

Agenda Request Form

Cherokee County School District

Meeting Date
January 18, 2018

Agenda Item Number
B-1

Title
Board Adoption of Georgia Education Coalition (GEC) 2018 Legislative Priorities
Requested Action
Board Adoption of Georgia Education Coalition (GEC) 2018 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.</p> <p>Also attached for your information are CCSD's 2018 Legislative Partnership Priorities unanimously approved by the School Board at its November 16, 2017 meeting.</p>
Major System Priority
Increasing Accountability
Financial Impact
N/A
Exhibits: (List)
GEC 2018 Legislative Priorities; CCSD 2018 Legislative Partnership Priorities

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


Source of Additional Information
Kyla Cromer, Chairman Dr. Brian V. Hightower Mike McGowan (770) 479-1871

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Approved in Open Board Meeting on: _____ (Date)

By: _____ (School Board Chairman)

2018 Legislative Priorities

1. Fully restore austerity cuts or provide for equivalent funding through alternative allocation of State revenue.
 2. Formulate policy to help local districts contain costs, including contributions to health benefits and retirement.
 3. Support efforts to maintain and increase local control, including flexibility in testing, school calendars, and curriculum.
 4. Oppose efforts to divert public funds to private entities through vouchers and tuition tax credits.
 5. Adopt legislation implementing the recommendations of the Joint Study Committee on Establishment of a Leadership Academy.
 6. Encourage the Georgia Department of Education to comply with the provisions of Senate Bill 211.
 7. Acknowledge the additional local costs of state allocations for “percent” salary increases.
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2018 LEGISLATIVE PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

FUNDING

- Partner with K-12 public school districts by fully restoring “austerity budget cuts” or providing for the equivalent in new state revenue to the State’s education funding formula... thereby empowering local School Boards to address continued student population growth, reducing class sizes and funding continued employer increases in health care premiums and retirement payment ratios.
- 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.



LOCAL CONTROL & GOVERNANCE

Partner with K-12 public school districts by ensuring proposed legislative initiatives strengthen provisions for the local control and management of schools (including the ability to set its own local school year calendar) . . . 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.



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Partner with K-12 public school districts by developing statutory provisions to further ensure 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.



DR. BRIAN V. HIGHTOWER, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

KYLA CROMER, CHAIR

MIKE CHAPMAN, VICE CHAIR

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: JOHN HARMON, PATSY JORDAN,
CLARK MENARD, KELLY POOLE & ROBERT RECHSTEINER

2018 LEGISLATIVE PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

FACTS ON FUNDING:

- The Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula for local school districts was fully funded by the Georgia General Assembly its first 15 years (1987-2002). However, from 2002-2017, \$209.2M of funding earned by CCSD was withheld through austerity budget cuts, while CCSD student enrollment increased by more than 53.5% (15,057 students).
- The Teacher Retirement System of Georgia increased the employer (CCSD) contribution rate for 2017-18 from 14.27% to 16.81% (...and it is slated to increase to 20.9% for FY2019).
- While CCSD had approximately 350 fewer non-certified employees participating in SHBP in FY2017 compared to FY2009, CCSD contributions increased over \$8M (from \$3.6M to \$11.7M) during that same time. As a result, 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 during the past four years.
- The School District's employer contribution toward the annual cost of providing health insurance for a non-certified employee has risen from \$2,000 in 2010 to \$10,000 in 2017... yet another increase effective Jan. 2018 will inflate the cost of providing health insurance for a non-certified employee to \$945 per month, more than \$11,000 per year.
- CCSD benefit costs for non-certified employees are projected to be \$13.9M for 2018; up from \$11.7M in 2017; \$10.7M in 2016; \$8.2M in 2015 and \$7.5M in 2014. Each \$100 monthly increase in the employer contribution rate costs the District \$1.5M annually, thereby potentially impacting funding availability for classroom instructional resources.

FACTS ON GOVERNANCE:

- CCSD and its highly-respected School Board have garnered multiple State and National awards relative to student achievement gains and innovative educational programs.
- More than 76% of residents polled rank CCSD schools as "excellent" or "good" in a recent Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) report.
- The community overwhelmingly voted Nov. 8, 2016 to "Continue One Percent for Cherokee Schools:" 73% (78,796 voters) said "YES"... more than the four previous Education SPLOST successful renewals combined.
- CCSD achieved highly-distinguished ratings during its most recent accreditation visit/renewal by AdvancED.

2018 CHEROKEE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

State Representative, District 20

Michael Caldwell
3044 Lexington Avenue
Woodstock, GA 30189
michael@caldwellforhouse.com

State Representative, District 22

Wes Cantrell
1044 Meadow Brook Drive
Woodstock, GA 30188
wes@cantrellforhouse.com

State Representative, District 46

John Carson
3605 Sandy Plains Rd Suite 240-123
Marietta, GA 30006
john.carson@house.ga.gov

State Senator, District 21

Brandon Beach
303-B Coverdell Legis. Office Bldg
Atlanta, GA 30334
Brandon@beachforsenate.com

State Representative, District 21

Scot Turner
508 Blue Ridge Terrace
Canton, GA 30114
scot.turner@house.ga.gov

State Representative, District 23

Mandi Ballinger
P.O. Box 5123
Canton, GA 30114
mandiballinger23@gmail.com

State Senator, District 14

Bruce Thompson
25 Hawks Branch Lane
White, GA 30184
brucethompsonforsenate@gmail.com

State Senator, District 56

John Albers
530 Junction Pt
Roswell, GA 30075-3007
john@votealbers.com