

By Commissioner Donalds

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1 A proposal to amend
2 Section 1 of Article IX of the State Constitution to
3 specify that no provision of the State Constitution
4 may be construed to limit the Legislature from making
5 provision for other educational services that are
6 beneficial to the children and families of this state.

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

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

13 ARTICLE IX

14 EDUCATION

15 SECTION 1. Public education.—

16 (a) The education of children is a fundamental value of the
17 people of the State of Florida. It is, therefore, a paramount
18 duty of the state to make adequate provision for the education
19 of all children residing within its borders. Adequate provision
20 shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and
21 high quality system of free public schools allowing the
22 opportunity for each student ~~that allows students~~ to obtain a
23 high quality education. Provision shall be made ~~and~~ for the
24 establishment, maintenance, and operation of institutions of
25 higher learning and other public education programs that the
26 needs of the people may require. Nothing herein may be construed
27 to limit the legislature from making provision for other
28 educational services that benefit the children and families of
29 this state that are in addition to the system of free public
30 schools. To assure that children attending public schools obtain
31 a high quality education, the legislature shall make adequate
32 provision to ensure that, by the beginning of the 2010 school

donaldse-00074-17

201745__

33 year, there are a sufficient number of classrooms so that:

34 (1) The maximum number of students who are assigned to each
35 teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for
36 prekindergarten through grade 3 does not exceed 18 students;

37 (2) The maximum number of students who are assigned to each
38 teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for grades 4
39 through 8 does not exceed 22 students; and

40 (3) The maximum number of students who are assigned to each
41 teacher who is teaching in public school classrooms for grades 9
42 through 12 does not exceed 25 students.

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44 The class size requirements of this subsection do not apply to
45 extracurricular classes. Payment of the costs associated with
46 reducing class size to meet these requirements is the
47 responsibility of the state and not of local schools districts.
48 Beginning with the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the legislature shall
49 provide sufficient funds to reduce the average number of
50 students in each classroom by at least two students per year
51 until the maximum number of students per classroom does not
52 exceed the requirements of this subsection.

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

donaldse-00074-17

201745__

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