2027-2028 Legislative Budget Request

Performance-based and Preeminence Funding Initiatives

The following provides an explanation of the performance-based funding and preeminence requests.

1. Performance-Based Funding - $350 million

Performance-based funding has proven, over more than a decade, to be an exceptional tool to drive improvement, enhance university accountability, and improve student outcomes in very tangible ways, including remarkable increases in student retention, on-time graduation rates, wages for recent graduates, and research efforts and related expenditures. The Board recommends $350M for the State Investment incentive portion of next year's performance-based funding. These funds will be allocated in accordance with the current allocation model as outlined in Board Regulation 5.001.

Institutions are using Performance-based funding to advance student success, strengthen faculty recruitment and retention, enhance academic and research excellence, modernize technology and campus infrastructure, and support strategic institutional priorities. Expenditures are primarily focused on improving student outcomes through advising, financial aid, and retention initiatives, while also investing in faculty support, academic programs, campus operations, technology enhancements, and facility improvements.

2. Preeminence Funding - $125 million

Funding of $125 million is being requested to recognize universities designated as preeminent pursuant to section 1001.7065, Florida Statutes. Universities designated as preeminent would receive an equal amount of this state funding.

Five universities have been designated as preeminent: the University of Florida, Florida State University, the University of South Florida, Florida International University, and the University of Central Florida. Each university has met at least 12 of the 13 standards set in statute. Preeminent funds will be used to continue improving performance and national and international reputations.

State University System Initiatives

The following provides a brief explanation of the System initiatives included in the 2027-2028 Legislative Budget Request. Additional detailed information is available from the Board Budget Office.

3. SUS Postsecondary Guardian Program - $1.8 million

The Board is requesting $1.8 million in recurring General Revenue to continue the Postsecondary Guardian Program. The funding will support the certification and training of guardians at State University System institutions, helping maintain campus safety and ensuring continuity of the program beyond the nonrecurring FY 2026–27 appropriation.

4. University of Florida – Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Workload - $6.3 million

The UF/IFAS workload formula is a cost-to-continue funding model that provides for increased research and extension workload demand. The formula was developed at the request of and approved by the Florida Board of Governors. New challenges require new research for solutions. Increased demand for UF/IFAS research and extension activities stems from the delivery of research information to UF/IFAS clientele throughout Florida. The model uses Extension delivery methods to measure increases in workload by both Extension and research faculty in the form of workload delivery units. UF/IFAS faculty disseminates a wide range of research-based information to the general public, community leaders, and policymakers. The model uses non-traditional teaching methods and converts these contacts into student FTE equivalents.

The request aligns with four separate priorities of the University of Florida in its strategic plan: 1. Research and Discovery, demonstrating how UF/IFAS research generates real-world impact, 2. Economic and Workforce Development, supporting Florida's economy by delivering science-based education and training, 3. Community Engagement and Public Service, measuring UF/IFAS' statewide reach through consultants, workshops, educational programs, and public outreach, and 4. Technology and Innovation, recognizing modern delivery methods such as online education, social media, digital communications, and web-based resources that expand access to research-based information.

5. State Fire Marshal Inspections - $3.1 million

Pursuant to Section 633.218, Florida Statutes, the State Fire Marshal (SFM) is required to inspect all state-owned buildings on a recurring basis, and high-hazard occupancies must be inspected annually. The 4,000+ buildings of the State University System generally fall into both the state-owned and high-hazard categories, and thus, as a practical matter, all university facilities are inspected every year by SFM employees.

Historically, the SFM has not assessed inspection fees on universities for annual inspections. It appears that this practice dates back many years to the former Board of Regents and was based on an agreement between Chancellor Reed and the SFM office. Section 633.218, Florida Statutes, provides that each state department must include in its annual budget proposal a request for sufficient funds to cover the costs of any fees imposed by the SFM services, including inspection fees. In accordance with the statutory language, the SUS requests recurring appropriations totaling $3.1 million to cover the annual inspection costs for each university for the 2027-2028 fiscal year.

Below is a breakdown from the SFM by university for the annual inspection fees:

University	Annual Fee
Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University	$128,451.42
Florida Atlantic University	$295,674.51
Florida Gulf Coast University	$106,456.47
Florida International University	$289,957.74
Florida Polytechnic University	$39,154.65
Florida State University	$533,453.97
New College of Florida	$21,754.17
University of Central Florida	$798,973.93
University of Florida	$283,348.43
University of North Florida	$85,112.29
University of South Florida	$475,461.88
University of West Florida	$66,510.28
Total:	**$3,124,309.74**