

By Commissioner Levesque

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1 A proposal to amend
2 Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution to
3 revise requirements relating to class size limitations
4 in public schools and to require that any funds not
5 expended towards the maintenance of average class
6 sizes be applied towards increasing teacher pay to the
7 national average.

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9 Be It Proposed by the Constitution Revision Commission of
10 Florida:

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12 Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution is
13 amended to read:

14 ARTICLE IX

15 EDUCATION

16 SECTION 1. Public education.—

17 (a) The education of children is a fundamental value of the
18 people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount
19 duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education
20 of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision
21 shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and
22 high quality system of free public schools that allows students
23 to obtain a high quality education and for the establishment,
24 maintenance, and operation of institutions of higher learning
25 and other public education programs that the needs of the people
26 may require. To assure that children attending public schools
27 obtain a high quality education, the legislature shall make
28 adequate provision to ensure that, ~~by the beginning of the 2010~~
29 ~~school year,~~ there are a sufficient number of classrooms so that
30 within each public school:

31 (1) The average ~~maximum~~ number of students who are assigned
32 to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for

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33 prekindergarten through grade 3 does not exceed 18 students;

34 (2) The average ~~maximum~~ number of students who are assigned
35 to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for
36 grades 4 through 8 does not exceed 22 students; and

37 (3) The average ~~maximum~~ number of students who are assigned
38 to each teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for
39 grades 9 through 12 does not exceed 25 students.

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41 The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to
42 extracurricular, blended learning, or virtual classes. Payment
43 of the costs associated with reducing class size to meet these
44 requirements is the responsibility of the state and not of local
45 schools districts. ~~Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, The~~
46 legislature shall provide sufficient funds to maintain ~~reduce~~
47 ~~the average number of students in each classroom by at least two~~
48 ~~students per year until~~ the maximum number of students per
49 classroom does not exceed the requirements of this subsection.
50 Any funds not spent by districts to maintain the school-level
51 average class size maximums must be spent towards raising
52 teacher pay to the national average.

53 (b) Every four-year old child in Florida shall be provided
54 by the State a high quality pre-kindergarten learning
55 opportunity in the form of an early childhood development and
56 education program which shall be voluntary, high quality, free,
57 and delivered according to professionally accepted standards. An
58 early childhood development and education program means an
59 organized program designed to address and enhance each child's
60 ability to make age appropriate progress in an appropriate range
61 of settings in the development of language and cognitive

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62 capabilities and emotional, social, regulatory and moral
63 capacities through education in basic skills and such other
64 skills as the Legislature may determine to be appropriate.

65 (c) The early childhood education and development programs
66 provided by reason of subsection ~~subparagraph~~ (b) shall be
67 implemented no later than the beginning of the 2005 school year
68 through funds generated in addition to those used for existing
69 education, health, and development programs. Existing education,
70 health, and development programs are those funded by the State
71 as of January 1, 2002 that provided for child or adult
72 education, health care, or development.