

SUWANNEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

LESLEY FRY
DISTRICT 1
NORMAN CRAWFORD
DISTRICT 2
TIM ALCORN
DISTRICT 3



ED DA SILVA
DISTRICT 4
RONALD WHITE
DISTRICT 5
LEONARD DIETZEN, III
BOARD ATTORNEY

1740 Ohio Avenue, South
Live Oak, Florida 32064
Telephone: (386) 647-4600 • Fax: (386) 364-2635

RONNIE GRAY
Superintendent of Schools

April 28, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to express our support for the proposed establishment, development, and implementation of an Elementary Education Bachelors Degree Program at North Florida College. The vast majority of our Dual Enrollment program is through North Florida College and many of Suwannee Counties students earn post-secondary degrees from this institution. We believe that a teacher preparation program that equips future educators with the knowledge, skills, and a passion for education will greatly benefit our community. North Florida College aims to address the demand for well-prepared, well-qualified new teachers.

This program is timely and will help meet the educational needs of our area. Last year, over half of our new teachers had little or no background experience in the field of education. We believe having access to teachers, who have been trained in pedagogy and evidence-based instructional practices will strengthen our teachers teaching and as a result increase the success of our students.

Suwannee School Suwannee District is currently developing an “Educator Academy” in an effort to “grow our own” teachers. We are collaborating with North Florida College to develop a partnership that will enable students to participate in our program and articulate seamlessly into North Florida College and this new Elementary Education Program. In addition, students involved in the new program at NFC could potentially complete internships with our district schools giving them hands-on teaching experience and us a potential pool of candidates.

Suwannee School District has worked with NFC on many projects and we are excited at the prospect of an Elementary Education Bachelors program. We believe that this will have a positive impact on both students and our community.

Please feel free to contact me at 386-647-4601, 386-688-4847 (cell), or email me at tamara.boggus@suwannee.k12.fl.us.

Sincerely,

Tamara Boggus
Director of Curriculum and Instruction

District School Board of Madison County



Dr. Karen Todd Pickles
Superintendent
Karen.Pickles@mcsbfl.us

210 NE Duval Avenue
Madison, Florida 32340
Main: 850/973-5022 or Fax: 850/973-5027
www.madison.k12.fl.us
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April 25, 2025

Mr. Ben Gibson, Chair
State Board of Education
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Chair Gibson and Members of the Board

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for North Florida College's proposal to establish a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education degree program. As a current K-12 Superintendent, an advocate for education, and as a professional engaged in the field of public K-12 system for Madison County, I believe this program request is both timely and essential for our region.

There is an increasing demand for highly qualified elementary educators who are not only knowledgeable in content areas but also skilled in child development, culturally responsive teaching, and instructional practices. North Florida College is well-positioned to meet this need, given its commitment to academic excellence, student-centered learning, and community engagement.

The addition of this degree program will provide aspiring teachers in our region with access to a high-quality, affordable pathway to practicum experience and licensure. It will also help address the growing teacher shortage, particularly in underserved and rural communities, by preparing competent, compassionate, and culturally competent educators who are ready to make a lasting impact in the classroom.

I am confident that North Florida College has the faculty expertise, institutional support, and necessary community partnerships to launch and fully sustain this important and much needed program. I strongly urge you to approve this proposal, which represents a meaningful investment in the future of education in our community, state, and leaders.

Thank you for considering my support for this initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact me if further information is needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dr. Karen T. Pickles'.

Karen T. Pickles, PhD
Superintendent



Lafayette County School Board

363 N.E. Crawford Street • Mayo, FL 32066-5612
Telephone: (386) 294-1351
Fax: (386) 294-3072

ROBERT EDWARDS
SUPERINTENDENT

May 2, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for North Florida College's proposal to establish a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education degree program. Most of our Dual Enrollment program is through North Florida College and many Lafayette County students earn post-secondary degrees from this institution. The ability to continue their education further by earning a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education would be a valuable opportunity.

There is an increasing demand for highly qualified elementary educators who are not only knowledgeable in content areas but also skilled in child development, culturally responsive teaching, and instructional practices. North Florida College is well-positioned to meet this need, given its commitment to academic excellence, student-centered learning, and community engagement.

The addition of this degree program will provide aspiring teachers in our region with access to a high-quality, affordable pathway to practicum experience and licensure. It will also help address the growing teacher shortage, particularly in underserved and rural communities, by preparing competent, compassionate, and culturally competent educators who are ready to make a lasting impact in the classroom.

I am confident that North Florida College has the faculty expertise, institutional support, and necessary community partnerships to launch and fully sustain this important and much needed program. I strongly urge you to approve this proposal, which represents a meaningful investment in the future of education in our community, state, and leaders.

Thank you for considering my support for this initiative. Please do not hesitate to contact me if further information is needed.

Sincerely,

Robert Edwards
Superintendent Lafayette County School District

DARREN DRIVER
DISTRICT ONE

JEFF WALKER
DISTRICT TWO

MARION MCCRAY
DISTRICT THREE

KIMBERLY ADAMS
DISTRICT FOUR

TAYLOR MCGREW
DISTRICT FIVE

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Hamilton County School District

5686 US Highway 129 South – Suite 1
Jasper, Florida 32052

Phone: 386.792.7800 – Fax: 386.792.3681

Lee Wetherington-Zamora, Superintendent

School Board Members
Cheryl McCall – District 1
Gary Godwin – District 2
Saul Speights – District 3
Johnny Bullard – District 4
Sammy McCoy – District 5

November 8, 2024

RE: North Florida College's Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education

Dear FLDOE:

I am writing this in support of the NFC's application to offer a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education.

My name is Philip H. Pinello and I am the Director of Administrative Services (HR)/Assistant Superintendent for the Hamilton County School District. One of my main duties as HR Director is to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers and staff.

This new program that NFC is planning to offer will help us with our goal of hiring certified teachers. With the program within a short driving distance, we will be able to point many of our prospective teachers to this local college and hopefully help us grow our own instructional staff.

This is a program that is much needed in our community due to the lack of certified classroom teachers in our rural area. I fully support this application to help with our search for and the hiring of qualified teaching candidates.

If you have questions about this letter of support, you can contact me at philip.pinello@hamiltonfl.com or by calling (386) 792-7815.

Sincerely,

Philip H. Pinello
Assistant Superintendent
Hamilton County School District