



Item: CG: I-1.b.

COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, May 16, 2017

SUBJECT: GOVERNOR SCOTT LETTER

PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION

For Information Only.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Mr. Ryan Britton, Executive Director of Government Relations will lead a discussion on Governor Scott's letter to the trustees.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE

N/A

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

Supporting Documentation: Governor Rick Scott's Letter to the Trustees

Presented by: Mr. Ryan Britton, Executive Director of Government Relations **Phone:** 561-297-2583



RICK SCOTT
GOVERNOR

April 13, 2017

TO: College and University Presidents
College and University Trustees
Florida Board of Governors

cc: State University System Chancellor
Florida College System Chancellor
Florida League of Mayors
Florida Association of Counties
Enterprise Florida Board of Directors
Florida Chamber of Commerce
Florida Chamber Foundation
Florida Realtors
Florida TaxWatch
Associated Industries of Florida
NFIB Florida
Florida Council of 100
Urban League
CareerSource Florida
Manufacturers Association of Florida
Local Chambers of Commerce
Local Economic Development Councils

Dear Friends:

Together we have done great work on behalf of our students and our state over the last six years. Because we have fought hard for college affordability, accountability, and transparency, more students are getting an affordable education that leads to a great job.

Recently, U.S. News and World Report released a publication citing Florida as number one for higher education. The report revealed that Florida is ranked second in the nation for affordability, and third for college graduation rates. Florida also boasts an impressive rank in low debt at graduation, ranking 11th in the nation, and with continued focus on affordability, Florida will continue to improve.

The adoption of performance based funding has led to a change at Florida's higher education institutions. Students are graduating faster with degrees that lead to great careers and are not burdened with decades of debt, as evidenced by the following accomplishments:

- The State University System's six-year graduation rate for First-Time-in-College Students is the second highest among the ten largest states.

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- Nine out of ten Florida College System graduates are employed or are continuing their education within their first year after graduation.
- The State University System has increased STEM degree production more than non-STEM degree production during the past four years for both baccalaureate and graduate degrees.
- Florida Atlantic University moved from the bottom of the state performance rankings to the top in just two years by implementing strategic student success initiatives, including increased admission requirements and collaboration with businesses and research partners, incorporating a campus-wide culture focused on improvement.
- Daytona State College rose from the lowest ranking performance category to the second highest category in just one year by focusing on increasing job placement and continuing education rates and improving retention rates. Daytona State College used the increased performance funding as savings to pass on to students in the form of reduced tuition and fees.

[See an overview of SUS Performance Based Funding.](#)

[See an overview of FCS Performance Based Funding.](#)

We have funded Florida's higher education system at an historic level, while holding the line on tuition for three consecutive years. Higher education funding has increased by the following amounts:

- State funding for the Florida College System has increased 21 percent over six years, from \$1.02 billion in Fiscal Year 2011-12 to \$1.24 billion in the current 2016-17 fiscal year.
- State funding for the State University System increased 44 percent over six years, from \$1.58 billion in Fiscal Year 2011-12 to \$2.28 billion in the current 2016-17 fiscal year.

[See a six-year funding history for SUS.](#)

[See a six-year funding history for FCS.](#)

In January, I released my [Finish in Four, Save More](#) legislative proposal, which freezes all fees at state colleges and universities, cuts fees for Florida's graduate assistants, and freezes state college tuition so students aren't burdened with the constant sky-rocketing costs. I am continuing to fight for expansion of Bright Futures for the summer term, helping students graduate in four years. I also released my Fighting for Florida's Future budget, which provides record funding investments of \$1.25 billion in the Florida College System and \$2.36 billion in the State University System, and includes historic levels of performance funding. For details on my higher education funding priorities, please visit the following website: www.fightingforfloridasfuturebudget.com.

These are all successes that we can be proud of, but we have more work to do. The Florida College System is currently in its second year of performance funding and already seeing improvements in completion rates and job placement and continuing education rates as

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evidenced by the included attachment. The State University System is in its fourth year of performance funding, and the majority of the performance funding metrics are shaded green for "excellence" on the attached chart. Now is the time to demand more of your institutions and raise the bar. Florida's higher education system has made great gains over the last six years, but we cannot again become comfortable with the status quo. Institutions must continue to find efficiencies to provide every Floridian the opportunity to get a great education that leads to a great career. When I worked in the private sector, I made sure to reduce costs and find new efficiencies each and every year. Florida's higher education system must do the same.

Many of you have reached out with suggestions, strategies, and successes to questions I have posed. These conversations are vital to the success of our students, and I encourage you to continue the dialogue. At your next board meeting, please consider the following questions and let me know the outcome of the discussions:

1. How are your institution's degrees matched to the top job opportunities in Florida? I have attached the [most recent list of top job](#) areas in the state from the Department of Economic Opportunity as a reference.
2. What is your institution's job placement rate for graduates of your two most popular degree programs? [My Ready, Set, Work University Challenge established a goal of 100 percent.](#)
3. How has your institution spent the record state funding in higher education? Attached is a six-year funding history for the 28 state colleges and 12 state universities.
4. What is the return on investment from the record state funding in higher education?
5. In response to my Finish in Four, Save More Challenge, what steps has your institution taken to get students graduated within four years? How have you worked with your college or university partner to assure students a seamless transition?
6. Has your institution implemented any new internship programs?

Thank you again for the hard work you put in to ensure every student is afforded the opportunity to get a great education that lets them pursue their dreams. In addition to responding to the above questions, please keep me informed of any ideas you have to help make Florida the best place in the world to get a great education and a great job.

Sincerely,



Rick Scott
Governor