

House Joint Resolution

A joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution relating to public education.

Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

That the following amendment to Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution is agreed to and shall be submitted to the electors of this state for approval or rejection at the next general election or at an earlier special election specifically authorized by law for that purpose:

ARTICLE IX

EDUCATION

SECTION 1. Public education.--

(a) The education of children is a fundamental value of the people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education and for the establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning and other public education programs that the needs of the people may require. To assure that children attending public schools obtain a high quality education, the legislature shall make adequate provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2009-2010 ~~2010~~ school year and for each school

29 year thereafter, there are a sufficient number of classrooms so
 30 that:

31 (1) The school district average ~~maximum~~ number of students
 32 who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public
 33 school classrooms for prekindergarten through grade 3 does not
 34 exceed 18 students and the maximum number of students in any
 35 prekindergarten through grade 3 class does not exceed 23
 36 students;

37 (2) The school district average ~~maximum~~ number of students
 38 who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public
 39 school classrooms for grades 4 through 8 does not exceed 22
 40 students and the maximum number of students in any grade 4
 41 through 8 class does not exceed 27 students; and

42 (3) The school district average ~~maximum~~ number of students
 43 who are assigned to each teacher who is teaching in public
 44 school classrooms for grades 9 through 12 does not exceed 25
 45 students and the maximum number of students in any grade 9
 46 through 12 class does not exceed 30 students.

47
 48 The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to
 49 extracurricular classes. Payment of the costs associated with
 50 reducing class size to meet these requirements is the
 51 responsibility of the state and not of local school ~~schools~~
 52 districts. Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the
 53 legislature shall provide sufficient funds to reduce the school
 54 district average class size ~~number of students in each classroom~~
 55 by at least two students per year until the school district
 56 average class size for each of the grade groupings ~~maximum~~

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57 ~~number of students per classroom~~ does not exceed the
58 requirements of this subsection.

59 (b) In addition to the amounts appropriated to meet the
60 class size requirements of subsection (a), the legislature shall
61 annually cause to be appropriated a separate amount from state
62 funds equal to the difference between the estimated cost of
63 implementing a class size reduction program according to the
64 provisions of subsection (a) as initially adopted in November
65 2002 and the cost of implementing the provisions of subsection
66 (a) as amended in November 2006. Such separate amount shall be
67 appropriated by the legislature first for increasing the salary
68 of public school teachers to the extent necessary to cause the
69 average annual teacher salary in Florida public schools to equal
70 at least the average annual salary of all public school teachers
71 in the United States in prekindergarten through grade 12 and for
72 increasing salaries for other public education employees, and
73 thereafter for funding such public education purposes as deemed
74 appropriate by the legislature.

75 (c) (1) ~~(b)~~ Every four-year old child in Florida shall be
76 provided by the state a high quality prekindergarten ~~pre-~~
77 ~~kindergarten~~ learning opportunity in the form of an early
78 childhood development and education program which shall be
79 voluntary, high quality, free, and delivered according to
80 professionally accepted standards. An early childhood
81 development and education program means an organized program
82 designed to address and enhance each child's ability to make age
83 appropriate progress in an appropriate range of settings in the
84 development of language and cognitive capabilities and

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85 emotional, social, regulatory, and moral capacities through
 86 education in basic skills and such other skills as the
 87 Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

88 (2)~~(e)~~ The early childhood education and development
 89 programs provided by reason of this subsection ~~subparagraph (b)~~
 90 shall be implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005
 91 school year through funds generated in addition to those used
 92 for existing education, health, and development programs.
 93 Existing education, health, and development programs are those
 94 funded by the state as of January 1, 2002, that provided for
 95 child or adult education, health care, or development.

96 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following statement be
 97 placed on the ballot:

98 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

99 ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1

100 PUBLIC EDUCATION; REVISING CLASS SIZE REQUIREMENTS TO
 101 INCREASE SALARIES AND FUND OTHER PURPOSES.--Proposing an
 102 amendment to the State Constitution to revise class size
 103 requirements and their date of implementation to provide that
 104 they shall be based on the school district average number of
 105 students who are assigned to a teacher in specified grades; to
 106 specify the maximum number of students in any one class; to
 107 provide that, in addition to the amounts appropriated to meet
 108 the revised class size requirements, the Legislature shall
 109 appropriate a separate amount equal to the difference between
 110 the estimated cost of implementing a class size reduction
 111 program according to the constitutional provisions adopted in
 112 November 2002 and the cost of implementing these revised class

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113 size requirements; and to provide that such separate
114 appropriation shall first be used to increase the salary of
115 public school teachers and other public school employees and
116 thereafter to fund other public education purposes.