



Seminole County Public Schools 2024 Legislative Priorities

Appropriation Request for Lake Howell High School Cybersecurity Creating Employability

Lake Howell High School in Winter Park, Florida proudly provides students with exceptional learning experiences regardless of their diverse post-secondary aspirations. Among its program offerings, students have opportunities to earn experience and industry certifications in cybersecurity, computer science, and/or aeronautical sciences. Through the combination of these programs, the School Board of Seminole County will create the Cyberhawk Academy at Lake Howell High School. This state-of-the-art program will capitalize on existing spaces and create new spaces that allow students to engage in all aspects of cybersecurity for both civilian and military applications. This allocation will allow the district to develop the CyberHawk Project in Phases. Phase 1, “Expansion & Engagement” will allow for the creation of classroom/competition space. This space will support the inclusion of industry partnerships through the collaborative development and implementation of engaging, real-world, high-intensity simulations that will allow CyberHawk students to demonstrate skills and experience the cybersecurity industry in a safe, competitive, and engaging learning environment. Working in conjunction with business, university, and military partners, Lake Howell High School’s Cyberhawk Academy is essential to sustaining our security as individuals and as a nation. **Therefore, the School Board recommends creating a pipeline for cybersecurity professional by funding a program expansion in the amount of \$3,000,000.00. (System Initiative C)**

High School Mathematics Accountability

Middle School Math Acceleration has Negative Consequences for High Schools.

Accountability, measurement, and reporting of student achievement and learning growth are foundational values for Seminole County Public Schools, however math accountability in high schools is inequitable since the highest performing students are excluded from the math component of the High School grade calculation. Many of our highest performing students have completed all math EOCs (Algebra I and Geometry) requirements before entering the 9th grade, which results in a skewed grade calculation for high schools. Seminole County would like to utilize the PSAT Mathematics score of 430 or above as an option for students to earn high school accountability points if the student has already completed Algebra I and/or Geometry in middle school. This score is the State Board approved concordant score for Algebra 1 that is aligned with level 3 or above performance on the Algebra 1 EOC. The Florida Legislature appropriates funds to administer the PSAT to all 10th grade students, so all districts have an equal opportunity to include these scores. Accelerated and non-accelerated students are included in high school math accountability, resulting in a more accurate representation of mathematics achievement. Incentivizing schools and districts to widen access opportunities to higher level math acceleration for a larger and more diverse group of students which aligns with the Florida Department of Education’s Strategic Plan Goals one (1) and two

**(2). The School Board recommends utilizing the PSAT Mathematics score of 430 or above as an option for students to earn high school accountability points if the student has already completed Algebra I and/or Geometry in middle school.
(System Initiative A)**

Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Deregulating Statutory Language to Create Funding Flexibility.

Hiring and retaining teachers has become increasingly difficult with the mounting demands put on teachers and the lack of teacher candidates entering the colleges of education. In addition, with the rising cost of living in Florida compared to the level at which teachers are paid exacerbates recruitment and retention issues. Pay for performance is differentiated and prescribed by the teacher's performance. However, a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is an adjustment to meet the demands of rising costs in the area. By striking F.S.1012.22(1)(c)2, b, "Does not exceed 50 percent of the annual adjustment provided to instructional personnel rated as effective" would allow districts to have flexibility in paying all teachers an appropriate COLA adjustment while maintaining the intent of teacher salary increase allocations. **The School Board recommends deregulation of salary schedule within Section 1012.22(1)(c)2, b, F.S. by removing the restriction of "Does not exceed 50 percent of the annual adjustment provided to instructional personnel rated as effective". (System Initiative F)**

Achieving advanced degrees is an important way for teachers to improve their craft, however the current statutory language only allows supplements for degrees in an area of certification. This language has unintended consequences, in that there are many degrees in education that directly improve student learning that don't offer certification and therefore teachers are unable to earn a supplement for earning these degrees, such as curriculum and instruction or educational technology to name a few. In addition, it makes it very difficult to recruit teachers from other districts or states when they were earning an advanced degree supplement, but due to the move to another district they no longer qualify and then receive an unexpected reduction in pay, which is counterproductive to recruiting and retaining teachers. Striking F.S. 1012.22(1)(c)3, "A District school board may not use advanced degrees in setting a salary for instructional personnel or school administrators hired on or after July 1, 2011, unless the advanced degree is held in the individual's area of certification and is only a salary supplement" would support our recruitment and retention efforts and would award teachers for taking initiative for continuing advance degree opportunities. **The School Board recommends expanding eligibility for advanced degree salary differentials within Section 1012.22(1)(c)3, F.S. by striking "A District school board may not use advanced degrees in setting a salary for instructional personnel or school administrators hired on or after July 1, 2011, unless the advanced degree is held in the individual's area of certification and is only a salary supplement." (System Initiative F)**

Verbiage in F.S. 1011.62 regarding the payment of CAPE bonuses states, "Bonuses awarded pursuant to this paragraph shall be provided to teachers who are employed by the district in the year in which the additional FTE membership calculation is included in the calculation." Verbiage related to the payment of bonuses for International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement does not contain this level of specificity. As a result, Career & Technical Education teachers who resign/retire at the conclusion of an academic year are ineligible for bonus funding because funding is often received in January of the subsequent academic year. By striking the sentence, "Bonuses awarded pursuant to this paragraph shall be provided to teachers who are employed by the district in the year in which the additional FTE membership calculation is included in the calculation," from F.S. 1011.62, the bonuses for Florida Career & Technical Education teachers who retire/resign at the end of an academic year will be addressed in the same manner as their colleagues who were awarded bonuses for International Baccalaureate and/or Advanced Placement. **The School Board recommends amending F.S.1011.62 to align the verbiage related to bonus payments to teachers for industry certifications with other bonus payment structures. (System Initiative F)**