



Mission/Goal Statement

Provide the highest quality education so that all of our students are empowered to lead productive and fulfilling lives as lifelong learners and responsible citizens. As the 112th Congress convenes, we urge the President and Congress to reaffirm their commitment to our nation's children by reinvesting in public education.

2011 Federal Legislative Program

112th Congress



The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida

Perla Tabares Hantman, Chair
Dr. Lawrence S. Feldman, Vice Chair
Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall
Carlos L. Curbelo
Renier Diaz de la Portilla
Dr. Wilbert "Tee" Holloway
Dr. Martin Karp
Dr. Marta Pérez
Raquel A. Regalado

Alberto M. Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

For further information contact:

Iraida R. Mendez-Cartaya
Assistant Superintendent
Mobile: 305-606-6553
imendez@dadeschools.net
Miami -Dade County Public Schools
Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Grants
Administration, and Community Engagement
1450 N.E. 2 Avenue, Suite 931, Miami, FL 33132
305-995-1497 • FAX 305-995-3088
gafla.dadeschools.net

Legislative Issues

Funding for Education

Elementary and Secondary Education Act
(No Child Left Behind)

Early Childhood Education

Immigration Impact

School Nutrition Program

Medicaid Reimbursement

School Construction/Renovation

Secondary School Reform

Technology in Schools

Workforce Preparation

Health Care

Personnel

Cybercrime

The Parent Academy

Cultural Passport

Safe Routes to Schools

FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

Increase federal investment in public education to fully fund the implementation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Increase funding for safe and drug-free school initiatives to implement and expand interventions that focus on reducing disruptive and aggressive behaviors and strengthening students' emotional and behavioral competencies.

Support reform of formula-funding disparities as identified by the General Accounting Office report of January 2002, which hinder funds from reaching the nation's poorest students.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND)

Reauthorize and modify the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind Act 2001) to:

- recognize student progress in lieu of the current all-or-nothing approach and recognize degrees of progress for schools;
- eliminate sanctions associated with not meeting adequate yearly progress;
- support uniform national assessments aligned with national standards to allow for valuable comparison of student achievement among states;
- ensure fair accountability by providing flexibility for special education and English Language Learners (ELLs) and other formula adjustments and by requiring identical tests for Title I and Title III students in non-public schools;
- include other indicators for accountability such as dual enrollment, industry certification, AP enrollment, and graduation/dropout/attendance/suspension rates in determining AYP and align accountability standards with those in the School Improvement Grant;
- reward and retain quality teachers by supporting measures that raise pay for teachers in fields with shortages and in high-need communities; create career ladder paths; and assist with rising housing costs;
- allow districts to use Supplemental Education Services (SES) funds to provide tutoring to eligible students, as well as also pay for monitoring and other implementation costs out of the required 20% set aside and ensure that public schools be not unfairly prevented from providing remedial services to students;
- require that funding to SES private providers be contingent on outcomes on norm-referenced assessments developed and administered by the states and/or the district; and
- allocate immigrant funds under Title III based on the number of recently arrived foreign-born students.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Increase funding for the newly reauthorized Head Start Program.

Support federal funding to develop, expand, and enhance quality voluntary preschool programs while ensuring the adoption of developmentally appropriate early education standards that are aligned with state K-12 academic content standards.

Support the Early Learning Challenge Fund or similar legislation that encourages states to develop effective, innovative child care delivery models that promote high quality childhood education programs and ensure school readiness.

IMMIGRATION IMPACT

Address the impact of federal immigration policies on local school district funds by supporting the Entrant and Refugee Assistance Program under the Targeted Assistance and Immigrant Education appropriation serving foreign-born, English Language Learners (ELLs) and their families.

Support the DREAM Act or similar legislation which provides immigration relief to a select group of students who grew up in the United States, who have good moral character, and who are pursuing a college education or have enlisted in the military; and allow states to determine whether to grant in-state tuition to state residents regardless of immigration status.

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM

Increase federal reimbursement rates to more accurately reflect the cost of producing a healthy school meal.

Implement a tiered system of income eligibility guidelines and reimbursement rates taking into account the varying cost of living in communities throughout the nation.

Provide funding for the implementation of a federally required nutrition education and Wellness Plan.

MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT

Oppose any policy revisions to restrict school-based reimbursement for administration expenditures and certain transportation costs for services provided to low-income children with disabilities.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION/ RENOVATION

Support supplemental funding for implementing “green” sustainable projects that will improve operational efficiency, reduce the carbon footprint, extend the useful life of existing school buildings, and eliminate adverse indoor environmental conditions that are not conducive to learning.

Support supplemental funding for large school districts with high levels of free and reduced-priced lunch to implement “green” sustainable projects, including upgrading technology infrastructure and replacement of school buses or maintenance vehicles that will improve operational efficiency, reduce the carbon footprint, extend the useful life of existing school buildings, and eliminate adverse indoor environmental conditions that are not conducive to learning.

SECONDARY SCHOOL REFORM

Support continued and additional funding for secondary education reform including themed, career path-based academies, and smaller learning communities.

TECHNOLOGY IN SCHOOLS

Support increased allocations and expand the eligible expenditures to include educational linkage beyond the school for the Universal Service Fund Program (E-Rate) and streamline refund procedures to provide schools and libraries with affordable access to state-of-the-art networking and telecommunications technology.

WORKFORCE PREPARATION

Enhance funding and effectiveness of public vocational training, adult education, family literacy, and career academy programs through improved coordination with partner agencies through the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) legislation.

Support the role of district-operated adult education and job training in new federal initiatives including Green Jobs, Fast-Track-to-College programs, and the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act, or similar legislation impacting workforce education.

Oppose any efforts to reduce funding for vocational and technical education programs authorized through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act.

HEALTH CARE

Guarantee the availability and security of employment-based health benefits plan, and guarantee that employee tax exclusion for health benefits is not limited or capped.

PERSONNEL

Support increased funding to recruit, develop, and retain highly qualified teachers in fragile or low-performing schools.

CYBERCRIME

Support legislation that provides supplemental funding to assist school districts in promoting Internet crime awareness and cybercrime prevention to students, teachers, and parents.

THE PARENT ACADEMY

Seek federal supplemental funding to support programming expansion, curriculum development, and replication of The Parent Academy, a parent engagement program launched in 2005.

CULTURAL PASSPORT

Seek federal supplemental funding for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools’ Cultural Passport program, a new educational initiative that will provide all students, grades K-12, with a different cultural field experience each school year, thus ensuring a well-rounded educational experience inclusive of the arts.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

Support the passage of the Safe Routes to High Schools Act (H.R. 4021), or similar legislation, to expand eligibility for federal grant dollars to high schools for infrastructure improvements to establish safe route to schools.

