



THE PERRY POST

Senator Keith Perry
FL District 9

February, 2024



Friends,

District 9

I have reached my last year in the Florida Senate; however, I pledged an oath to serve the interests of District 9 and all of Florida, and that oath remains until my last day in office. I want to thank you for your unwavering support over the years. It has been an honor and a privilege serving as your State Senator, and I look forward to finishing strong as we head into the final weeks of session. If you need assistance or have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out my office.

Sincerely,

W. Keith Perry

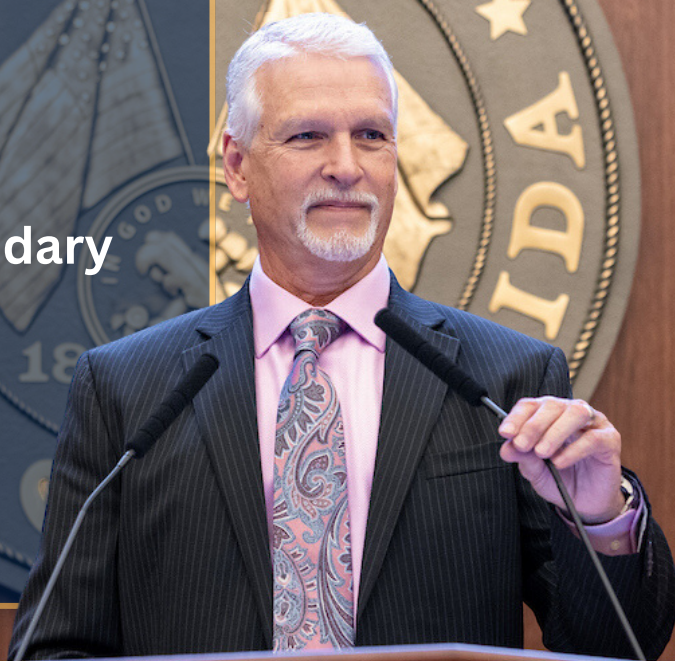


SENATOR PERRY'S 2024 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS



Committee Assignments

- Appropriations Committee on Education, Chair
- Rules, Vice Chair
- Appropriations
- Criminal Justice
- Education Postsecondary
- Education Pre-K -12
- Joint Legislative Budget Commission



Gainesville Office: M-F 9AM-5PM
Gigi Hernandez: (352) 264.4040

Ocala Office M-F 9AM-5PM
Suzy McGuire, Damon Vitale: (352) 361.4361

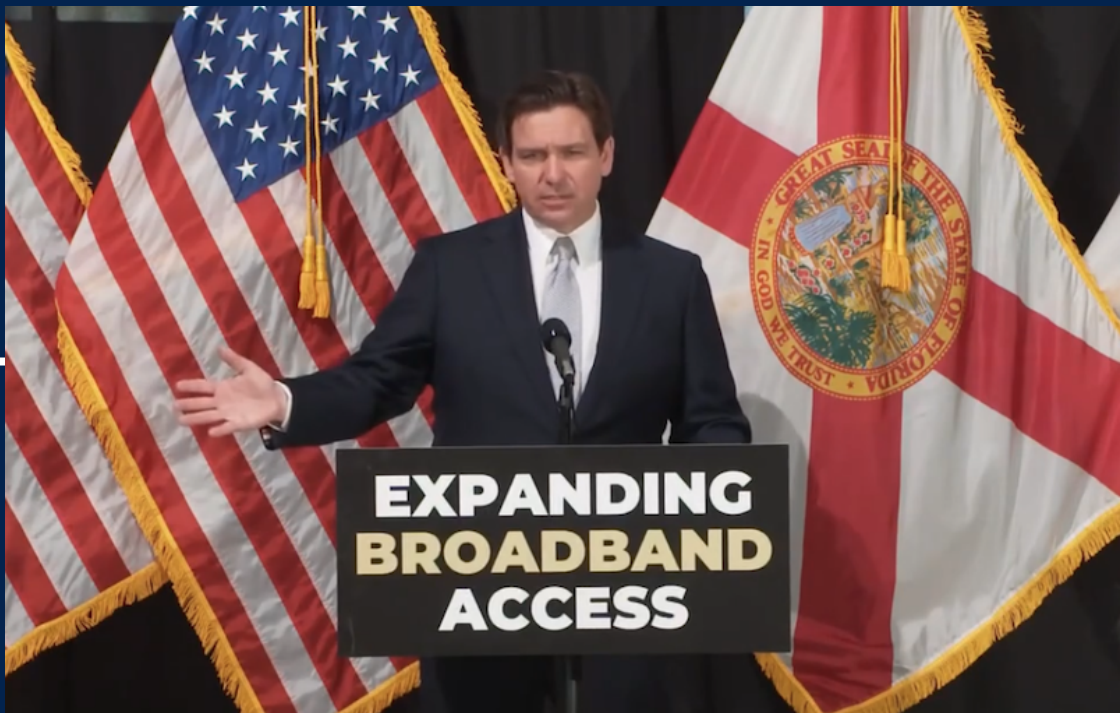
Tallahassee Office M-F 9AM-5PM
Anthony Serge: (850) 487.5009



