

SCHOOL BOARD OF DUVAL COUNTY

RESOLUTION 2026-14

A RESOLUTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF DUVAL COUNTY, CALLING FOR THE JACKSONVILLE CITY COUNCIL TO CALL AN ELECTION AT WHICH THE ELECTORS WITHIN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT WILL BE ASKED TO APPROVE THE CONTINUATION OF CURRENT AD VALOREM TAX MILLAGE FOR SCHOOL OPERATIONAL PURPOSES FOR FOUR YEARS; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF FACT; PROVIDING FOR APPROVAL OF THE REFERENDUM QUESTION AND BALLOT TITLE.

WHEREAS, the School Board of Duval County (the “Board”) is charged with operating the public schools within Duval County, Florida; and,

WHEREAS, the Board has as its primary goal the continued improvement of the education provided to the students attending its public schools; and,

WHEREAS, the current 1-mill ad valorem millage, approved by voters in 2022, provides essential funding to sustain high-quality education, teacher, security and staff compensation, and key programs; and,

WHEREAS, the education funds available to the Board through traditional means, such as the state funding formula and the required local millage option, do not give the Board the resources to continue improving and providing the excellence in education that its public students deserve, and,

WHEREAS, the national teacher shortage and an alarming increase in the number of resignations and retirements have created a large vacancy rate in Duval County schools, and national exit interviews indicate that lower pay or higher wages elsewhere is one of the primary reasons for departures from the classroom; and,

WHEREAS, the Board has concluded that a significant increase in teacher compensation, particularly for experienced teachers, is crucial to recruiting and sustaining a highly qualified faculty work force; and,

WHEREAS, the state provided a substantial increase in starting teaching salaries, creating a disparity among experienced teachers making the same or similar salaries, and yet, experienced teachers have proven to have a greater impact on student achievement, and,

WHEREAS, the Board further faces a shortage of various support services positions, primarily due to pay significantly lower than the private sector for similar services, and,

WHEREAS, the average teacher salary in Duval County ranks last among Florida's seven large urban districts and 20th among all 69 districts, and,

WHEREAS, the Board intends that the revenues generated by the additional millage for operational purposes shall be used to retain and recruit instructional personnel including teachers, support staff, safety personnel, administrators and school counselors, to make its compensation competitive with surrounding counties and other large Florida school districts, and,

WHEREAS, the Board further intends to use some of the revenue generated by the additional tax to enhance art, music and athletic programs, and,

WHEREAS, dedicated revenue sources exist for many other programmatic needs, such as student mental health, school safety and transportation, but there is no specific funding source for arts and athletics, and,

WHEREAS, funds raised by the 1 mill will be proportionately shared with public charter schools based upon student enrollment, as prescribed by the Florida Legislature, and,

WHEREAS, the Board will not use the revenues to increase compensation for its members, the Superintendent, or executive-level (senior Cabinet) positions in the District office, and,

WHEREAS, a high-quality education system benefits all residents in Duval County, regardless of whether they have children in school, and,

WHEREAS, the district has achieved continuous improvement in graduation rate (up to 97%), a district grade of A, closing the achievement gap and expansion of career and technical programs, among other key indicators, and wishes to continue this cycle of improvement, and,

WHEREAS, the state Legislature has mandated a steady decline in the Required Local Effort millage rate since 2008, from 4.879 to 3.095, so a 1 mill increase in the rate if approved by voters will still be significantly less than the 2008 level, which funds operational expenses and helps keep up with growth for all Duval County schools, and,

WHEREAS, the Board is aware that voters in 29 school districts in Florida have been asked to approve a similar millage increase and did in fact, approve additional millage for school operations, creating a competitive advantage for them; and,

WHEREAS, all the dollars raised through the 1 mill will stay in Duval County, remaining under district control and not going to Tallahassee or Washington for widespread distribution, and,

WHEREAS, the citizen's Audit Advisory Committee will continue to provide oversight of all district budgets, including the 1 mill referendum, to ensure appropriate spending, and report findings to the school board and public, and,

WHEREAS, Section 1011.73(2), Florida Statutes, authorizes the qualified electors of the Duval County to vote on millage for operational purposes, and,

WHEREAS, the Board finds that it is in the best interest of the students in public schools that the qualified electors be given the opportunity to approve continued millage for school operations, and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Duval County, Florida, in a public meeting duly called and assembled:

1. That pursuant to Section 1011.73(2), Florida Statutes, the Jacksonville City Council to call an election on the November 3, 2026, ballot, for the qualified electors of the Duval County School District to vote on a continuation of the current ad valorem millage. The continued millage shall be limited to operating expenses of the School District as described in this resolution and district strategic

plans. The continued millage shall begin on July 1, 2027, and shall expire on June 30, 2031, as authorized by Section 1011.71(9), Florida Statutes, unless renewed by the electorate.

2. The substance of the millage referendum question and the ballot title shall read:

DUVAL COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
AD VALOREM MILLAGE ELECTION

Shall the Duval County School District continue the current one (1) mill ad valorem millage for essential operating expenses, shared proportionately with charter schools, including compensating teachers, security, and support staff; preserving academic programs, and protecting arts, athletics, and student activities beginning July 1, 2027, and ending four (4) fiscal years later on June 30, 2031, with annual reporting to ensure proper fiscal stewardship of these funds to the citizens of Duval County?

_____ YES, for continuation

_____ NO, against continuation

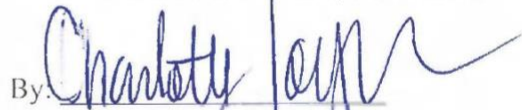
PASSED AND DULY ADOPTED this 5TH day of MAY, 2026.

ATTEST:



Dr. Christopher Bernier, Superintendent
Date: 5/5, 2026

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF
DUVAL COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 

Charlotte Joyce, Chairman
Date: may 5, 2026