

Major Initiatives

Class Size Reduction Amendment

In November, 2002, Florida voters passed Constitutional Amendment 9, requiring the state legislature to reduce the maximum class size in Florida's public schools. The goal set by the amendment to be reached by 2010-11 is 18 students per pre-kindergarten class through grade three, 22 students per core class in grades 4 through 8, and 25 students per core class in grades 9 through 12. During the 2009 legislative session, the school average was extended for the 2009-10 school year. In 2012-13, the state allocated \$66.1 million toward meeting classroom compliance requirements in Volusia County Schools. In an effort to meet compliance at the classroom level, the district added 257.8 teaching positions and extra period supplements in 2010-11 and maintained them in 2011-12. Some of the many implementation strategies used then and currently still in use are:

- Increased Volusia virtual classes in the high schools
- Multi-grade classes in the elementary schools
- Extra period supplements for teachers in the secondary schools
- Out of zone variance deadline

The District met class size compliance for the 2010-11 and 2011-12 and avoided substantial penalties. However, meeting class size compliance in 2012-13 will be particularly challenging with the reduction of nearly 250 teaching positions.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was a significant federal legislative measure that augmented the school district's budget. Divided into two segments, the stimulus package provided the district with an additional \$16.7 million in Title I, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Homeless Children and Youth, Enhancing Education Through Technology and Equipment Assistance-School Food Service grants, while the stabilization portion supplied an additional \$19.5 million for general fund expenditures. The ARRA funds were a critical component in saving and creating more than 550 full-time equivalent personnel, despite declining state funding. The ARRA funding was no longer available in 2011-12, with most of the personnel assigned to the general operating budget or reassigned through attrition. The district was no longer able to fund nearly 250 teachers with its available resources in 2012-13.

Capital Outlay Program

This is the end of the ten-year building program and the progress made since its inception continues to be visible throughout the district. For school year 2009-10, Champion Elementary (Hurst Elementary replacement) opened for students. University High School (formerly High School DDD) opened for students in school year 2010-11. Projects at Enterprise Elementary for a new administration and classroom building and extensive site work were completed. Citrus Grove Elementary (formerly Elementary Z) and Holly Hill School, middle school addition, had inaugural openings. The final phase of the Ormond Beach Middle School replacement was completed in 2012.



Executive Summary

Major Initiatives

Critical Needs Operating Millage

Under F.S. 1011.71(3)(b), the 2010 legislative session provided district school boards throughout the state the ability to levy an additional 0.25 discretionary ad valorem millage for critical operating or capital needs for two (2) fiscal years. The Volusia County School Board exercised that option for critical operating needs, generating an additional \$8 million and \$7 million in the last two years. The continuation, of the 0.25 critical needs millage was approved by voter referendum through 2012-13. On June 26, 2012, the school board passed a resolution calling for an additional .75 mill (above the .25) for school operational purposes for a four (4) year period – July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2017. This additional millage will go to the voters on November 6, 2012.

Education Jobs Bill

President Barack Obama approved The Education Jobs Fund Act on August 10, 2010. The State of Florida was allocated \$554.8 billion dollars to help schools retain or create teaching jobs, with Volusia County Schools receiving \$12.4 million. This program required that school districts use the funds to pay the salaries and benefits of teachers, school-administrators and other essential school-based staff. The funds were expended by June 30, 2011; therefore, the funds are no longer available.

Race to the Top Program

Race to the Top is a \$4.35 billion United States Department of Education program designed to spur reforms in state and local district K-12 education. It is funded by the ED Recovery Act as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and was announced by President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan on July 24, 2009. The Volusia County School District received \$11.7 million over the four-year period ending June 30, 2014 to implement ambitious plans in four core education reform areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace, and to compete in the global economy
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools

Race to the Top will reward States that have demonstrated success in raising student achievement and have the best plans to accelerate their reforms in the future. These States will offer models for others to follow and will spread the best reform ideas across their States and across the country.

Fund Balance Policy

A significant highlight in 2009-10 was the school board's bold decision to approve policy 722 which requires the district to maintain a minimum 3% unreserved fund balance with the desirability of 5%. This decision added a more noteworthy dimension of substantive and responsible goal setting in the fiscal process. The Board met that goal in 2009-10, 2010-11, and 2011-12.

