

AMENDMENTS 5-7-9

Q&A

Amendment 5

Q. – What percentage of the state’s public education budget is funded by the state required school property taxes?

A. -- Approximately 50 percent of current state funding for public education is provided by the state required property taxes. It currently totals billions of dollars.

Q. – The proposed amendment includes increasing the state sales tax by 1 cent to partially replace elimination of the required local effort property tax. How much money is this measure expected to generate?

A. – A one cent sales tax increase is not expected to generate enough money to make up for the revenues to education that would be lost by the elimination of the required local effort property tax.

Q. – Does the amendment require the state to makeup for the total funding for public education that would be eliminated by doing away with the state required local effort property tax?

A. – Replacing the funding that would be lost by the elimination of the state required local effort property tax would be at the discretion of the state legislature. There is nothing in the measure that would compel state legislators to totally replace this education funding on a dollar for dollar basis.

Amendment 7

Q. – How would the transferal of state funding for purposes other than public education be managed?

A. – The state legislature would have discretion over how these funds would be used. There is no language in the proposed amendment that restricts how state funding is spent.

Q. – If state funding was diverted to religious schools, would they be held accountable for complying with state education standards as the public schools currently are?

A. – Again, that would be at the discretion of the state legislature. Religious schools are not required to comply with state student performance and financial accountabilities like public school districts are.

Amendment 9

Q. – How would the proposed amendment regarding the use of vouchers work?

A. – The Florida Supreme Court and the First District Court of Appeals ruled in the past that a voucher program is illegal and unconstitutional. By bringing back this measure, the state legislature would have the ability to divert funding from school districts for other purposes, including funding tuitions for private schools, which may include religious schools, depending on how the Legislature implements Amendment 9.

Q. – Is there a clear definition of what constitutes classroom expenses relating to the so-called 65 percent rule that would require school districts to allocate 65 percent of their state funding directly to classroom instruction?

A. – There is no clear definition of what the state would allow to be included in this 65 percent category. Currently, most if not all school districts in Florida allocate at least 65 percent of their state funding directly for classroom instruction by their own established definitions of what is included in this category (source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)).

Q. – Does implementing a 65 percent rule have any documented direct impact on student performance?

A. – Independent research has established no definitive correlation between allocating at least 65 percent of state education funding to classroom instruction and increased student academic performance.