

Agenda Request Form

Cherokee County School District

Meeting Date
January 19, 2017

Agenda Item Number
B-1

Topic
Georgia Education Coalition (GEC) 2017 Legislative Priorities
Requested Action
Board Adoption of Georgia Education Coalition (GEC) 2017 Legislative Priorities
Summary Explanation and Background
<p>The Georgia Education Coalition (GEC), a consortium of nine large and growing public school districts in the State of Georgia created for the purpose of increasing collaboration and legislative/policy advocacy between and among large school systems, unanimously approved the attached Legislative Priorities at its December 2016 meeting.</p> <p>Also attached for your information are the 2017 Legislative Partnership Priorities unanimously approved by the School Board at its November 3, 2016 meeting.</p>
Major System Priority
Increasing Accountability
Financial Impact
N/A
Exhibits: (List)
GEC 2017 Legislative Priorities; CCSD 2017 Legislative Partnership Priorities

Board Action
<i>(For Official School Board Records Only)</i>


Source of Additional Information						
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Kyla Cromer, Chairman</td> <td style="border: none;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Dr. Brian V. Hightower</td> <td style="border: none; text-align: right;">(770) 704-4202</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Mike McGowan</td> <td style="border: none; text-align: right;">(770) 721-6242</td> </tr> </table>	Kyla Cromer, Chairman		Dr. Brian V. Hightower	(770) 704-4202	Mike McGowan	(770) 721-6242
Kyla Cromer, Chairman						
Dr. Brian V. Hightower	(770) 704-4202					
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OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Approved in Open Board Meeting on: _____ (Date)

By: _____ (School Board Chairman)

2017 Legislative Priorities

1. Require any changes to the State’s education funding formula to fully restore “austerity budget cuts” or provide for the equivalent in new State revenue.
 2. Maintain capital outlay funding for large and fast growing school districts.
 3. Require local fiscal impact statements on education legislation that creates new mandates or programs for school systems.
 4. Advocate for alignment between the reauthorized Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Georgia Single Statewide Accountability System by making necessary mid-course corrections in new assessment models for teachers and administrators with a greater emphasis on actual observation of performance by professionally-trained administrators/supervisors, rather than test scores.
 5. Make revisions to the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) to ensure continued workforce stability and responsibility, particularly as it pertains to employee and employer cost and the impact on non-certified or classified employees of school systems.
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2017 LEGISLATIVE PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES



PRIORITY #1: Partner with K-12 public school districts by requiring any changes to the State's education funding formula to fully restore "austerity budget cuts" or provide for the equivalent in new state revenue ... thereby empowering local School Boards to: address continued student population growth in Georgia; maintain a 180-day school calendar for students; reduce class sizes to State-funded maximums; and, replenish annual reserve fund balances.

Locally-earned Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula funding was fully provided to local school districts by the Georgia General Assembly for 15 years with initial funding beginning in 1986-87 and continuing thereafter until 2002.

CCSD FACTS: Since 2002, \$205.2M (\$3.9M this year and \$84M over the past five years) of statutorily-required QBE formula funding earned by CCSD has gone unfunded through austerity budget cuts ... all during a time when CCSD student enrollment increased by more than 53% (14,527 students).



PRIORITY #2: Partner with K-12 public school districts and their employees by addressing cost-prohibitive premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for participation in the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) ... thereby empowering local School Boards to provide competitive, affordable and responsible health and benefit packages to their employees.

Develop a statewide strategy for State Health Benefit Plan cost containment ... rather than continuing to pass annual premium increases along to local school districts and their employees. State-level policy planning and budgeting, and the appropriation of necessary funding in this regard, are critically needed to address immediate and future healthcare needs of educators, non-certified staff and educational system retirees.

- Between FY2008 and FY2017, State appropriations for non-certified health insurance premiums have been systemically reduced and are slated for total elimination. Non-certified employees most often represent local school district's' lowest wage-earners and have been the most negatively impacted by the State's recent actions in this regard.

- SHBP is currently projected to operate with an annual deficit of more than \$55 Million in FY 2018, signifying probable continued premium increases under current policy and planning.

- Extraordinary employee health care costs (in the form of significantly higher premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for deductibles, annual maximums, reduced credits and co-insurance expenses) continue to erode the quality and competitiveness of the overall compensation package developed by local school districts for its employees.

CCSD FACTS: While CCSD had approximately 350 fewer non-certified employees participating in SHBP in FY2016 compared to FY2009, employer contributions increased over \$7M (from \$3.6 to \$10.7M) during that same time period.

CCSD has been forced to privatize custodial and grounds services and increase the use of part-time/temporary workers for non-certified staffing as cost-reduction measures. The annual cost of providing health insurance for a non-certified employee has risen from \$2,000 in 2010 to \$9,000 in 2016 ... a \$7,000, or 450% increase! And with an additional \$100 per employee per month increase effective Jan 2017, the cost of providing health insurance for a non-certified employee will increase to \$846.20 per month and more than \$10,000 per year.

CCSD benefit costs for non-certified employees are projected to be \$11.7M for 2016-17; up from \$10.7M in 2015-16; \$8.2M in 2014-15 and \$7.5M in 2013-14. Local school systems cannot continue to absorb these extraordinary costs.



PRIORITY #3: Partner with K-12 public school districts by ensuring proposed legislative initiatives strengthen provisions for the local control and management of schools . . . thereby empowering local School Boards to fulfill their Constitutional authority and responsibility to involve their local constituency, develop locally-derived educational policy and oversee continued performance improvements among their students.

CCSD FACTS: *CCSD and its highly-respected School Board has garnered multiple State and National awards relative to student achievement gains and innovative educational programs. Through a model of determining a visionary Mission Statement, a prioritized listing of Major System Priorities and collaborative, governance-based policies, the CCSD School Board has a transparent and proven ability to guide its schools in exemplary teaching and learning.*



PRIORITY #4: Partner with K-12 public school districts by developing statutory provisions to further insure workforce readiness skills and preparation by high school graduates for transitions directly into careers or secondary-level career educational opportunities by providing students in Georgia with an alternative diploma option in the area of Technical/Career Preparation.



PRIORITY #5: Partner with K-12 public school districts by implementing statutory provisions designed to address continued erosion of the State's tax base through exemptions from the sales and use tax, income tax and other State taxes.



PRIORITY #6: Partner with K-12 public school districts by opposing the continuation and/or expansion of existing programs that directly or indirectly use public funds to pay private school tuition for students or provide tax incentives for their parents.



PRIORITY #7: Partner with K-12 public school districts by insuring timely, state and local access to all federal funding allocations.

CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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John Harmon
Clark Menard
Kelly Poole
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