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Florida Association of
District School Superintendents

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Florida Association of District School Superintendents

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol, Plaza Level 05
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Dear Governor Scott:

For the last three years, Florida's Superintendents have stated that addressing mental health needs in our schools is the top priority. We appreciate your leadership in addressing this issue. As President of the Florida Association of District School Superintendents, I want to thank you for the substantial increases in funding for school safety and mental health services for students. These dollars are greatly needed in the wake of the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) High School. Unfortunately, funding appropriated for the day-to-day operating costs for schools is significantly inadequate.

The budget passed by the Legislature reflects only a 47 cents (.01 percent) increase to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) portion of the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). School districts face growing challenges in the day-to-day operations of schools. The BSA is used to pay for new inflationary costs for operating schools such as the state-required increase in retirement contributions, increased costs in utilities, property insurance, fuel for buses, and health care for our employees. The overall increase in the education budget is used to pay for the additional 27,000 new students entering public schools next year and the influx of new students and families from Puerto Rico. We know you recognized the need for an increase in the BSA when you submitted your Legislative Budget Request that proposed an increase in the BSA of \$152 per student and we appreciate your efforts.

Superintendents fully support the additional, much needed funds for safety and mental health. However, the limited additional funding in the BSA will necessitate school districts to eliminate funding of other programs to meet the operational costs of our school districts.

We urge you to call the Legislature back into session to increase funding in the BSA so that we can address our operating needs. Our students deserve a rich educational environment for teaching and learning that is safe, comprehensive and world-class.

Sincerely,

Robert Runcie
President

cc: Commissioner Pam Stewart
Megan Fay