

Constitutional Amendment Subdividing School Districts

1. While the School Board has not taken a vote on this particular bill, when the legislature has debated this issue in the past, the Board at the time did not support the proposal.
2. There is no real magic in size. Microsoft is praised as a business model, and the size of the company has not inhibited its excellence. We believe the size of our school district does not inhibit our excellence and I believe our SAT scores supports my beliefs.
3. Reform debates should be focused around product and not process. I think that this issue dilutes the focus on student achievement because it falls into an "us against them" issue that has nothing to do with children. We should be concentrating on the reform issues like middle school and high school reform that the districts, the Governor and the legislature have been working on for the past few years.
4. I have learned that there are always complicated, unintended consequences from any constitutional amendment. And this proposal has never even been studied for its impact on Florida. I would hope that we have learned something about a concept that in its simplicity sounds absolute, but in its reality could be problematic...like the Class Size Reduction constitutional amendment.
5. One of the issues never studied has to do with debt that the school districts in the state have incurred. How will the debt be distributed? How would dividing up districts...or the possibility of dividing up the districts impact our bond rating?
6. Another issue not studied – the resulting need to re-design the school funding formula used in the state, one that is recognized nationally for its fairness and constitutionality and has withstood court challenge on fairness and equity.
7. One of my biggest concerns is that this constitutional amendment could increase the possibility of creating poor districts and poor schools – since County school districts were designed to distribute wealth and minimize the poverty of all the children in the county
8. The possibility of re-segregation of public schools will be greatly increased.
9. This is a proposed joint resolution for a constitutional amendment. There are many steps before it can pass through the legislature, then through a referendum campaign. At that time there would have to be a second local referendum to implement the proposal.
10. During the legislative process we will continue to work with legislators to address this proposal.
11. At this time, based on the evidence we have of the probable consequences of this proposal, and based on the experiences in many other urban areas where this type of organization prevails, (i.e.: Cleveland, Los Angeles, Dallas, Philadelphia, Detroit, etc.) I would not recommend to the Board to support this proposal.