



# Municipal Resolutions Guide

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## Step 1: Reaching out to commissioners:

Simple. Just ask.

Send a copy of the resolution template to a city or county commissioner/councilperson with a request that the commissioner **sponsor the resolution** at the next meeting of the commission. The local elected official can be someone you know or someone you have never met. Try to get the county commission and a couple of city commissions in each county.

### Sample email messages:

Dear Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am contacting you today as a member of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Florida to gain your support in advancing equity in education for English learners.

Currently in Florida, English learners have the lowest graduation rate of 75% in comparison to the statewide average of 86%. This achievement gap is mostly due to the fact that high school graduation is dependent on students passing standardized tests presented only in English. However, English learners by definition are not proficient enough in the English language to accurately demonstrate their knowledge on standardized tests like the Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) and End of Course (EOC) exams. Therefore, our organization is urging the Florida Department of Education to adopt native language

assessments that would essentially provide English learners with an equal opportunity to succeed on standardized assessments in the content areas. As of now, there are 31 states in addition to the District of Columbia that offer native language assessments. To review the many reasons why this reform to the state accountability system is needed, please see <https://esolflorida.org/native-language-assess>.

This letter is to request your sponsorship of a resolution to advance equity in education for English learners. Please see below for a template for the resolution we are requesting, an interim feedback letter from the United States Department of Education, and a list of the city and county commissions that have adopted similar resolutions.

Template for the resolution

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/16-MoJRh1w9mV5\\_2r7xKThIalmIDQatUY](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/16-MoJRh1w9mV5_2r7xKThIalmIDQatUY)

Interim feedback Letter

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/16-MoJRh1w9mV5\\_2r7xKThIalmIDQatUY](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/16-MoJRh1w9mV5_2r7xKThIalmIDQatUY)

List of city and county commissions that adopted resolutions supporting NLAs

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aE4Ekaq-KANZIoBdh\\_r9iwijC-pL-1SN/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aE4Ekaq-KANZIoBdh_r9iwijC-pL-1SN/view?usp=sharing)

I will follow up on (insert date) \_\_\_\_\_ to discuss this request and to see if any additional information is needed.

Thank you for your consideration,

\_\_\_\_\_ (your name)

**Second sample request to Commissioner:**

This is to request that you sponsor a resolution on Florida's ESSA plan that follows up on concerns expressed by Florida organizations and echoed by national coalitions since 2017. A list of Florida organizations that support alignment of Florida's policy with ESSA principles is here

<https://esolflorida.org/organizations> .

A related policy statement by Hispanic Unity of Florida is here

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m\\_Vk-kLqlQSV5b-ENcC730nRAWupkO1R/view.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1m_Vk-kLqlQSV5b-ENcC730nRAWupkO1R/view)

A statement by national organizations is here

<https://civilrights.org/resource/civil-rights-groups-express-concerns-regarding-floridas-submitted-state-essa-plan/>

An overview of editorials and opinion from a dozen newspapers across the state is here

<https://esolfloida.org/press> .

Here is a link to the interim feedback letter on Florida's draft ESSA plan from the U. S. Department of Education.

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/16-MoJRh1w9mV5\\_2r7xKThIalmIDQatUY](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/16-MoJRh1w9mV5_2r7xKThIalmIDQatUY)

The concerns addressed in the proposed resolution are consistent with those stated in federal feedback on the Florida ESSA plan and with concerns raised by state and national organizations.

Please let me know if any additional information is needed.

Thank you for your ongoing support for equity in education.

\_\_\_\_\_ (your name)

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## **Step 2-Getting a response:**

Follow up with a phone call. Introduce yourself, summarize the cause and answer any questions the commissioner has. **DO NOT wait more than 3 business days to follow up!**

**If commissioner says NO:**

Move on. Do not ask another elected official on the same commission. Once one person says no, you will not get unanimous approval. You must move on to another city.

**If commissioner says YES:**

For each commission considering a resolution, you'll need the following information, most of which should be available from the commission website.

