3rd grades ➤ African-American students made larger gains in 1st grade only ➤ Overall, magnitude of gains are meager
North Carolina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Voluntary ➤ Flexible funding for reading teachers, reducing ratio ➤ 1:23 ratio in K-2 	Funding through foundation program	Grades K-2		
Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mandated ➤ Maximum of 22 students in K-4 		Grades K-4		

STATE	POLICY INTENT/ ELEMENTS	ALLOCATION/COST	TARGET	IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	IMPACT/RESULTS
New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce class size to 20 in grades K-3 ➤ Flexible funding for salaries, start-up costs, and professional development, 	<p>1999-2000: \$75 million</p> <p>2000-2001: \$150 million</p> <p>2001-2002: \$225 million</p>	Grades K-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Few problems, most pressing is lack of space for new classrooms 	
Illinois	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Statewide ➤ Mandatory ➤ Improve reading through several measures, including class size reduction 	<p>1999-2000: \$5 million</p> <p>1999-2000: 20% of funds used to reduce class size</p> <p>1999-2000: \$83,389,500 (Reading Improvement Block Grant)</p>	<p>Grades K-3 (CSR)</p> <p>Grades K-6 (Improve Reading)</p>		
Indiana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Statewide ➤ Voluntary ➤ Target Ranges: 15-18:1 (revised in 1999) ➤ Target ratio not flexible ➤ 2000-01 was the 17th year of implementation 	<p>1999-2000: \$35.6 million</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funding formula includes "hold harmless" and a "cap" on funding increases ➤ State funding based on current year staff needs relative to the base year ➤ State funding to hire teachers and instructional assistants ➤ Local funding for classroom space 	Grades K-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lowering class size alone will not bring about better teaching and learning ➤ Prime Time staff provides professional development and TA on best practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ No systematic statewide evaluation <p>Teachers have reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved student behavior ➤ Higher test scores ➤ More efficient classrooms <p>Program evaluations indicated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weak relationship between class size and student achievement ➤ Significant improvement in teacher attitudes and morale

STATE	POLICY INTENT/ ELEMENTS	ALLOCATION/COST	TARGET	IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	IMPACT/RESULTS
Iowa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce K-3 class size to 17:1 ➤ Flexible, combined with other strategies 	<p>1999-2000: \$10 million</p> <p>2000-2001: \$20 million</p> <p>2001-2002: \$30 million</p>	<p>Grades K-3</p> <p>Allocation formula targets low income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Not enough \$ to hire new teachers in some districts ➤ Lack of space to add classrooms 	
Maryland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduce class size to 20 in grades 1-2 reading or grade 7 math ➤ Goal is to hire 1,000 teachers 	<p>1999-2000: \$11.6 million</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Districts must submit plans ➤ State superintendent will appropriate funds if plan meets Legislature's intent 	<p>Grades K-3 (Reading)</p> <p>Grade 7 (Math)</p> <p>All districts will participate</p>		
Nevada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legislation limits class size to 15 in grades K-3 	<p>999-2000: \$82.9 million</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Special revenue fund for class size reduction. ➤ Funds teachers, not facilities 	<p>Grades K-3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enrollment boom ➤ Not enough classroom space 	<p>Districts reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fewer special education referrals ➤ Less teacher absenteeism <p>In-depth evaluation reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overall, achievement levels remained the same ➤ In some districts, students in small classes did better in reading and math

STATE	POLICY INTENT/ ELEMENTS	ALLOCATION/COST	TARGET	IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	IMPACT/RESULTS
Oklahoma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Maximum of 20 students in K-6 ➤ PE, music, vocational not included 	<p>Funding addressed through foundation program</p> <p>Fiscal and accreditation penalties for non-compliance</p>	Grades K-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If classrooms not available, will not be penalized if meets guidelines for facilities funding 	
Utah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Focus on reading ➤ Lower class size in Grades K-4 	<p>Funding formula (weighted pupil units) \$46,311,678 for 1997-2000</p>	<p>K-4, initially</p> <p>Expanded to K-6, then K-8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Shortage of classroom space ➤ Enrollment boom 	
NATIONAL	POLICY INTENT/ ELEMENTS	ALLOCATION/COST	TARGET	IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES	IMPACT/RESULTS
USDOE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hire 100,000 teachers to lower class size ➤ Flexible program ➤ Professional development 	<p>Seven year by 2005: \$12.4 billion</p> <p>2000-2001: \$1.6 billion</p>	Elementary Grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Funds may no longer be used to hire unqualified teachers ➤ Teachers previously hired under program must be certified within one year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Through 1999-2000: 29,000 teachers hired ➤ 2000-2001: 30,000 teachers hired ➤ School districts using about 8% of funds for professional development

Other states with class size initiatives: Maine, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Virginia (ECS), Ohio, Wyoming (Policy Paper)

