FEA: Educators appreciate quick action in response to crisis

TALLAHASSEE — At this time of great uncertainty, the Florida Education Association (FEA) commends Gov. Ron DeSantis for stepping forward Tuesday to clarify issues facing students and educators in our public schools.

“We are concerned first and foremost with the health, safety and well-being of students, families, educators and their communities,” said FEA President Fedrick Ingram. “Student learning also must be addressed under the reality of the current crisis, and the governor is taking steps to do that by canceling standardized testing for our students, extending certification testing deadlines for teachers and lifting the burden of K-12 school grades from districts for this year. The FEA and our members still have many unanswered questions regarding how this crisis will affect students and educators, and we hope that other issues also will be quickly resolved.”

Gov. DeSantis announced decisions on a range of education issues during his afternoon press conference on Tuesday, including testing and the redirection of funds in order to equip low-income children for online learning. Many other issues remain unclear, such as how online learning would take place and when students will be able return to classrooms. The governor indicated that schools will be closed at least through April 15. We remain deeply concerned about how we will meet the needs of students, especially the most vulnerable, who depend upon the services and meals our public schools provide.

The FEA will continue to work to protect the interests of our students, educators and public schools as our communities and nation deal with the coronavirus crisis.

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The Florida Education Association is the state’s largest association of professional employees, with more than 145,000 members. FEA represents PreK-12 teachers, higher education faculty, educational staff professionals, students at our colleges and universities preparing to become teachers and retired education employees.