- **Get it as soon as a commissioner agrees to sponsor** and update immediately after the final vote on the resolution. The information sometimes disappears from the municipal websites.
- Please use this spreadsheet as a template for tracking the following information for each commission you reach out to. The following information has already been added as headers to the spreadsheet. Use the left and right arrow keys on your keyboard to scroll through the headers and enter new information.
  - City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_
  - Link to list of commission members:
  - Name and title of Sponsor:
  - Hearing Dates:
  - Location of Hearing:
  - Email Addresses for each commission member
  - List of members' titles and names
  - City Clerk's name, phone, and email address:
  - Agenda link:
  - Webcast link:
  - Link to resolution presented at hearing:
  - Link and downloaded copy of adopted resolution with signatures:
  - Vote: Unanimous or number for and against adoption.

1. Send Rosie a blind copy of the request so we can keep track.
2. Please send Rosie a copy of the spreadsheet at [rcastro@fiu.edu](mailto:rcastro@fiu.edu) and you keep a copy to draw on when writing thank you notes, announcing the meeting, etc.

**The second and third resolve clauses should be part of every draft submitted. Some municipalities may delete the third one because they don't have government relations staff. Don't worry if the commission makes some changes to the resolution. As long as the original resolve clauses are in place, we're OK. See page 6 for an example of the Miami-Dade County Resolution.**

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## **Step 3: Presenting the resolution at commission:**

- When the resolution comes up for review at a commission meeting, attend so you can answer any questions that might come up and thank the commission for their vote to adopt it.
  - Bring additional supporters with you. If possible, include representatives from several organizations in your group and residents of the city or county whose commission is considering the resolution.
- Be prepared to comment on the proposed resolution. Find out how many minutes you will be allowed to speak. Suggested comments for your presentation are at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hFi0gnJe1hHCku5IVnXwwKhbHxCyjguS/edit#heading=h.gjdgxs>
  - You may want to draw from those suggested comments and practice timing your speech in advance of your presentation.

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## **Step 4: Thank the commission for their support:**

- Follow up with a thank you email message to each commissioner with copies to advocates.
- Ask the sponsoring commissioner to send you a copy of the official adopted version. **That's the one that has signatures on it.**
- VERY IMPORTANT! Communicate with Rosie afterwards about what happened during the commission meeting and send her a copy of the adopted resolution for LULAC's files.
  - Please send the name of the commission, the name and title of the sponsor, the date of adoption, and the vote. Typically, it's unanimous.

**Sample thank you message**

**Thank you!**



Rosa Castro-feinberg <rcastro@fiu.edu>

Mar 31 (3 days ago)

to ogilbert, eighodaro, Idavis, rharris, IOdom, frobinson, David, McMillon, Francis, Shirley, Adora, Carolyn, Mari, bcc: Danielle, bcc: me

Dear Mayor **Gilbert**, Vice-Mayor **Ighodaro**, Resolution Sponsor **Williams**, and Council Members **Davis, Harris, Odom and Robinson**:

Thank you for your unanimous vote on March 21st to adopt an ESSA resolution. We appreciate your action in support of equity in education for Florida students.

Sincerely,

Rosie

Rosa Castro Feinberg, Ph. D.

Associate Professor (Retired)

Florida International University  
Chair,  
Government and Media Relations Committee, LULAC Florida

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## **Helpful Tips and Suggestions:**

- This strategy pays off. This is how we won our seven-year war on teacher training requirements for ESOL teachers. From 2007 to 2014 we were at it. Not until we had a dozen or so resolutions from government bodies in four counties did the FDOE finally adopt our position.
- Send copies of the adopted version to your local newspapers. Best to send it to the reporter that covers local government. Ask the commissioner you worked with if the commission staff will help publicize it.
- Copies of each of these resolutions are sent by the adopting body to the Governor, the Commissioner of Education, the presiding officer of each chamber of the legislature, and to members of the area's legislative delegation.

