

LET'S HOWL FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

PTA/PTSAs in Hillsborough County are responding to the lack of funding for our public schools. The goal has been to gain a strong understanding of the issues and share that information with you, our Walker families.

Many parents say that it feels overwhelming to address the issues since they are numerous and complex. We agree and are trying to boil the issues down into main components, summaries and visuals. We hope that the following summary sheets will help raise awareness for the seriousness of what our public schools are facing. To begin to understand these summaries, it's important to know that most of our public school funding – and policies – are decided by our State Legislators (House Representatives, FL Senators and the Governor).

In recent years, the State has made decisions that have had a severely negative impact on our public education system. Both last and this year, they passed bills that divert significant funding away from traditional public schools. They responded to an education budget crisis in which we cannot adequately pay our teacher salaries, fix broken air conditioners or even provide basic classroom supplies by increasing funding \$0.47 per student after paying for underfunded security mandates. State Legislators have been public in their attacks on our core education system.

While public education legislation is political by its very nature, we **ALL** have children in public schools. We **ALL** are in this together. Regardless of broad political viewpoints, let's unite on this critical topic. Let's unite in learning together how to advocate for our children. Let's unite to fight for what **ALL** children in this state deserve – access to a free and equal quality education. We are a strong community of leaders, made stronger when we unite our voices.

We hope that the following summaries will expand discussions and unite our community on demanding adequate funding for **ALL** of our children's educations.

Please contact Brita Wilkins Lincoln walkeradvocacy@gmail.com or walkerptsainfo@gmail.com for more information.

How does the State of Florida per student funding compare to other states?

- Florida public school funding per student is approximately **\$4000 (or 36%) below the national average!**
- The highest per student funding in Florida of \$7126 was in 2007-08. Adjusted for inflation, **we would need \$8726 per student funding in 2018-19 to equal what students received a decade ago. So we actually lag pre-recession funding by almost 18%!**

| National Average | 2007-08 Budget | 2007 Budget Adjusted for Inflation to Equal 2018 \$ | 2017-18 Budget | 2018-19 Budget |
|------------------|----------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| \$11,500* | \$7126 | \$8726 | \$7296 | \$7408 |

| Category | National Ranking |
|--|------------------|
| Per capita spending of state and local government for K-12 public schools (2014) | 49 |
| Spending for public K-12 students in attendance (2016) | 42 |
| Spending for public K-12 per \$1000 of personal income (2015) | 50 |
| Per capita state government spending for all education (2014) | 50 |
| State & local government spending for all education as a % of government spending (2014) | 48 |

How can you help support public education?

- **VOTE!!!** Vote for representatives that support public education, especially in the FL House of Representatives, the FL Senate and the Governor who decide much of education funding and policy!! These important elections are happening in November 2018.

- Contact your representatives via in-person meetings, phone calls & emails – our collective voices can make a difference!
- Follow these local public education information resources:
 - Hillsborough County Council PTA Advocacy on Facebook
 - Alliance for Public Schools: www.all4schools.org
 - Tampa Bay Times Gradebook: <http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/gradebook/>
 - Follow Walker Advocacy:
 - On the Walker PTSA Facebook page
 - On the Walker PTSA website <http://walker.my-ptsa.org/> click on Advocacy

