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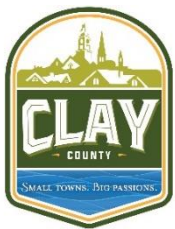
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May 14, 2024

President Joe Pickens  
St. Johns River State College  
5001 St. Johns Avenue  
Palatka, FL 32177

RE: Letter of support for SJR State's Baccalaureate Proposals

Dear President Pickens,

On behalf of the Clay County Board of County Commissioners, it is my pleasure to offer this letter of support for the baccalaureate degrees being proposed by St. Johns River State College.

The degrees you are proposing, BS degrees in Exceptional Student Education, Biological Sciences, and Social and Human Services, as well as BAS degrees in Digital Art & Media and Performance Design & Production, will all prepare graduates for entry into high wage, high demand careers. Many employment opportunities exist within our local community for graduates of these programs. In Florida, there is a well-documented critical teacher shortage, and graduates of programs in STEM, human services, digital media, and performance production are all in high demand as well. In addition to addressing employers' hiring challenges, the proposed programs will enable the residents of Clay County to earn a high quality, low cost baccalaureate degree from the only public College offering such degrees in our county, greatly increasing the likelihood that we retain these graduates in our local community and workforce.

State colleges that offer baccalaureate programs provide the most economical means of achieving a four-year degree. Local state colleges, like St. Johns River State College, offering programs that include the baccalaureate degrees listed above will enhance resident satisfaction and provide for increased economic development in Clay County.

It is a pleasure to support you and St. Johns River College as you work to bring these new baccalaureate degree offerings to the residents of Clay County.

Sincerely,

Jim Renninger, Chairman  
Clay County Board of County Commissioners