



## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

October 25, 2021

The Honorable Richard Corcoran  
Commissioner of Education  
Florida Department of Education  
325 W. Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Commissioner Corcoran:

It has come to our attention that the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) has recommended, and the Florida State Board of Education (FSBE) has ordered, through Orders DOE2021-4027 and DOE2021-4029 of October 12, 2021, a reduction in state education aid to the School Board of Broward County (Broward) and the School Board of Alachua County (Alachua) by the amount of each district's federal Project SAFE grant award. The FSBE ordered this reduction in direct response to the federal support provided by Project SAFE, a federal grant program intended to help school districts improve student safety and well-being by advancing strategies to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in schools.

Should FLDOE implement these orders, it would be failing to comply with federal requirements, in particular, section 8522 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, which provides:

A State shall not take into consideration payments under this Act ... in determining ... the amount of State aid, with respect to free public education of children.

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) expects FLDOE to comply with all requirements applicable to its federal grant awards. If FLDOE moves forward with its planned reduction of state aid to Alachua and Broward, the Department is prepared to initiate enforcement action to stop these impermissible state actions.

We hope that you reconsider your threatened actions against these districts in response to the Project SAFE awards, so that they may continue to take steps to help ensure safe and healthy environments for their students, families, and educators.

400 MARYLAND AVE. SW, WASHINGTON, DC 20202  
[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

*The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access*

As always, the Department is eager to work with FLDOE to ensure a safe and successful school year for all of Florida's students. We remain ready to provide assistance, support, and partnership as we work together to achieve this shared goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ian Rosenblum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ian" and last name "Rosenblum" clearly legible.

Ian Rosenblum  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Programs  
Delegated the Authority to Perform the  
Functions and Duties of the Assistant Secretary