DISTRICT NEWS



Governor Ron DeSantis Delivers \$223 Million to Expand Rural Broadband Access to District 9



Press release from the Office of Governor Ron DeSantis
BOWLING GREEN, Fla. — Governor Ron DeSantis awarded nearly \$223 million to expand broadband internet access to Floridians, including small and rural communities. This funding includes \$135 million in state funding through the Broadband Opportunity Program and \$86 million in federal funds through the Multipurpose Community Facilities Program. Awards through the Broadband Opportunity Program will support 54 projects in 33 Florida counties for broadband internet expansion that will provide internet to over 27,000 unserved residential, educational, agricultural, business and community locations. Awards through the Multipurpose Facility Program will support 29 community infrastructure projects including health clinics, schools and workforce development programs providing internet to Floridians across 18 counties. To learn more, click [here](#).

Awards in District 9 include:

ALACHUA

- Cities of Alachua and Gainesville (\$1,985,124) — to add 40 miles of fiber optic cable to provide 187 unserved and underserved locations within Alachua County with symmetrical download and upload speeds of 1 GB.
- Cities of Alachua, Brooker, Gainesville, La Crosse, and Waldo (\$5,000,000) — to add 121 miles of fiber optic cable to provide 720 unserved locations within Alachua County with symmetrical download and upload speeds of 1 GB. Cities of Alachua, Gainesville, High Springs and Newberry (\$3,845,302) — to add 78 miles of fiber optic cable to provide 463 unserved locations within Alachua County with symmetrical download and upload speeds of 1 GB.

MARION

- Cities of Belleview, Lake Panasoffkee, Ocala and Summerfield (\$4,932,170) — to add 71 miles of fiber optic cable to provide 457 unserved and underserved locations within Marion County with symmetrical download and upload speeds of 1 GB.
- Cities of Bellevue, Marion Oaks, York, Romeo, Dunnellon, Silver Spring Shores, Citra and Unincorporated areas of Marion County (\$3,606,374) — to add 136 miles of fiber optic cable to provide 875 unserved and underserved locations within Marion County with symmetrical download and upload speeds of 1 GB.

LEVY

- Cities of Chiefland, Cross City, Bronson, Williston, Newberry, Trenton, Bell and Archer (\$5,000,000) — to add 353.82 miles of fiber coverage to 1,080 locations within Levy County, increasing speeds beyond 1G symmetrical.

“Under Governor DeSantis’ leadership, Florida’s economy has grown at a persistent pace. Today’s strategic awards help maintain Florida’s forward momentum,” said Florida Commerce Secretary J. Alex Kelly. “By connecting Floridians with centrally located community hubs, residents have increased access to find their next professional opportunity, upskill for future jobs, and access telemedicine resources through a steady broadband internet connection.”

“Thank you, Governor DeSantis, for your leadership and for investing in our community,” said Representative Kaylee Tuck. “The need for reliable broadband access has never been more prevalent, and the strain on rural communities like Hardee County has never been felt more than it is today. This investment will be incredible for our area.”

Today’s awards build on [Governor DeSantis’ earlier announcement](#) of more than \$226 million awarded for projects across 53 Florida counties, connecting more than 250,000 homes and businesses through the Broadband Opportunity Program. Additionally, Governor DeSantis [awarded more than \\$247 million](#) through the Broadband Infrastructure Program, connecting more than 59,000 unserved and underserved businesses, homes, farms, and anchor institutions like hospitals and libraries to high-speed internet.

For a list of projects awarded through the Multipurpose Community Facilities Projects Program, [CLICK HERE](#).

For a list of projects awarded through the Broadband Opportunity Program, [CLICK HERE](#). For more information on Florida’s broadband initiatives, visit the Office of Broadband’s [webpage](#).





