

Updates from The Florida College System

May 24, 2023

**Submitted by Dr. Tonjua Williams, President, St. Petersburg College
and
Chair, Florida College System Council of Presidents**

Good morning, Commissioner Diaz, Chair Ben Gibson, Vice Chair Ryan Petty, and members of the State Board of Education. It is an honor to provide you with an update on the Florida College System. Prior to the start of session, Commissioner Diaz met with the FSC Presidents and encouraged us to work as a team – as one system of 28 colleges, building the workforce of the great State of Florida. It has certainly been an honor to serve as the Chair of the Florida College System Council of Presidents, and previously policy and advocacy chair. Today, I submit my final presentation as Chair of COP and what an amazing year and session it has been. My report recaps our year and legislative outcome.

The FCS Presidents developed with unanimous agreement a brand-new funding formula model and submitted it to the Legislature ahead of the deadline. As you can imagine, this was not an easy task and required us to focus on the system and institutions that needed a boost. We did that! Thank you, Commissioner Diaz, Sr. Chancellor Mack, Chancellor Hebda, DOE support staff, and FCS Presidents of the Great 28!

If you recall, our number one legislative priority for this session was an expansion of the support from both the Governor's and State Board of Education's recommended budget to:

1. Improve student success, completion, and job placement.

2. Increase transfer pipelines to our local Universities.
3. Enhance job placement through rapid credentialing and expanded career dual-enrollment courses.

We are proud to share that both chambers approved \$100M in the program fund using the new funding model! Thank you for your support! Without a doubt, an investment in the Florida College System will pay off massive dividends in our communities, as this will strengthen our ability to recruit and retain faculty and students to ensure our talent will live, work, and play near our institutions.

- The 2023-24 GAA - before the Governor's review of course – includes a total System increase in state funds for the Florida College System Program fund for 2023-24 of \$211.5 million or 15.2%. This includes:
 - \$100 million in new funds distributed using the new funding model
 - \$30 million in Student Success Incentive Funds, such that the funds each college earned from their performance stay in each college's base funding.
 - New Dual Enrollment Tuition and Fees Reimbursement Funds in the amount of \$25.7 million to reimburse colleges for the student fees and additional tuition revenue that are not included in school district tuition for our dual enrollment students.
 - Nearly \$12 million in non-recurring for 9 individual college projects.
 - \$57.2 million in additional operational support for 12 colleges.

- Additionally, there were other programs funded that benefit our colleges:
 - The Open-Door Grant Program funding of \$20 million.
 - Prepping Institutions, Programs, Employers, and Learners through Incentives for Nursing Education (PIPELINE) Funds in the amount of \$40 million (performance pay for nursing programs, same amount as last year)
 - Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Funds in the amount of \$19 million (matching grant health care funds; same as last year)
 - Performance Based Incentive funds for Industry Certifications for \$20 million, which is a \$6 million increase)
 - Open Door Grant Program in the amount of \$20 million
 - First Generation in College Matching Grant, with colleges portion at \$2,654,332 (same as last year)
 - Law Enforcement Academy Scholarship Program in the amount of \$5,000,000 (same as last year)
 - Out-of-State Law Enforcement Equivalency Reimbursement for \$1,000,000 (same as last year)
 - Dual Enrollment Scholarship Program for \$18,050,000 (reimburses colleges for private school. Home education and summer public school students in dual enrollment; same amount as last year)
- Lastly, we are also very excited about several workforce program funds for which colleges can apply to participate in:
 - Pathways to Career Opportunities Grant for \$20M which also this year includes \$5 million in nonrecurring funds to enhance the Pathways to Career Opportunity

Grant (PCOG) to include a specific sub-initiative for the Grow Your Own Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program Expansion

- \$5 million in nonrecurring funds for the Adult General Education Performance-Based Incentive Funds Program, for school districts and FCS institutions based upon the most recently available performance data.

With this new money, we will increase our workforce by continuing to focus on job placement through rapid credentialing and the expansion of career dual-enrollment courses. If approved, we are better equipped to recruit and retain students and faculty and staff to earn equitable wages. This investment in the Florida College System will pay-off massive dividends in our communities, as this will strengthen the lives of Florida's workforce and provide educated high wage-earning citizens who will live, work, and play in our communities through our institutions.

During the 2023 legislative session, the FCS institutions advocated to be included into the state group health insurance. Because of the complexity of the issue, we focused on finding the best solution that helps all Florida colleges, big or small. We are glad to share that there will be a study by the Division of Management Services to investigate the cost for our system to be included in the state health plan. The report will be concluded by December 2023. We are excited about this possibility and look forward to participating in the review process.

Senate Bill 750 is important to us in strengthening our student's ability to transfer to our state universities. This Bill addresses solutions to

articulation challenges discussed during the convening hosted by Commissioner Diaz and Chancellor Rodriguez with FCS and SUS presidents. A unique component of this bill includes not only associate in arts degrees, but also associate in science degree (workforce degree) transfers. The bill also strengthens our existing 2 + 2 agreement to ensure that our FCS graduates matriculate smoothly to SUS institutions. We want to keep all FCS and SUS graduates here in the state of Florida. Strengthening the articulation agreement from FCS to SUS will be a great first step. I'd like to recognize and thank the State Board of Education for supporting this bill.

We hosted a joint legislative meeting with FCS Trustees, Presidents, and SBOE Leaders. This interactive session included presentations by key legislators, Commissioner Diaz, Chancellors Mack and Hebda, Secretary Eric Hall, and Mark Wilson to name a few. We ended the day with a reception to recognize our Trustees and Legislators. Thank you, Trustee Cindy Ross from Polk State College, chair of the FCS Trustees and Dr. Angela Falconetti, Dr. Tim Beard (policy and advocacy chair) president at PHSC, Dr. Larry Tyree and the AFC team, and Seth McKeel, Karen Moore, and President Madeline Pumariega and Maryam Laguna Borrego from MDC for making it happen. Thank you to those who were able to join us.

And finally, I would be remiss if I did not thank Commissioner Diaz for his unwavering support of the College system. On behalf of all the College Presidents, thank you Commissioner Diaz, Senior Chancellor Henry Mack, and Chancellors Hebda and O'Farrell. Your insight and leadership contributed to the success of our advocacy efforts. When we

are united behind one common goal, our system, institutions, and students succeed. This is why we are “The Great 28!”

Florida continues to lead the way in higher education. As you are aware US News & World Report continues to rate Florida’s higher education as #1. We continue to remain on the cutting edge through creativity and innovation. On another note, at the last estimating conference in February, for the first time since the pandemic, a majority of our colleges are showing increases in enrollment, including those AA students who were the hardest to get back. We are encouraged by that.

Thank you all for your leadership, thank you for your time, and thank you for being the champions of hope for Floridians to unlock opportunities and live better lives through education.

In June of 2023, I have the honor of passing the gavel to Dr. Tim Beard, president of Pasco-Hernando State College as he assumes the role of COP Chair in partnership with Dr. Ed Meadows, president of Pensacola State College. Dr. Jeff Allbritten, president of Florida Southwestern State will serve as vice chair leading policy and advocacy. We look forward to their leadership.

Any questions?