

Miami-Dade County Public Schools

2012 State Legislative Program

Priority: **Modify** the penalty for non-compliance with the Constitutional Class Size Requirement to loss of the Class Size Reduction Categorical allocation and not loss of the full Base Student Allocation.

- M-DCPS has met class size at over 99% in terms of FTE and 95% in terms of periods in both 2010-11 and 2011-12.
- Meeting the requirement at the 100% level would not be a cost efficient use of tax payer money given the penalty for one student above the cap is roughly \$4,500, while the cost of an additional teacher is roughly \$70,000.
- Meeting the requirement at the 100% level is not always in the best interests of students and families. If a 19th Kindergartner walks into her home school in late-September, full implementation would require the District sending that student to a school with an open seat – perhaps miles away.
- Class Size Amendment has worked as envisioned by the voters without the penalty. Over the past five years, M-DCPS' has been forced to make a historic amount of budget reductions, but due to the Class Size Amendment we have not done so by simply raising the teacher-student ratio. In fact, since the Amendment has gone into effect, M-DCPS' average class size has shrunk by over 10 FTE – a reduction of over 1/3!
- Funding to fully meet the Amendment has never been sufficient, and the BSA is now at pre-2002 levels. Levying a penalty under these circumstances is unfair and onerous.
- The Constitutional Amendment does not call for a financial penalty to be levied on school districts; in fact it puts the financial onus entirely on the Florida Legislature.

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