



FLORIDA COUNCIL OF 100

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For Immediate Release

News Release

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The Florida Council of 100 Releases [“The Horizons 2040 Project: PreK-3”](#); Calls for Repurposing of Class Size Funding

TAMPA –June 29, 2017—Today, the Florida Council of 100 released “The Horizons 2040 Project: Prekindergarten Through Grade 3.” The report establishes a long-term educational vision, mission, and set of values for Florida and “beacons” to light the way for grades PreK-3 over the next 25 years.

“While the state has a five-year, short-term plan to guide K-12 education, the Florida Council of 100 firmly believes that a long-term vision is key to keeping Florida on track to achieve even greater success,” said David Dyer, chair of the Council of 100’s PreK-12 Education Committee and former President & CEO of Chico’s FAS. “That’s what the Horizons Project is all about – bringing a business planning model to bear on the future of our students.”

Horizons 2040 focuses on four pivotal topics: the imperative of academic and social-behavioral preparedness; the need for outstanding teachers and leaders; the promise of personalized learning; and the importance of making informed educational decisions. Central to these themes is the idea that up to \$3 billion of annual class size funding should be repurposed and reinvested in more proven educational enhancements, such as investing in quality teachers, enhancing and expanding the Voluntary Prekindergarten Program, facilitating personalized education, creating best practices and programs information clearinghouses for students, parents, and educators, and lowering class size even greater in grades PreK-3 where research indicates it has its greatest impact.

“While class size has a proven impact on grades PreK-3, research clearly indicates that at least \$2 billion of taxpayer money for the later years would be better spent on things like attracting and retaining top-notch teachers and improving early learning,” stated Pat Geraghty, chair of

the Florida Council of 100. “The Council of 100 will be submitting its proposal to the Constitution Revision Commission, and we, as business leaders, hope the commissioners will give due consideration to an idea that could kickstart our educational system and close the talent gap.”

The report culminates a year of study and discussion, involving numerous public and private stakeholders and subject matter experts. Council members also visited a diverse group of schools, including:

- Evans High School in Orlando, a community school with wrap-arounds services;
- Corbett Preparatory School of IDS in Tampa and Indian River Academy, a private academy and a public school, respectively, teaching social-behavioral skills;
- iPrep Academy in Miami and Rosewood Elementary in Vero Beach, two magnet programs using technology and innovative teaching techniques to drive excellence; and
- Tampa Bay Christian Academy, which serves low-income students with Florida Tax Credit scholarships.

“The Council will continue its work on the Horizons 2040 Project over the next 18 months to complete the remaining grades 4-12,” said Kathleen Shanahan, vice chair of the Florida Council of 100. “We will seek-out best practices, and effective policies and programs from across the state and nation because the future of Florida depends on an educated citizenry and workforce.”

Formed in 1961, the Florida Council of 100 is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of business, civic, and academic leaders, which exists to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of all Floridians through the relentless pursuit of better, business-driven public policy. Visit www.fc100.org for more information.

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