

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES – FY22



## Career and Technical

### Education

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- The School District of Lee County supports the expansion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs throughout Lee County to ensure that every student is able to participate in, and complete, a high-quality program to advance college and career readiness.
- The District has allocated \$13,100,000 within its five-year capital plan and budget to expand current technical college programs at Cape Coral Technical College. The District will be asking for a Legislative Budget Request of \$1,500,000 to support this master planning effort. The Master Planning effort would establish the site plans and building designs necessary to expand existing program offerings, and establish new programs to meet the current demands of the community workforce. Programs planned for the expanded campus include: auto service technology, marine serve technology, professional career programs, and construction services, HVAC, welding technology, and other building trades programs.

### Early Learning

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- Implement a pilot program to allow students deemed “not ready” for kindergarten to participate in summer VPK.
- Offer state-certified Pre-K teachers the same treatment, benefits (including the ability to extend their careers beyond their DROP end date), and award opportunities as K-12 teachers

### Exceptional Student Education

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- Update Section 6 of Rule [6A-6.03027 Special Programs for Children Three Through Five Years Old who are Developmentally Delayed](#) to reflect an increase in age from three (3) to nine (9) years when determining whether a child has a developmental delay or an underlying disability requiring an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

### Teacher Certification & Retention

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- Modify the General Knowledge Exam requirements to allow for “Professional Performance Points”. The proposal recommends that a new teacher who receives a District rating of “Highly Effective” or “Effective” during their first three years of employment, earns 3 - 5 “Professional Performance Points” that would count toward their score on the General Knowledge Exam.
- Allow districts to have local authority over teacher evaluations and pay for performance.

### Safety and Security

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- Seek an increase in the Safe Schools Allocation to fund the total cost of a School Resource Officer at each school in the District, including charter schools, with the ultimate goal of one SRO per 1,000 students.



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- Establish statewide student data privacy laws and certification program that would apply to all vendors that

provide software and services to educational entities within the state of Florida. Regulations should include, at a minimum, restrictions on commercial use of student data, data handling, and data protection requirements.

- Advocate for cybersecurity threat mitigation services, including SETA (Security Education, Training and Awareness) programs, to be funded by the federal E-Rate program. In the interim, as a stop-gap measure, state funding should be allocated to compensate for increased threat exposure associated with E-Rate expenditures.

## Budget & Finance

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- Change the language in Section 1013.64(6)(b)1., F.S. to allow Districts to use existing Capital Outlay, Surtax Revenue and Impact Fees rather than Certificates of Participation when the total cost per student station exceeds the cost per student station as provided in the law.

## Facilities

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- Convene a work group or task force to review and update the Size and Space and Occupant Design Criteria of SREF to better meet District needs.
- Due to industry standards for construction costs increasing 6.5% year over year for the past three years, provide flexibility in Section 1013.64(6)(b)1., F.S. on total cost per student station school construction requirements.
- Eliminate the impact that pre-kindergarten classrooms have on Florida Inventory of School Houses (FISH).

## Transportation

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- Rewrite Florida Statutes §627.732(3)(b) and §627.733(1)(a) to clearly delineate that school buses operated by county school boards are not subject to the requirement of obtaining personal injury protection insurance and that there has been no waiver of sovereign immunity for claims for reimbursement of paid PIP benefits by automobile insurance companies.

## Comprehensive Health

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Support the implementation of a fully funded Comprehensive Health Education Policy to address mental and emotional health education, suicide prevention, substance use and abuse prevention, dating violence and abusive behavior, human trafficking, teenage pregnancy, injury prevention and safety, Internet safety, personal health, community health, consumer health, family life, nutrition, prevention and control of disease.

## Innovation School

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The School District of Lee County (SDLC) and Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) are partnering to develop an advanced, state-of-the-art model for school systems and teacher preparation programs nationwide, by examining how students learn and improving education for diverse student populations through innovation, research-based practice,

*Draft document until Board approval on 8/17/21*

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and public engagement.

The Innovation School would create resourceful and imaginative leaders and lifelong learners who positively impact an ever-changing society. Teachers and students at SDLC and FGCU would engage in multi-level research in order to:

- Foster educational learning opportunities that inspire individuals' innovative thinking;
- Allow for creative expression, collaborative engagement and effective communication; and
- Turn critical thinking into action