

The President's

Solidarity Report



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Message from FEA:

Senate education budget is encouraging step forward

TALLAHASSEE 3/19/2019 — Today the Florida Senate proposed increasing K-12 education funding by more than \$1 billion, with a nearly \$600 million increase in discretionary funds that could be used to increase teacher and support staff salaries.

“We are encouraged that Senate President Galvano has listened to Florida’s educators and families,” said Florida Education Association President Fedrick Ingram. “This proposal indicates his intent to prioritize the students who attend our neighborhood public schools. It is certainly a step in the right direction and recognizes the needs of our students.”

The FEA had hoped that the House would follow the Senate’s lead, but public statements by Florida House members are less encouraging, as they proclaim that their budget proposal will be the leanest in years. This approach to funding our state’s needs will continue to damage our ability to attract and retain teachers and shortchanges our students.

“Educators and parents have seen the results of a decade of neglect for Florida’s neighborhood public schools. They see firsthand how severely our schools are underfunded,” Ingram said. “One thing we know for sure is that this issue will not be made better overnight. Today Senate

leadership took a positive step toward ensuring our students receive the high quality public education they deserve.”

The Senate education budget proposal includes:

- \$1.1 billion increase over current year, the highest since the 2006-2007 budget year
- \$35 increase in per-student funding
- \$149.40 increase in Base Student Allocation
- \$233.9 million in funding for the teacher and principal bonus program
- \$68 million increase in Safe Schools Allocation
- \$46 million increase in turnaround funds

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Message from our FEA President: The House Budget Proposal 3/20/2019

Dear Leaders,

Thank you to everyone who got on last night’s call. We wanted to provide one more update with regards to the budget.

As we discussed on last night’s phone call, your hard work and activism played a large role in yesterday’s proposed Senate Education budget. Unfortunately, but not unsurprisingly, the House so far has not listened.

The proposed budget released this morning by the House PreK-12 Appropriations Subcommittee falls over \$100 short of the Senate proposal when it comes to funding the base student allocation.

There is no other way to say it; the budget put forth by the House is simply unacceptable.

This year the Legislature has the opportunity to change the trajectory—to put funding for Florida’s students back on the right path. While we would still like to see the Senate invest further in the Base Student Allocation, we commend the Senate for listening to the voices of parents and educators around the state. Their budget reflects a serious commitment to Florida’s students that is simply absent from House’s proposal.

We know, and the members of House know, there is more money to be found; it is simply a matter of political will. It is up to all of us to keep up the pressure on the House to make their

budget more in line with Senate by providing a significant increase to the Base Student Allocation.

Finally, we know the budgeting process can be difficult to understand, so we've put a refresher < <https://feaactioncenter.org/frontline/budget-time-in-the-legislature/> > on the Frontline Blog you can use as a reference and provide to your members when they have questions about the budget.

Fedrick C. Ingram

Fedrick C. Ingram, President
Florida Education Association
NEA, AFT, AFL-CIO

Follow me on—

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fedingram>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fedrick.ingram?fref=ts>

###

Transfers

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I know many have been waiting for information on the transfer period. More information will be sent out by HR later today.

Teachers looking for a transfer must complete an application through SearchSoft, where they must apply for each position they are interested in and qualified for. HR will be sending out the directions for you to complete an internal application through SearchSoft. You must upload a resume and a letter of intent to your application.

The transfer window will take place from April 8, 2019, to June 27, 2019, with a three-week break for a May 22nd Job Placement event and a District Job Fair which will be held on June 4, 2019.

Teachers at a Tier 3 or Tier 4 school will have to decide whether to seek a transfer or remain at their current school. They must commit, one way or another, because they will not be allowed to return to their current school should they participate in the transfer period. Information on this process will also be sent out to tier 3 & 4 Schools. If they are unsuccessful in finding another position by the end of the transfer period, they will be placed at a school.

A teacher who is listed as out of field is also not eligible to transfer unless the transfer would result in him/her moving into a position for which he/she is in-field. A teacher who is in the process of completing their ESOL or reading endorsement is eligible to transfer provided that they have completed their annual requirements as of the first date of the transfer period.

Administrators will consider an applicant's seniority during the interview/selection process. If the administrator chooses to select the most senior applicant for a vacancy, they may do so without interviewing. A minimum of 50% of the applicants chosen for interviews must be the most senior applicants (based on PCON). After interviewing, if the administrator selects the most senior applicant, they must make this selection in SearchSoft and the transfer process will continue in HR. When, in the opinion of the hiring administrator, the best-qualified applicant is not one of the more senior applicants interviewed, the reason for the decision will be provided to the more senior applicants, when requested.

Once a teacher accepts a transfer, this will complete the transfer process and the teacher may no longer interview for other positions.

If, at any time during the process, you are unsure of your contract rights, please call the PCTA offices and request to speak to a Membership Services Director or to your President.

In Solidarity,

Mike

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Aetna Onsite Team

Healthcare has been, and continues to be a crisis across the entire country. Every year the cost goes up and the pharmaceutical companies' profits follow that pattern. Hard working Americans have to bear the brunt of the burden and we can all agree, it's just not fair.

In switching to Aetna, most people found things were better, but a few of us discovered that some costs were higher. In a large District, with nearly 15,000 employees, it is easy to feel like you are lost or an insignificant voice within a large conglomerate.