CAPITOL UPDATE



Senator Perry's Bill Highlights

SB 888: Property Rights

SB888 Protects Florida homeowners from squatters. It allows owners to request the *immediate* removal of unauthorized guests by law enforcement and establishes three new criminal penalties for committing fraud related to a lease or deed.



SB 694: Florida Seal of Fine Arts Program

SB694 recognizes high school graduates with outstanding achievement in the fine arts. Students who complete higher-level fine arts classes and events and who engaged in arts-based community service will earn a seal on their diploma.

SB 258: Interstate Safety

SB258 Tackles safety issues in high-speed settings. Under SB 258, Individuals are prohibited from maintaining the left lane on roads with a speed limit of 65 mph or more.



SB 774: Towing and Storage

- Prohibits the Florida Highway Patrol from excluding a wrecker operator from its wrecker operator system based solely on a prior felony conviction, unless such conviction is for a specified felony offense.
- Cracks down of predatory towers

Senator Keith Perry~Chair
Senator Shevrin Jones~Vice

Senate Appropriations Committee on Education

Summary
- SB 2500
First
Engrossed
Fiscal Year
2024-2025

Senator Perry Releases the 2024 Proposed Education Budget

Summary

Total Appropriations: \$29.5 billion [\$22.1 billion GR; \$7.4 billion TF]
Total Funding - Including Local Revenues: \$45.1 billion [\$29.5 billion state/federal funds; \$15.6 billion local funds]

HIGHLIGHTS

Early Learning Services~ Total: \$1.65 billion [\$600.9 million GR; \$1.05 billion TF]
Public Schools/K12 FEFP~ Total Funding: \$28.3 billion [\$15.4 billion state funds; \$12.9 billion local funds]
Public Schools/K12 Non-FEFP & Ed Media~ Total: \$541.1 million [\$533.6 million GR; \$7.5 million TF]
State Board of Education~ Total: \$329.3 million [\$169.4 million GR; \$159.9 million TF]
Vocational Rehabilitation~ Total: \$268.2 million [\$56.6 million GR; \$211.6 million TF]
Blind Services~ Total: \$80.3 million [\$26.6 million GR; \$53.7 million TF]
Private Colleges~ Total: \$183.8 million GR
Student Financial Aid~ Total: \$1.05 billion [\$320.5 million GR; \$728.1 million TF]
School District Workforce~ Total: \$822.3 million [\$485.7 million GR; \$293.9 million TF; \$42.7 million tuition/fees]
Florida College System~ Total: \$2.4 billion [\$1.45 billion GR; \$259 million TF; \$689.9 million tuition/fees]
State University System~ Total: \$6.5 billion [\$3.9 billion GR; \$666.7 million TF; \$1.94 billion tuition/fees]

For more on this year's fiscal budget, visit:
<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Appropriations/2024>





CAPITOL UPDATE



Senator Perry Celebrates Gator Day at the Capitol



The University of Florida's annual Gator Day took place this week. It's an annual event held during each legislative session that promotes the University of Florida's impact on the state's collegiate education system, research advancements, and community engagement. This year, Senator Keith Perry made the Gator Day declaration — extending a tradition that began in 1962.

“It was a pleasure meeting with students and faculty to get updates on one of the best public Universities in the country. Growing up as a Gator fan, I am proud to be an ally for UF and their vision for the next generation. We were even lucky enough to have Albert and Alberta help out in the office before they chomped down the courtyard. I am grateful to the University for their role in transforming education in Florida and Go Gators!” Said Senator Perry.

They held an outdoor celebration between the historic and new capitol buildings from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday. It featured UF President Ben Sasse, football coach Billy Napier, quarterback Graham Mertz, linebacker Shemar James, Florida Gator mascots Albert and Alberta.





CAPITOL UPDATE



New College students and Board members joined President Richard Corcoran in Tallahassee last week to share the exciting new opportunities being offered at the College.

Speaking with Board members who were past students and still committed to the school, demonstrates the career pipeline that can be created when education is the focus of our college system

To learn more about New College of Floirda, visit <https://www.ncf.edu>



It was a pleasure meeting with students from Belleview High School Cambridge AICE program in Tallahassee. I toured the school a few months back to learn about the program and was glad to host the students in the Florida Senate.

The Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE) is an internationally used English language curriculum offered to students in the higher levels of secondary school intended to prepare them enter college and offers the opportunity to earn college credits in high school.

