

A PROVEN RECORD | 20 YEARS OF REFORM

FLORIDA IN
1999

vs.

FLORIDA IN
2019

FOURTH GRADE READING

Nearly half of Florida fourth graders were reading severely below grade level.¹

Ranked 6th in the nation in fourth grade reading achievement.¹

FOURTH GRADE MATH

Nearly half of Florida fourth graders were performing below grade level in math.¹

Ranked 4th in the nation in fourth grade math achievement.¹

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Ranked among the worst 10 states for the percentage of students successfully completing AP courses.²

Ranked 3rd among states for the percentage of students successfully completing AP courses.²

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Only half of Florida students graduated high school on time.³

Increased Florida's statewide graduation rate by more than 30 percentage points.³

PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS

Only 0.4 percent of all K-12 students - 9,135 - attended a public charter school.³

More than 1 in 10 students - 313,000 - attended a public charter school.³

K-12 STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

Fewer than 10 students received a K-12 scholarship.³

More than 140,000 low-income students and students with disabilities received scholarships.³

1. National Assessment of Educational Progress
2. The College Board
3. Florida Department of Education
4. Step Up for Students
5. National Center for Higher Education Management Systems



3-YEAR IMPACT | 2017-2019

\$392 million
Additional funding for charter schools

300,000
Charter school students benefiting from new capital outlay funds

\$177 million
New funding for private school choice programs

61,600
Newly funded private school choice scholarships

1st
in the nation school choice Hope Scholarships for victims of bullying

Largest
first-year enrollment in private school choice history (Family Empowerment Scholarships)

86,000
Students with expanded access to online courses

\$11.5 million
New funding for computer science

1st
in the nation Schools of Hope charter program for rapid turnaround of failing schools

2nd
in the nation to enact private school choice for middle-income families (Family Empowerment Scholarships)

885,500
Students benefiting from new or improved early literacy policies

1st
in the nation Reading Scholarship Accounts for struggling readers



ABOUT THE FOUNDATION FOR FLORIDA'S FUTURE

The Foundation for Florida's Future supports Sunshine State leaders in developing and advancing a broad range of student-centered policy solutions that increase student learning, advance equity, expand access to a quality education and ready graduates for college and high-quality, high-paying and high-demand 21st century careers.



FIRST IN CLASS FLORIDA



3 GOALS



3 YEARS

THE FLORIDA STORY

Two decades ago, Florida began a massive overhaul to transform its education system from one that accepted mediocrity to one that puts students first, with high expectations and educational opportunity.



WILL YOU SUPPORT OUR WORK to place Florida First in Class?

THE RESULT? Florida's students rose from the bottom of the pack to the top ten nationally in reading and math. But, according to the nation's most recent report card, Florida's students—as in other states across the country—are beginning to stagnate. And that's not good enough for the Sunshine State. When it comes to education, it's time to make Florida first in class.

THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

Despite Florida's monumental progress:

- More than **60%** of 4th graders aren't reading on grade level.¹
- Over **65%** of 8th graders aren't proficient in reading or math.¹
- **13%** of high schoolers aren't meeting the requirements to graduate.³
- **100,000** students are waiting to attend a charter school.³
- Nearly **39,000** students who applied for special needs- and income-based scholarships remain on waitlists.⁴
- **1/3** of high school graduates aren't immediately pursuing college.⁵

THREE GOALS IN THREE YEARS

To get back on track, state leaders can adopt 21st century policy solutions that put Florida's students first and ensure the state remains a model for the nation.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Close learning and opportunity gaps for all students, especially our most at-risk students through support for early literacy, resources for low-income students and bridging the digital divide. *Florida will be in the **top 10** for student achievement in all grades and subjects.*

EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM

Increase options for families, teachers and schools so Florida can lead the nation in educational opportunity and innovations. *Florida will remain **#1 in the nation** for family empowerment.*

EDUCATION TO WORKFORCE

Create high-quality, education-to-workforce pathways leading to high-skill, high-wage, in-demand jobs. *Florida will be **#1 in the nation** for quality postsecondary college and career outcomes.*

2021 PRIORITIES

“We must meet the historic challenges that Florida students and educators are facing by protecting and increasing funding for our schools and at-risk students and advancing policies that empower families and promote equity.” —Governor Jeb Bush



STUDENT SUCCESS

- Support success in **early literacy**:
 - **Measure** reading skills from pre-K to 8th grade through a statewide-aligned, direct early literacy screener and progress monitoring tool, then target support for students who need it most.
 - **Screen** K-1 students who are identified as at-risk for **dyslexia** so parents and teachers are better informed on needs.
 - **Support K-4 teachers** and administrators with statewide science of reading training.
 - Support **struggling readers** in K-2 with access to Reading Scholarship Accounts.
- Support **low-income students** by providing additional funds to schools that serve them.
- Take steps to bridge the **digital divide**:
 - Annually collect and report data on device and internet connectivity to **identify gaps** with families and teachers.
 - Ensure all low-income students have access to devices and **broadband internet**.
 - Support **Florida’s teachers** with annual professional development in online learning.
 - Provide **parents** with access to technical assistance and resources so they can help students with online learning.
 - Create a biennial state term contract for **digital devices** to lower cost for districts and taxpayers and simplify procurement for districts that choose this option.



EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM

- Support **military, foster care and adopted students** with guaranteed access to educational choice through the creation of the new Family Heroes Scholarships.
- Expand access to Family Empowerment Scholarships and McKay Scholarships by **removing the requirement for prior year public-school enrollment**.
- **Customize learning** for students by converting Florida Tax Credit Scholarships and Family Empowerment Scholarships to ESAs.
- **Close learning gaps** by establishing Learning Equity and Progress (LEAP) grants for public school families impacted by learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provide options for state-certified teachers to **work directly with families** for student instruction through parent-teacher compacts.
- Create **“teacher wallets”** so educators have funds **and choice** in their training opportunities and classroom supply needs.
- Empower public schools to serve more students through **part-time enrollment** options in district-run schools.
- Allow **flexibility for innovative districts and charter schools** to establish classrooms outside of district property.



EDUCATION TO WORKFORCE

- Increase **incentives** and support for students who will earn degrees in areas of critical importance for Florida (high-need, high-wage, high-demand occupations).
- Create a designation for **early college high schools**, recognizing schools that help students earn an associate’s degree or 30 hours of aligned, postsecondary credit while in high school.
- Create a process for students to receive college credit for certified **work experience**.
- Create a data dashboard for state leaders that provides information on degrees and credentials earned as well as **alignment with workforce needs** in the state and local communities.
- Ensure the **credentials and skills gained in high school closely align** with postsecondary and employment opportunities, including those dramatically changed due to the pandemic.
- Establish a biennial audit to ensure graduates are receiving the **coursework and credentials** to succeed in college and the workforce.
- Ensure quality of data reporting through data sharing agreements with credentialing organizations.