



STATEMENT ON SB 540

The Association of Florida Colleges Trustees Commission, consisting of the state's 28 Florida colleges, is committed to working with the Florida Legislature this session to develop legislation that positions the Florida College System for continued success – legislation that takes into consideration the varied needs of each college.

2+2 PROGRAM

We are aligned with the component of the articulation agreements, or the 2+2 program in SB 540. The relationships we have built with universities across Florida ensure that our students have opportunities to advance their education and become part of Florida's talent pipeline. We welcome recommendations from the legislature that can further strengthen these partnerships.

FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Unfortunately, SB 540 contains changes that can negatively affect each of the state's colleges. To start, changing our system name back to the Florida Community College System does not reflect the evolution of the progressive system we have become. Impacting this advancement may potentially affect the perception from inside and outside the system.

PERFORMANCE FUNDING

The proposed changes to the performance funding metrics ties college funding to the graduation rate of full-time baccalaureate degree students at other institutions who initially come from an FCS institution. While each of Florida's colleges is committed to the success of the students it serves, they can only meet their needs and offer guidance while they are active students at the college. Similarly, there are concerns about the metric that links college performance funds to the number enrolled full-time in each of our colleges. Florida colleges serve unique populations who have full time jobs, families, and many responsibilities, who sometimes struggle in maintaining the balance.

DIRECT SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

SB 540 calls for additional restrictions on Direct Service Organizations, or the foundations that serve to bring money into the colleges. Mandating what colleges can spend on staff that raises funds will only be to the detriment of our students and programs. These funds, which already have use restrictions, directly benefit students in the forms of scholarships.

ENROLLMENT CAPS

Further concerns stem from SB 540's establishing enrollment caps for baccalaureate programs. These programs are workforce targeted and exist to meet the demands of the local labor market and the needs of students within a community. The Florida College System has a rigorous approval process to determine whether there is an actual need for a baccalaureate program including a proposal on how they will meet market demand and communication with area state universities and colleges. Ensuring that this process dictates the number of students enrolled in these programs instead of setting an arbitrary percentage cap is what will ultimately best strengthen a community's workforce.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE

SB 540 seeks to change FCS governance from individual local boards to include a statewide board as well. By removing the ability for a college to directly listen to the needs of its community and adapt as a response, the success of the system and ability to remain relevant are threatened. As we look at the respect the FCS earns nationally, we find that our primary local control combined with the current State Board of Education for reporting and policy oversight as established by Governor Bush in 2001 is a key element to our status as the best college system in the country.



COUNCIL OF PRESIDENTS | 2018 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM PROGRAM FUND & PERFORMANCE-BASED INCENTIVES REQUEST: \$286 MILLION

The Florida College System (FCS) serves as the primary entry point to higher education for Florida students and has been recognized as the nation’s best. Since the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence was first awarded in 2011, two FCS institutions have won the prize, three were named finalists with distinction, and over half have been among the nation’s top 150. The 28 colleges of the FCS provide the necessary programs for transfer students to the State University System (SUS), meet local workforce needs through degree and certificate programs, and offer low-cost baccalaureate degree programs in areas with demonstrated workforce need.

While serving nearly 800,000 students, the FCS plays an integral part in Florida’s degree attainment and workforce training needs. With more than half of FCS graduating students transferring to universities, there is a direct correlation between supporting our students and strengthening our state universities in order to achieve a preeminent destination status. The Council of Presidents (COP) fully supports this “2+2” partnership. FCS students are on par or above native university students.

The budget initiatives listed below increase the state’s investment for meeting current and future needs related to degree attainment and job creation; it also restores system program funding from the previous fiscal year. Additional funding requests include \$401 million for Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO), \$210 million for deferred maintenance, and the operational cost of new facilities (OCNF). These dollars are imperative to maintaining the operations of campus facilities and hurricane hardening to ensure FCS institutions are meeting the needs of the students and the communities we serve.

2018 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

REQUEST: (RECURRING)	GOAL
\$80 million for performance-based funding <i>(includes \$40 million state investment and \$40 million institutional investment)</i>	Continue strategic improvements in areas of job placement and continuing education, retention and completion rates, and wage earnings.
\$14 million for industry certifications	Expand the number of nationally recognized high-value certificates that address areas of critical workforce need in emerging or targeted industries.
\$75 million for Workforce Preparation	Increase degree and certificate programs to fulfill identified employment gaps in high-demand areas.
\$67 million for Student Success and Completion	Establish program-specific “2+2” targeted pathways and shorten time-to-degree completion by investing in services, including mental health, to promote student success, persistence, and retention.
\$50 million for Faculty Recruitment and Retention	Recruit and retain high quality faculty and staff, with focus on competitive fields including STEM.