



FACTS....FACTS.... AND MORE FACTS!

Schools Have Cut Costs

Schools have cut costs. Property taxes, which are our primary source of funding, fell more than 20 percent. We cut 500 positions and \$70 million from our operating budget in the past two years. We are expecting this year's cut in revenue to be \$35 million to \$50 million, depending on projected property values and legislative action. If the school tax extension does not pass, it will be double that amount. *Excerpt from Letter to Editor by Shirley Brown, Chair, Sarasota County School Board.*

If the referendum does not pass, the district will be cutting positions and programs.

How has the tax money been used?

Teacher salaries to retain/recruit high quality teachers (highest number of advanced degrees in the state – 63%; state average is 39%).

Extra 30 minutes to provide more learning time and meet class size mandate.

Enhanced programs: Counselors, literacy and data coaches, elementary art, music and science teachers, charter and alternative school, high school academies, drop out prevention.

What do we get for what we pay?

Top 10 in FCAT Scores (09/10)

Reading – gains except Grade 10

Math – gains except Grade 8

Writing – Top 3 in essay; 30-point elementary gain since 2001

District of Distinction

95% A – Elementary

85% A – Middle

84% A or B All Schools

SAT scores above state average

+23 points in math

+19 points in reading

Record graduation rates – 86%

All time low drop out rate – 2% (07/08)

Superior arts, gifted and ESE programs: Kennedy Center Award for outstanding arts