

# Education & Workforce Development

**F**lorida's economic success, future growth and overall quality of life will depend heavily on developing and retaining skilled workers. The focus across Florida has been and continues to be job creation. In order to create jobs, Florida must have a world-class workforce ready for those jobs; and that begins with educating our students. AIF has been at the forefront of education reform efforts for several years. Accomplishments include stronger curricular standards, increased high school graduation requirements, and funding and changes that allow for more technology in public schools.

## E-Learning

**AIF will continue to SUPPORT legislative changes that will increase digital learning.**

In order to accomplish the move to e-Learning, many policy changes must occur. Specifics will include:

- Changing the funding policies to allow students to move at their own pace and generate funding when competencies are reached.
- Changes in funding for instructional materials may also be needed to give districts the greatest flexibility in moving to e-Learning.
- Additionally, the availability of virtual education, full-time and part-time, K-12 must be expanded; both in the traditional public school setting and as a school choice option.

## College and Career Readiness

**AIF will continue to SUPPORT efforts to upgrade foundational skills and readiness for college and careers.**

This effort becomes more important based on Florida's Race to the Top goals to increase the number of high school graduates attending some postsecondary institutions over the next four years. Career academies have been an important part of the changing landscape toward college and career readiness in Florida. **AIF will continue to SUPPORT the expansion of career academies in Florida.** An extension of the career academy model for college readiness is also happening in Florida and around the country. **AIF will also SUPPORT early college and college readiness academy models that help the state reach the Race to the Top goals.**

## Higher Education

The K-20 pipeline for a highly qualified workforce for Florida culminates with the higher education system.

**AIF will continue to SUPPORT the performance-based budgets for higher education sectors such as the Florida College System, the Florida Resident Access Grant, and the ABLE scholarships for students in the for-profit higher education sector. Additionally, AIF will continue to SUPPORT funding for the expansion of research and commercialization in our State University System.**

## No Child Left Behind Waiver

**AIF SUPPORTS efforts by the Florida Department of Education to seek a federal waiver from the No Child Left Behind program.**

This law was established a decade ago to help our nation improve our education system. Although it has helped many students throughout the country, it has also had some limitations that need to be addressed. As such, the Department plans on applying for a flexibility waiver that will enable us to closely align our state's accountability system with a revised federal plan. Obtaining this federal waiver will ensure that the recent gains in our education system will continue to bear fruit and prepare our students for the workforce of tomorrow.

**AIF will also engage in Education issues by:**

- Supporting efforts to make **funding for education more competency-based**, thereby increasing school accountability.
- Supporting the continued expansion of acceleration mechanisms such as **AP, IB, AICE, and Dual Enrollment.**
- Supporting the *Ready to Work* program and other programs that focus on getting students prepared for more rigorous courses in high school and, thus, prepared for college and the workplace.



**AIF Lobby Team Member Assigned to the Area of Education & Workforce:**

José L. Gonzalez – Education