AICE Benefits:

- **AICE courses and examinations are equivalent to first year and a half of college and university courses (Up to 45 total credit hours) (See Course Equivalents for more detail).**
- **Students who pass seven examinations are awarded the AICE Diploma directly by the University of Cambridge. Students who do not earn the AICE Diploma are given credit for those examinations they do pass and are awarded individual General Certificates of Education by Cambridge.**
- **AICE students are eligible for the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship. All AICE Academy students are required to fulfill the 100-hour community service project, which is required for the Florida Academic Scholars Award.**
- **The AICE program of study at BHS offers students one of the most demanding and rigorous college preparatory programs in the world. The State of Florida Universities and the Bright Futures Scholarship Program each award one extra quality point for students who successfully complete an AICE course with a "C" or better.**

To learn more about the AICE program, visit: <https://www.marionschools.net/Page/12963>



Senator Perry Recognized as the 2024 4H Legislative Champion



Last week the 2024 Florida 4-H Day took place at the Capitol. The Florida 4-H Youth Development Program uses a “learn-by-doing” approach to help youth gain the knowledge and life skills they need to be productive, responsible citizens. Florida 4-H aspires to be the leading youth development program that creates positive change in youth, families, and communities. To achieve its mission, 4-H accesses the expertise and resources of the University of Florida and a nationwide network of Cooperative Extension Service faculty and staff. It is always great to visit with the students and see what questions they have about the legislative process. I am honored to be recognized as their 2024 Legislative Champion award recipient.



I enjoyed a great meal with the Capital Young Republicans and some of my colleagues in the House. They are part of a group of young leaders across America putting conservative principles into action through recruiting and advocacy for conservative principles. We exchanged ideas and discussed some of Florida's most pressing issues. These young men and women are our future leaders and I'm proud to support Capital Young Republicans.





Florida’s 2022–23 High School Graduation Rate Sets New Record at 88 Percent

Student Performance Highlights

- The statewide graduation rate among students with disabilities increased by 4.9 percentage points compared to 2018–19, rising from 80.6 percent in 2018–19 to 85.5 percent in 2022–23.
- The statewide graduation rate among black or African American students increased by 1.7 percentage points compared to 2018–19, rising from 81.5 percent in 2018–19 to 83.2 percent in 2022–23.
- The statewide graduation rate among American Indian or Alaska Native students increased by 7.2 percentage points compared to 2018–19, rising from 77.5 percent in 2018–19 to 84.7 percent in 2022–23. This is the highest 5-year increase compared to all other subgroups.
- The statewide graduation rate among Hispanic students increased by 0.9 percentage points compared to 2018–19, rising from 85.9 percent to 86.8 percent.
- The statewide graduation rate among economically disadvantaged students increased by 0.9 percentage points compared to 2018–19, rising from 82.9 percent to 83.8 percent.

For more on Florida’s 2022-23 graduation rates, visit:

<https://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/edu-info-accountability-services/pk-12-public-school-data-pubs-reports/students.stml>.



ICYMI Governor Ron DeSantis Awards Over \$57 Million to Protect Florida’s Springs



Governor Ron DeSantis announced the award of over \$57 million for 23 statewide springs restoration projects to protect Florida’s iconic springs, as well as increase spring flow and improve water quality.

Suwannee River Water Management District was among those awarded. They received \$1.67 Million for Alachua County’s Poe Springs for the acquisition of 250 acres of slash pine plantation adjacent to Poe Springs that will be permanently placed into conservation.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and four of Florida’s water management districts have identified projects such as wastewater, stormwater, pollution control projects and water-quality projects to protect and restore our springs. Additionally, these projects will help conserve and acquire land in spring recharge zones to prevent nutrients from entering the groundwater that feeds our springs.

“Florida is home to more than 1,000 springs, with more large springs than any other state in the nation, which attract visitors from across the world,” said Governor DeSantis. “This \$57 million investment will continue to protect water quality and allow Florida’s springs to continue to be a world class tourist destination for years to come.”

“Thanks to Governor DeSantis for once again continuing to protect one of Florida’s greatest assets — our invaluable springs,” said DEP Secretary Shawn Hamilton. “In partnership with our water management districts, local governments and community leaders, implementation of these projects will help to continue the protection of this precious resource for generations to come.”

The selected projects reflect a collaborative effort with DEP, water management districts, community leaders and local stakeholders. Combining efforts and leveraging resources from various agencies across Florida allows for a more efficient and comprehensive restoration effort.

Lists of the recent spring’s protection projects and projects funded in previous years can be found [HERE](#).