However, one of the selling points to the EWBS committee was the retention of the onsite team under Humana. These ladies, now fully trained within the Aetna system, are an invaluable asset to everyone who is on one of the District's health plans. My wife Liz, speaks with these ladies on a regular basis as my son's medical needs are chronic. They have been lifesavers to my

family and my wife raves about how hard they advocate for us. I have heard similar stories from members so I am providing the flyer below and ask that you keep it and utilize this service when needed.

Aetna Onsite Team

Office Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM



Janet Lang
Aetna Account Advisor

O: 727-588-6367

F: 727-588-6182

Lang1@aetna.com

- Aetna coverage and benefits
- Explanation of benefits
- Review claims and billing
- Assist with eligibility inquiries
- In-network provider inquiries
- Spending account inquiries



Gina DeOrsey, RN MSN
Aetna Patient Advocate

O: 727-588-6137

F: 727-588-6182

DeorseyG@aetna.com

- Oversees the PCS Diabetes Care Program
- Coordinates Tampa Bay Mobile Mammography Bus
- Resource for inpatient/outpatient coordination of care issues
- Promotes Aetna's Clinical Care Programs: Aetna In Touch Care, 24/7 Informed Health Line, Teladoc, Aetna Maternity
- Provides general health and preventive screening education



Jessica O'Connell, RN BSN
Aetna Wellness Nurse

O: 727-588-6134

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OConnellJ2@aetna.com

- Aetna Health Promise program: GetActive, Peerfit, Mindfulness Challenge, Small Bytes
- Works closely with Pinellas County Schools employee wellness team on programs and initiatives
- Promotes and attends health screenings
- Provides general health and preventive screening education



Sick Leave Bank

My first year as a teacher, one of my colleagues was stricken with cancer. She had used up all her sick/personal time and she dragged herself to work because she could not afford to have her pay docked for missing days. We could hear her in the bathroom throwing up after a chemo treatment. We all wanted to donate some of our accumulated sick days to her but that is not allowed. She was not a member of the sick leave bank and so she could not draw any days from that.

That memory still pains me. I would urge all members of PCTA to become members of the sick bank. The cost is one of your sick days and if a debilitating illness should befall you, you may be entitled to withdraw up to sixty (60) days from the sick leave bank upon approval.

The applications to join the sick leave bank are on the PCTA-PESPA website. If you don't do it for yourself, do it for your colleagues. If we don't look out for each other, who will?

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Best and Brightest Bonus

While our Union continues to fight against bonus money instead of real raises, while they are continuing to give this money out, we want our members to get it if they qualify despite the discriminatory qualifications behind them.

The district has received the funds for the Best & Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program. Qualifying classroom teachers who applied and qualified for the \$6,000 scholarship award along with the \$1,200 award for highly effective evaluation status will be receiving payment in your March 29, 2019 paycheck. I believe that the sum for Effective classroom teachers who qualify, is \$700.

Aside from the normally higher tax rate imposed on bonuses, many will notice that the employer's share of taxes is coming out of your check. The District does not pay for this bonus and is under no obligation to match the SS or MD taxes that a third party (the state) is willing to pay. Theoretically, the State should pay those matching taxes but in Florida, the legislature gets to do whatever they want. This money is not bargained with the District because the state wants to bypass the collective bargaining process by calling it a bonus, not actual wages, which would be subject to collective bargaining. So Tammany Hall, I mean Tallahassee, orders the money to be paid to some teachers but does not want to pay the taxes as an employer should, yet they expect the taxes to be paid nonetheless. They get to have their cake and eat it too! We need to keep the pressure on Tallahassee with the message that we don't need bonuses, we need raises!

PCTA-PESPA Facilitators Wanted!

With the passing of several bills last legislative session many educators in Pinellas County will need to be reading endorsed. If you'd like to help offer training, please see the opportunities below.



All opportunities are open to PCTA-PESPA members. Space is limited, applications will be reviewed, and participants will be chosen by a subcommittee. If you're interested in attending any of the trainings below, please contact Kali Davis at (904) 233-8888 or KaliDavis@gmail.com

AFT Summer Academy July 17-24 Baltimore, MD

Reading Comprehension Instruction

PCTA will pay for:

- Hotel
- Conference registration
- Most meals
- Flight

Participants will be responsible for:

- A pre-training assignment
- Attending all sessions and completing homework while in Baltimore
- Completing several reflections when participants return and start implementing the learning
- Provide the training to colleagues at least once a year. (4 Saturdays or 8 week nights).

Train the Trainer June 17-21 Largo, FL

Beginning Reading Instruction

Cost:

\$0

Participants will be responsible for:

- A pre-training assignment
- Attending all sessions and completing homework in between sessions
- Completing several reflections when participants return and start implementing the learning
- Provide the training to colleagues at least once a year. (4 Saturdays or 8 week nights)

Become a PCTA-PESPA trainer TODAY!

1. Trainers receive research based professional development on content and delivering effective professional development.
2. Each time either of these full courses are delivered, each trainer will be paid \$800.
3. Schedules are flexible. Trainers will help come up with the 2019-2020 training schedule.
4. If you're interested in becoming a facilitator, please fill out the application [HERE](#) or visit: <https://goo.gl/forms/PvYpHWAFiGHm8wTK2>.

