



What is 8isGREAT.org?

An organization created to promote the passage of proposed Florida Constitutional Amendment 8.

What is Proposed Amendment 8 (besides GREAT!)?

The ballot language in the November 6, 2018 general election will read:

“CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT
ARTICLE IX, SECTION 4, NEW SECTION
ARTICLE XII, NEW SECTION
SCHOOL BOARD TERM LIMITS AND DUTIES; PUBLIC SCHOOLS.—

Creates a term limit of eight consecutive years for school board members and requires the legislature to provide for the promotion of civic literacy in public schools. Currently, district school boards have a constitutional duty to operate, control, and supervise all public schools. The amendment maintains a school board’s duties to public schools it establishes, but permits the state to operate, control, and supervise public schools not established by the school board”

Source: [Page 16 of Constitution Revision Commission Final Report](#)

What's in Amendment 8?

The language of the amendment speaks of its content. We view it as being good policy because it does three things:

1. Limits the Terms of School Board Members to 8 continuous years, which will allow more people an opportunity to serve as citizen legislators on School Boards. Term limits reduce the power of incumbency and make elections more competitive through "open seat" races. This will increase innovative thinking on school boards by bringing in fresh ideas and experiences as new members come onto the board.
2. Gives the State of Florida the flexibility to establish new education opportunities so that our system of free public education can be more innovative and adaptive as we head through the 21st century.
3. Finally, it prioritizes the teaching of civic literacy in our public schools so that Florida students understand our form of government and their role in it.

Do We Really Need to Amend our Constitution To Do This? Why doesn't the Florida Legislature Just do this?

Since school board member terms are in the Florida Constitution, the legislature cannot establish term limits for those Constitutional offices. Current constitutional language prohibits the state from operating, controlling or supervising free public schools, so this must be corrected through constitutional amendment. While the prioritization of civic literacy could be established by the current legislature, a future legislature could likewise de-fund and de-emphasize civics education.

Who is behind 8isGREAT.org?

Three current elected School Board Members have formed a Florida [not for profit corporation](#) to promote the passage of proposed Florida Constitutional Amendment 8. "8isGREAT.org" is headed by the main sponsor of the proposed Amendment on the Constitution Revision Commission and Collier County School Board Member, [Erika Donalds](#). Commissioner Donalds is joined by Indian River County School Board Chairman, Shawn Frost, and Duval County School Board Member, Scott Shine, as executive board members.

Amendment 8 has already received incredible grassroots support as it moved through the CRC process. We expect this to continue as we draw volunteers and financial support from a broad base of concerned citizens who share our view that the necessary and transformative policy in Amendment 8isGREAT!

Where Can People Learn More?

Visit <http://8isGREAT.org>

Be sure to [sign up](#) to get our email blasts and stay informed.

To [volunteer](#)

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FAQ:

Q. Does this “remove local control” from school boards?

A. No. Amendment 8 does not in itself, nor does it require the legislature to, change the current manner of establishing public schools in Florida. Districts will still operate, control, and supervise free public schools (including charter schools) that they establish, as is the current practice. If amendment 8 passes, the legislature could choose to enact legislation to create an alternative process to establish public schools and allow other entities besides school districts to operate, control, and supervise those public schools.

Public schools of choice (magnet, charter, or virtual) cannot be successful without PARENTS support. Although some local politicians don’t want to lose the ability to tell parents where their children will go to school, “local control” doesn’t get any more “local” than when individual households (moms, dads, grandparents, uncles, or aunts) decide what is best for their unique family needs.

Q. Will this “funnel funds away from public schools”?

A. No. Amendment 8 only addresses the operation, control, and supervision of free public schools. Funding would follow the child to the free public schools chosen by the parent, which in the future could be established by another entity in addition to the local school district.

Q. Who will these free public schools be accountable to?

A. While it remains for the legislature to decide the specifics, the most reasonable expectation is that these schools, because they are free public schools, will be included and subject to Florida’s statewide accountability system where students take the same examinations and receive school grades as do all free public schools whether they are neighborhood, magnet, charter, or virtual. These schools, as schools of choice, would have the added accountability of parents who could remove their child at any time if they are unsatisfied with the school and could return their child to their zoned school. Parents will decide what is best for their child. Few schools face that same level of accountability.

Q. Is this an amendment about “charter schools”?

A. Not exclusively. The free public schools that could be established through this innovative policy could be free public charter schools, but they could also be magnet schools, or new schools not yet considered. The fact is that there already exist public schools that could be considered unconstitutional such as Florida Virtual School, university laboratory schools and the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. This amendment would make those existing schools constitutional, as well as create opportunities for innovation so Florida’s students are prepared for the 21st century. We wouldn’t want any of these great schools to be closed due to a legal challenge. Amendment 8 is the only remedy to this Constitutional issue.

How Can You Help?

Visit <http://8isGREAT.org>

Be sure to [sign up](#) to get our email blasts and stay informed.

To [volunteer](#)

Or to [Contribute](#) online or by sending a Check for any amount payable to:

"8isGREAT.org"
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