# **Example of Miami-Dade County Resolution:**

**Miami-Dade Legislative Item**

**File Number: 181109**

[Printable PDF Format](#) [Download Adobe Reader](#) [Clerk's Official Copy](#)

**File Number: 181109 File Type: Resolution Status: Adopted**

**Version: 0 Reference: R-649-18 Control: County Commission**

**File Name: URGING RE: STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT Introduced: 4/27/2018**

**Requester: NONE Cost: Final Action: 6/19/2018**

**Agenda Date: 6/19/2018 Agenda Item Number: 11A2**

**Notes: Title: RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REVISE FLORIDA'S STATE PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT IN ORDER TO MEET FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS AND ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE THE SUPPORT AND ATTENTION THEY DESERVE**

**Indexes: URGING**

**Sponsors: Rebeca Sosa, Prime Sponsor**

**Sunset Provision: No Effective Date: Expiration Date:**

**Registered Lobbyist: None Listed**

## **Legislative History**

<b>Acting Body</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action Sent To</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Returned</b>

<b>Pass/Fail</b>					
<b>Board of County Commissioners</b>	<b>6/19/2018</b>	<b>11A2</b>	<b>Adopted</b>		
P					

<b>County Attorney</b>	<b>4/27/2018</b>	<b>Assigned</b>	<b>Javier Zapata</b>	<b>5/8/2018</b>
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## **Legislative Text**

### **TITLE**

**RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO REVISE FLORIDA'S STATE PLAN FOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT IN ORDER TO MEET FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS AND ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS RECEIVE THE SUPPORT AND ATTENTION THEY DESERVE**

## **BODY**

**WHEREAS, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is the latest reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and**

**WHEREAS, the purpose of the ESSA is to strengthen and improve educational quality and educational opportunities in the nation's elementary and secondary schools; and**

**WHEREAS, each state is tasked with developing a plan for compliance with and implementation of the federal requirements embedded within the ESSA; and**

**WHEREAS, states' plans for implementation of the ESSA are developed by each state's department of education, reviewed, approved, or rejected by each state's governor, and submitted to the U.S. Secretary of Education for review to ensure compliance with the law; and**

**WHEREAS, Florida's proposed plan, submitted on September 20, 2017, was flagged by the U.S. Department of Education which sought clarification and additional information "to ensure the State's plan has met all statutory and regulatory requirements"; and**

**WHEREAS, over 24 categories within Florida's proposed plan were cited as "Items That Require Additional Information or Revision in Florida's Consolidated State Plan"; and**

**WHEREAS, among other things, the U.S. Department of Education found:**

**(1) Although Florida's plan indicates that it will measure progress in achieving English language proficiency at the school level, it does not include this measure in its accountability calculation as required by the ESSA to meaningfully differentiate among schools;**

**(2) Florida's plan does not specifically detail how to identify each school in which any subgroup of students, on their own, is performing so poorly as to receive additional targeted support; and**

**(3) Florida's plan does not provide a definition for languages other than English that are present to a significant extent in the participating student population and does not provide a mechanism for English language learners to be tested in their native language; and**

**WHEREAS, Florida's revised plan, submitted on April 20, 2018, still does not respond to the ESSA requirements to include measures of progress in achieving English language proficiency and performances of individual subgroups in accountability calculations; and**

**WHEREAS, the revised plan does not demonstrate that every effort has been made to provide a mechanism for English language learners to be tested in their native language; and**

**WHEREAS, numerous national civil rights organizations, English language learning experts, education reform organizations, and over 90 Florida-based organizations and advocates have**

**expressed their dissatisfaction with Florida's proposed ESSA plan to state and national policymakers; and**

**WHEREAS, Florida's plan does not currently meet the federal requirements of the ESSA and, in turn, cannot provide all children in the state with an opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education; and**

**WHEREAS, this Board is supportive of a statewide ESSA plan which serves the interests of all students, including historically marginalized subgroups, and that defines, solicits, and incorporates meaningful stakeholder engagement while providing the requisite support and attention all students in Florida deserve,**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:**

**Section 1. Urges the Florida Department of Education to revise Florida's state plan for compliance with the Every Student Succeeds Act in order to meet federal requirements and ensure that all students receive the support and attention they deserve.**

**Section 2. Directs the Clerk of the Board to transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Governor, the Chair and Members of the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation, the United States Secretary of Education, and the Commissioner of the Florida Department of Education.**

**Section 3. Directs the County's state lobbyists to advocate for the issues set forth in Section 1 above and authorizes and directs the Office of Intergovernmental affairs to include this item in the 2019 State Legislative Package when it is presented to the Board.**

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