



2022 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FUNDING

The state has a paramount duty to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. PTA urges the Legislature to fully fund strategies and programs that ensure the health, safety, and education of the children of Miami-Dade County. Additionally,

- Invest public tax dollars in Florida's K-12 public schools, the one public good open to all children regardless of race, religion, personal identity and special needs.
- Meet or exceed the national funding average for both students and teachers.
- Provide additional funding and support services for struggling schools beyond the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP), especially for mandated services.
- Reformulate the District Cost Differential to reflect all relevant cost of living factors.

ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Assessments should identify how instruction and learning can be improved by helping parents and teachers determine student academic needs. Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA opposes the use of state or nationally mandated standardized tests as the sole criterion for measuring student or school progress. Additionally,

- Parents' and educators' right to create policies and legislation that support and fund learning programs to supplement time lost from the inability to be in the classroom, with emphasis on reading and math for disadvantaged youth, as well as encourage partnerships that provide children and youth with supplemental learning activities and enrichment.
- Parents' right to gain timely access to actual student tests, score sheets and associated work product.
- Halt the practice of using tests to negatively impact students, teachers, districts and schools.
- Testing to be used only for student information and not for any other purpose or reason.
- Continue to allow for paper and pencil testing along with computerized testing.

Full transparency and accountability for all K-12 school choice providers authorized under Florida law with respect to

- Sources and use of capital and operational funds
- Admissions criteria and selection process
- Qualifications of administration and staff
- Curriculum
- Student performance

EXCEPTIONAL STUDENT EDUCATION (ESE) AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

English Language Learner (ELL) students face unique challenges with mandated testing processes. Additional funding should be allocated that would accommodate testing of ELL students in their native language. Additionally,

- Use ESE and ELL student testing for diagnostic purposes only.
- State investment in multiple methods of evaluation and parent/teacher/district collaborative support necessary to ensure the success of ESE and ELL students.
- Alternative, appropriate methods of assessing and accurately measuring learning progress of special student populations such as ESE and ELL.

SCHOOL AND STUDENT SAFETY

All students and educators have a right to attend schools that are safe and conducive to learning and achievement. Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA supports legislation that creates a safe, supportive and accepting environment in schools.

Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA supports the strengthening of Title IX and other federal, state and local laws that identify, address the effects of, and prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence impacting students.

It is a parent's right to be involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of all school safety plans, including emergency preparedness, crisis response, and threat assessment protocols, as well as school discipline policies and health and wellness support services.

FIREARM SAFETY

Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA believes the most effective day-to-day school climate is gun-free, which includes keeping guns out of the classroom by not arming teachers. Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA supports federal, state and local efforts to protect children and youth from gun violence by:

- restricting access to guns from persons who may endanger public safety
- closing the "gun show loophole"
- implementing universal background checks
- providing all relevant records to the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS)
- outlawing military style semi-automatic weapons

STUDENT PRIVACY/TECHNOLOGY

It is a parent's right to refuse student participation in vendor or state K-20 data warehousing/mining/collection schemes, including computer-based personal or competency-based education. Further, Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA supports the following:

- Ensuring that non-human instruction does not replace classroom teachers.
- Requiring every Florida student be taught computer and technology skills, including keyboard, by an effective classroom teacher, fully funded by the state and codified in law.
- Implementing a slow pace of expanding online learning unless and until there is clear and convincing research-based evidence from multiple resources that there is a benefit.

STUDENT SAFETY AND SUPPORT

Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA calls on state and local policymakers and school districts to act in the best interest of student safety and well-being. This includes:

- Providing access to mental health services by qualified professionals in schools and provide full funding to support these services.
- Ensuring the adoption of evidence-based approaches, implementation of best practices, and educational policies to best meet the needs of students with Dyslexia and other specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs).
- Supporting legislation that specifically protects LGBTQ+ students. Oppose funding and promotion of conversion therapy.

It is a parent's right to be involved in all efforts to provide for student safety and well-being.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA promotes policies and programs that prevent youth from entering or remaining in the juvenile justice system, including:

- Encouraging the use of Civil Citation as an alternative to youth arrest.
- Preventing the incarnation of youth in adult facilities.
- Supporting programs that prevent recidivism.
- Ensuring that every child in dependency court has a Guardian ad Litem.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS

Miami-Dade County Council PTA/PTSA urges the Legislature to preserve the election of school board members on a non-partisan basis.

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