

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Update**  
May 16, 2018

**SUBJECT:** K-12 Public Schools Update

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

N/A

**AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION**

N/A

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Dr. Michael Grego, Superintendent, Pinellas County Schools, will provide an update on behalf of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents (FADSS) on items relating to K-12 education initiatives.

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**Supporting Documentation Included:** Talking Points (under separate cover)

**Facilitator/Presenter:** Dr. Michael Grego, Superintendent, Pinellas County Schools

# **Florida Association of District School Superintendents**

## **Comments**

**State Board of Education  
May 16, 2018  
Pinellas County School Board Office  
Largo, Florida**

### **Introduction**

Dr. Mike Grego, Superintendent  
Pinellas County Public Schools

### **Accomplishments/Achievements**

Pinellas County Public Schools

### **Challenges**

#### **Implementation of SB 7026 – Student and School Safety**

The bill places multiple demands upon the State Board of Education, Department of Education, multiple state agencies, law enforcement agencies and school districts to ensure that our students, faculty and staff are safe in schools without interrupting teaching and learning. Full implementation of this legislation will require us to all work together to increase safety measures and secure mental health services for our students.

Many districts will have difficulty meeting the requirement to establish or assign one more safe-school officers at each school facility. In many school districts, the additional Safe Schools appropriation for school resource officers is not sufficient, coupled with the underlying Safe Schools Allocation, to assign a single safety officer to each school facility. There is also a shortage of school resource officers in some areas.

At this point it is likely that the funds appropriated for the Guardian Program may not be expended due to superintendents and school districts not using the program. Superintendents request that you support and recommend that these unspent dollars be used in districts for additional school resource officers or other school safety measures.

The bill also requires drills for active shooter and hostage situations. Superintendents support these drills but they must be accomplished with minimal disruption to teaching and learning and in a manner that does not unnecessarily frighten students, particularly elementary students.

Superintendents and their staffs want to collaborate with other major initiatives in the bill relating to school safety including:

- The establishment of the Safe Schools Office and the attendant duties of this office.
- The development of the School Safety Specialist Training Program.
- The centralized integrated data repository and data analytics resource to improve communication and integration of data.
- Implementation of the Guardian Program.
- The development of the grant guidelines for the implementation of the appropriation for hardening schools.

### **Implementation of SB 7026 – Mental Health Services**

The need of mental health services for students has been one of the top issues for superintendents over the past three years.

FADSS held a Mental Health Conference in Orlando last week that was attended by Chair Marva Johnson and Vice Chair Andy Tuck. Legislators, state leaders, superintendents and their staff, law enforcement personnel, mental health providers and others also participated in the event. The conference exceeded expectations in that it brought together all of the stakeholders to begin a discussion to maximize resources to bring needed mental health services to students and families. This discussion must continue.

Maximizing the funds appropriated through SB 7026 and other community resources to serve students and families must be a priority. The needs and corresponding resources vary significantly among school districts. However, no district is without need for additional resources and mental health professionals. We must work together to ensure that:

- The plans submitted by districts to implement the Mental Health Allocation maximize the assessment and treatment of students with mental health diagnoses and students at high risk of such diagnoses and the coordination of services with the student's primary care provider and other mental health providers.
- The multiagency network for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities is a true collaborative effort that provides children and their families with access to the needed services and supports.

- The required youth mental health awareness and assistance training program is implemented in a meaningful way to school district personnel.

## **Funding**

The budget initially proposed by Governor Scott included an increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) of \$152 per student, which superintendents fully supported. The State Board of Education also recognized the need for an increase by recommending an increase of \$ 136.77.

The budget passed by the Legislature reflects only a 47 cents (.01 percent) increase to the Base Student Allocation. School districts face growing challenges in meeting the day-to-day operations of schools. The BSA is the amount of money the state provides per student and is the main source of funding used to pay for operational costs in school districts.

The overall increase in the education budget is used to pay for the additional 27,000 new students entering public schools next year. The BSA also is used to pay for the inflationary costs for operating schools such as the state-required increase in retirement contributions (FRS) and increased costs in utilities, property insurance, and fuel for buses and health care for our employees.

With only a 47-cent increase in the BSA, Superintendents will be forced to cut their budgets – cuts that will impact students, schools and communities that are served.

As you develop recommendations to include in the 2019-2020 Legislative Budget Request, we hope you will continue to request and advocate for an increase in the Base Student Allocation.

## **Conclusion**

As school leaders, we touch the future by educating Florida's future leaders and citizens. We must work together to improve the overall funding of public education to support a world-class system that prepares our students for tomorrow.