Hillsborough County Election & Registration Dates

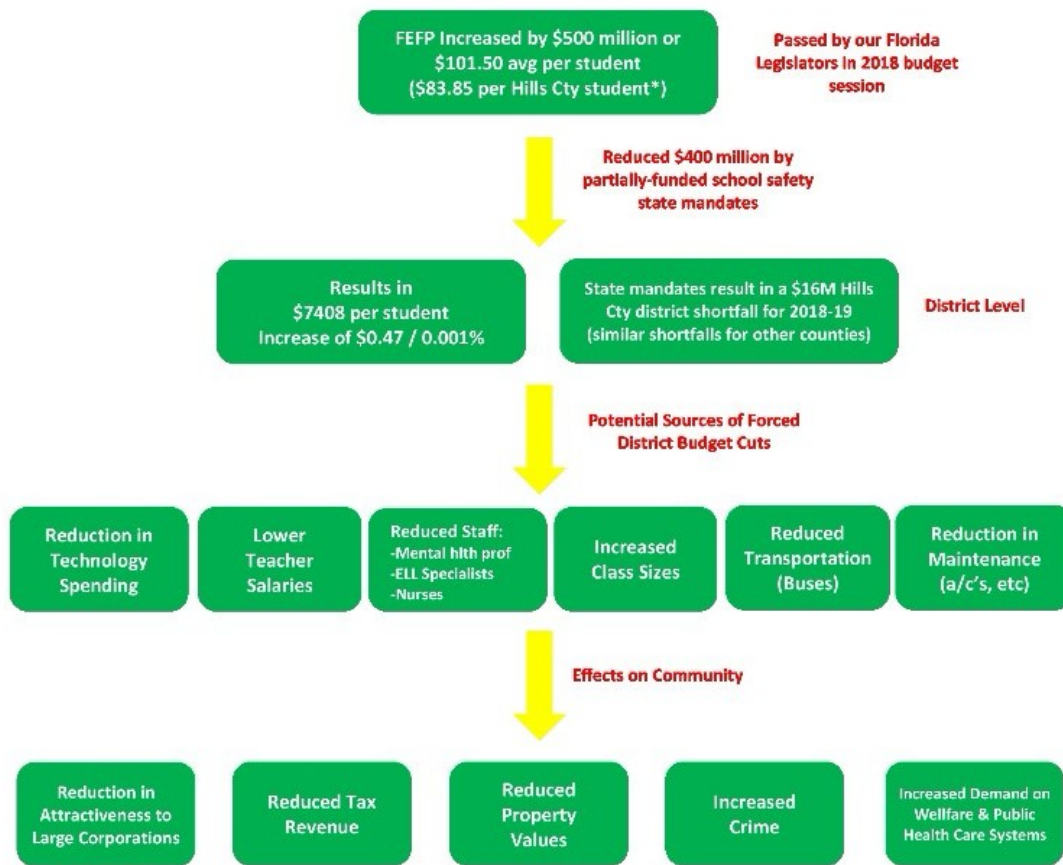
| Election | Registration Deadline | Election Day | Notes |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|---|
| 2018 Primary Election | July 30, 2018 | August 28, 2018 | Any school board candidate that obtains 51% of the Aug election votes will be automatically elected and not run in the Nov election |
| 2018 General Election | October 9, 2018 | November 6, 2018 | FL House of Reps & Senate will have races in this election! |

*As of most recent Census data from 2015

**Source: http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/2017_Rankings_and_Estimates_Report-FINAL-SECURED.pdf

Florida Education Funding Program (FEFP) 2018-19 (Per Student Funding)

The State of Florida claims record education funding. This is deceptive because in absolute dollars, we are at a record high but in real dollars (adjusted for inflation and higher student population) **we are below pre-recession, 2007 funding dollars!**



*based on new compression formula passed by 2018 legislatures.

Effects of School Choice on Public School Funding

What is a charter school?

Webster Dictionary: "A charter school is a tax-supported school established by a charter between a granting body (such as a school board) and an outside group (as of teachers and parents) which operates the school without most local and state educational regulations so as to achieve set goals."

Wikipedia: "A charter school is a school that receives government funding but operates independently of the established state school system in which it is located. Charter schools are an example of public asset privatization."

How is the “School of Choice” Movement Affecting Public Education Funding?

1. **Inequitable capital funding**

- In 2017, our State Legislators passed House Bill 7069 that requires 50% of Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funds to go to charter schools.
- In 2018-19 an estimated **\$96.3 million PECO funds will go to charter schools**
- PECO funds are used to build, improve and maintain schools
- This results in **inequitable capital funding**
 - Only 11% of Florida students attend charter schools
 - 89% of Florida students attend traditional public schools
- Public schools do not have sufficient PECO funds to meet capital demands
 - Hillsborough County has a \$3 billion deficit
 - Districts end up relying on private charter companies to build charter schools to keep up with student population growth

2. **PECO funds permanently lost from public school system**

- Private charter companies use PECO funds to buy land and buildings to build new charter schools
- If a charter school closes, which is common, the private charter company keeps ownership of the land and buildings and often times sells them for a significant profit!!!
- This results in significant windfalls of public funds for private for profit charter companies which motivates charter school development even if they are not needed

3. FEFP (per student funding) lost for entire school year

- When a student enrolls in a charter school, their FEFP (per student funding) transfers to the charter school for the ENTIRE school year
- If the child returns to the public school:
 - The FEFP funds stay at the charter school for the remainder of the school year
 - The public school absorbs the costs of the student without any funding for that student!
- This results in a system that encourages private for-profit charter companies to enroll students without intentions of keeping students in charter to capture their FEFP funds

