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Governor Scott: Florida Families First Budget Includes Historic State K-12 Education Funding

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Governor Rick Scott today highlighted the Florida Families First budget that includes \$20.3 billion in total funding for K-12 education, an increase of \$1.08 billion over last year's budget.

Specifically, the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) was increased by \$1 billion for a total of \$18.3 billion for the 2013-14 school year. This represents per student funding of \$6,779, an increase of \$404.04 or 6.34 percent over the current year. Included in the \$1 billion increase is \$480 million in funding to increase teacher salaries.

Governor Scott said, "The Florida Families First budget helps families pursue their dreams by getting a great job and accessing a quality education. Teachers will get a pay raise and funds for their classroom supplies so they don't have to pay out-of-pocket. This budget is another great win for our state's high performing education system."

The Florida Families First budget also holds the line on tuition increases to make higher education affordable for Florida families. Governor Scott vetoed the tuition increase of 3 percent passed by the Florida Legislature.

The Florida Families First budget supports Governor Scott's principles for strengthening Florida's education system.

- **K-12 Public School Funding:** The Florida Families First budget provides \$10.5 billion in state funding for K-12 public schools, including \$480 million for teacher salary increases and \$45.3 million for the Teacher Classroom Supply Program. It provides each teacher approximately \$250 for classroom supplies, and \$45.8 million for rural districts in order to cover higher costs the districts incur due to sparse student population.
- **K-12 Development Disability Services:** The Florida Families First budget provides \$13.1 million in K-12 state grants for an array of exceptional education programs and services to students with developmental disabilities. In addition,

\$45.7 million is provided for the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind, which is the state-supported residential school for eligible sensory-impaired students in preschool through the twelfth grade.

- **K-12 Rural School Districts:** The Florida Families First budget provides \$7.4 million in funding to assist rural school districts across the state. Included in the \$7.4 million funding is \$6 million for technology transformation grants to assist districts in establishing a wireless network or expanding an existing wireless network. Also, \$1.4 million is provided to three regional educational consortiums to create greater equity between larger and smaller districts by providing small districts access to resources and expertise they could not provide individually.
- **School Building Maintenance:** The Florida Families First budget provides \$90.6 million in PECO funding for critical deferred maintenance for charter schools. It also provides \$20 million in PECO funding for other traditional public schools.
- **Early Learning:** The Florida Families First budget provides \$404.9 million toward the Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) program, and \$552.5 million for the School Readiness program, including an increase of \$5 million to further expand school readiness services.
- **Florida College System:** The budget provides \$20 million in new funds for state college operating costs, \$3.9 million for operating and maintenance costs of new facilities opening in FY 2013-14, and \$5 million in performance funding based on associated industry certifications.
- **State University System:** The Florida Families First budget provides restoration of the \$300 million in recurring funding to our university system with performance measures and \$50 million in performance funding based on performance metrics which will measure a university's success in helping students obtain high paying jobs affordably.
- **College and University Building Maintenance:** The Florida Families First budget provides \$41.7 million in PECO funding for critical deferred maintenance for Florida College system projects and \$44.4 million in PECO funding for critical deferred maintenance items for State University system projects.
- **Student Financial Aid:** The Florida Families First budget increases need-based financial aid by \$3.3 million.

Florida Commissioner of Education Tony Bennett said, "It was a banner year for Florida's K-12 education system with a funding increase of more than \$1 billion. Thanks to Governor Rick Scott's leadership, the future is much brighter for students, parents, teachers and all Floridians who realize education is the foundation of our economy and our quality of life."

Florida Office of Early Learning Executive Director Shan Goff said, “This is an exciting time for early learning in Florida. The budget demonstrates commitment from the Governor and the Florida Legislature to education and employment support for Florida families. We look forward to working together with our early education partners and stakeholders to ensure high quality early learning opportunities for Florida children.”

Senator Bill Montford said, “Florida has made significant gains in transforming our education system over the past few years,” “Governor Scott is committed to making Florida a global education leader and with his leadership this past session, we are on our way.”

Chancellor of the Florida College System Randy Hanna said, “The Florida College System is extremely grateful for the continued support from Governor Rick Scott and the Florida Legislature. Last year our state government saw a 9.4 percent return on its investment in the Florida College System. With support in this budget for college operations and facilities, our colleges will continue to provide a strong return on investment for the state, taxpayers and our students.”

Chancellor Frank T. Brogan, State University System of Florida said, “Governor Scott has been a strong and leading voice in the dialogue to elevate our public universities while keeping them among the most affordable in the nation. This budget recognizes that the university system provides a real and lasting return on investment for the people of Florida.”

Chancellor of Career and Adult Education Rod Duckworth said, “Thanks to Governor Rick Scott’s commitment to continuing education and his belief that all students should be prepared for college and career. The 2013-14 Budget will support Career and Adult Education programs across the state and students in these programs are better prepared to enter postsecondary education and the workforce.”

Orange County Public School Superintendent Barbara Jenkins said, “Governor Rick Scott’s unwavering commitment to Florida teachers and students resulted in the states’ largest increase in education funding in recent history. His leadership is helping to move Florida’s education system in the right direction.”

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