Voters Approved 0.25 millage for critical needs in 2010 by more than 60%. This additional assessment yielded $6.7 million for the general operating budget. This millage was approved for a two-year term through school year 2012-13.

There are currently 9 charter schools operating in Volusia County with over 1,900 students. These schools are considered public schools that independently operate their institutions through school board approved contracts. The current budget (2011-12) for the charter schools is $13 million from Volusia County’s FEFP.

School Food Services (School-Way Café) is primarily a federally supported program ($18 million) for all students under established guidelines.

The national economy is mirrored in the state of Florida, in Volusia County and in each of our personal households. Our funding has been reduced and costs have increased yet we are obligated to provide our students with a quality education. Some of the measures we have taken to balance our budget include:

- Hiring Freeze for Non-Essential Positions
- Closure of Schools
- Closure of Administrative Complex (EDC)
- Curriculum Program/Project Reductions
- Non-Salary School Allocation Reductions
- Elimination of Block Schedule
- Multi-Grade Classes
- Class Load Supplement Reductions
- Substitute Budgets Reduced
- Extra Duty Supplements Reduced
- Consolidated/Reduced Bus Stops
- Elimination of Courtesy Bussing
- Reduction in Principals (coverage of two schools)
- Salary Reductions (District and School Administrators)
- Staff Reductions
- Non-Salary Department Budget Reductions
- Athletic Staff/Program Reductions
- Pay to Participate (Athletics)
- Four-Day Work Week
- Summer/Spring Break
- Mandatory Closure Dates—Winter Break
- Capital Transfer Imposed
- Instructional Materials Flexibility
- 0.25 Mill Tax Levy for Critical Needs
- Energy Management Initiative

In 2001, the voters of Volusia County approved a 10-year building program to begin in 2002 that would be funded by a half-cent sales tax increase for fifteen years. Completed projects from the approved list include 5 new elementary schools, 2 new middle schools, and 2 new special centers. School replacements included 1 elementary, 1 middle changed to an elementary/middle combination, 1 middle, 1 middle/high combination and 3 high schools. Additions and renovations have taken place at 9 elementary, 2 middle and 2 high schools. Twelve of the elementary physical education pavilions have been completed. Air conditioning installation and replacement projects have been completed. The last remaining project is one replacement middle school with anticipated completion this school year. Revenue for the anticipated sales tax collections has been bonded out through 2016 for debt service.

72% of our FY12 general operating budget is already appropriated at the function closest to the students—Instruction and Instructional Support.
The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) provides for the funding of public education in Florida. Our state’s constitution states that “...it is the paramount duty of the state to make adequate provision for education...” and that “...adequate provision shall be made by law for a...high quality system of free public schools that allows students to obtain a high quality education...

Volusia County Schools (VCS) has 3 major factors affecting the decline in funding over the last 6 years:

1. Student Enrollment Decline: (4,131)
2. Property Tax Values Decline: (A high of $41.3 billion down to $28.9 billion for this school year.)
3. District Cost Differential (0.9647)

The adopted budget for 2011-12 is $805.4 million which includes capital projects, special revenue and debt and internal services. Our general operating budget is $467.2 million.

How much has the state funding to Volusia County Schools been reduced? As illustrated below, more than $92 million since 2007-08!

In years past, additional funding was received through other sources. For FY2011-12, federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and EduJobs funds in the amount of $37 million are no longer available. As a result, the school district reallocated $27 million from its unreserved fund balance in the general operating budget to preserve positions and services. Most of these funds were utilized to preserve instructional and instructional support staff positions.

In 1988, lottery funds were originally allocated for discretionary use by the districts for K-12 students. In 2007, universities and community colleges were added to the distribution. Now the funds are no longer discretionary but must be used primarily for school recognition bonuses as determined by the state. Volusia County Schools highest lottery distribution occurred in 1993 when we received approximately $12 million as compared to about $2.4 million for the 2011-12 school year of which only $170,855 is discretionary.

The DCD is a methodology used by the state legislature by applying the Florida Price Level Index (FPLI) to calculate the FEFP funding. In this role, the FPLI is used to represent the costs of hiring equally qualified personnel across school districts. This comparison of cost of living or relative wage levels among Florida’s 67 counties has been punitive to a coastal community such as Volusia. Using this measure, VCS loses millions of dollars each year in state revenue. This year alone, the impact to the district was a loss of more than $8 million. Volusia County Schools ranks in the bottom quintile of the 24 major districts (30,000 or more students) in the DCD percentile calculation.

Neighboring Districts:
- Orange...........1.0083
- Brevard...........1.0014
- Seminole...........0.9987
- Lake...........0.9804
- Volusia...........0.9647
- Flagler...........0.9602

In the 2010-11 school year, Volusia County Schools was one of approximately one-half of the districts in the state to comply with the constitutional amendment. The additional cost for instructional staff compliance that year was approximately $13 million.

The maximum number of students in core courses (math, language arts/reading, science, social studies, English for Speakers of Other Languages—ESOL, and Exceptional Student Education—ESE) that can be assigned to a teacher by grade groupings are:

- PK-3 18 per classroom
- 4-8 22 per classroom
- 9-12 25 per classroom

For this 2011-12 school year, the school district was again in compliance with the class size amendment as it applied to the 15,147 core courses. The additional cost to maintain class size compliance remains at approximately $13 million per year.