

Kendrick on Education



Kendrick is the only candidate who has consistently stood up for Florida's children and teachers. He has opposed efforts to take away money from our public school system to provide taxpayer-funded vouchers to pay for private school tuition for selected students.

Education has always been an important issue for Kendrick. He was educated in the public school system in Miami-Dade County and he graduated from Florida A&M University. His mother was an educator teaching at schools and universities throughout Florida, including Miami-Dade College. He is intimately familiar with Florida's education system, and is an advocate for education reform with teachers, not to them.

As a Florida State Senator, Kendrick launched an initiative to reduce class sizes in Florida's overcrowded public schools, and Florida voters passed the initiative in 2002. Kendrick has repeatedly introduced legislation to ensure that funds are available to make smaller class sizes a reality.

Teachers today are faced with increasingly high standards for student performance, while confronted with an ever-growing list of challenges and demands with a less compliant and more troubled population of students. That is why Kendrick wrote a letter urging Gov. Crist to veto SB 6. We should focus on building systems of support for our school communities, and providing teachers and administrators with the resources they need.

Kendrick believes that funding early childhood education is one of the best investments our nation can make. He has voted to increase funding for Head Start, and has expanded eligibility for the program to make sure all children enter school ready to learn. He has expanded support for bilingual and special education instruction. In addition, he has worked with the Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, to ensure that Florida receives its share of federal stimulus dollars for education.

In order for the United States to continue to compete in the global marketplace, higher education should be affordable and accessible to all. Kendrick has voted to increase student aid and has supported legislation to cut interest rates in half for student loans. A college education should lead to greater opportunity, not personal bankruptcy.

In recognition of his sustained drive to improve our education system for both students and teachers, Kendrick has received an "A" rating from the National Education Association every year since 2003, and he has received the NEA's endorsement in this race. He has also received scores of 100 from the National Parent Teacher Association, the National Association for College Admissions Counseling, and many others.

Providing all our children with a great education is a critical component of America's economic future. As Florida's next U.S. Senator, Kendrick will continue to be a stalwart advocate for our children and for our teachers.