

Agenda Request Form

Cherokee County School District

Meeting Date
January 17, 2019

Agenda Item Number
B-1

Title
Georgia Education Coalition (GEC) 2019 Legislative Priorities
Requested Action
School Board Adoption of Georgia Education Coalition (GEC) 2019 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 for the upcoming General Assembly.</p> <p>Also attached for your reference are CCSD's 2019 Legislative Partnership Priorities unanimously approved by the School Board at its November 15, 2018 meeting.</p>
Major System Priority
Increasing Accountability
Financial Impact
N/A
Exhibits: (List)
GEC 2019 Legislative Priorities; CCSD 2019 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; text-align: right;">(770) 479-1871</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Dr. Brian V. Hightower</td> <td style="border: none; text-align: right;">(770) 479-1871</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: none;">Mike McGowan</td> <td style="border: none; text-align: right;">(770) 479-1871</td> </tr> </table>	Kyla Cromer, Chairman	(770) 479-1871	Dr. Brian V. Hightower	(770) 479-1871	Mike McGowan	(770) 479-1871
Kyla Cromer, Chairman	(770) 479-1871					
Dr. Brian V. Hightower	(770) 479-1871					
Mike McGowan	(770) 479-1871					

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Approved in Open Board Meeting on: _____ (Date)

By: _____ (School Board Chairman)

2019 Legislative Priorities

1. Promote **full state funding** of public education and policies to **help local districts contain costs and maintain local revenues**.
 - Work to maintain full funding of the QBE formula while collaborating with partners to modernize the formula to recognize the true costs of delivering public education.
 - Support a salary increase for teachers in the State Salary Schedule.
 - Promote policies to contain local costs associated with health and retirement benefits.
 - Support requiring district input into tax increment financing and abatement.
 - Support flexibility in maturity requirements for local district tax anticipation notes.
 - Oppose efforts to divert public funds to private entities through vouchers and tuition tax credits.

2. Support efforts to **maintain and increase local control**, including flexibility in testing, school calendars, and curriculum.
 - Encourage elimination of state-mandated use of schools as polling places.
 - Oppose implementation of statewide school calendar restrictions.
 - Oppose transfer of Career, Technical, and Agricultural programs from the Department of Education and local districts.

3. Champion initiatives to **increase school safety** through prevention, protection, and readiness.
 - Promote increased funding for school counseling and associated mental health positions and programming.
 - Support additional allocations and grants for school resource officers and capital security enhancements.
 - Support district flexibility in the implementation of school safety initiatives.

For more information, contact George Ray at george.ray@nelsonmullins.com or (404) 322-6145.

2019 CCSD LEGISLATIVE PARTNERSHIP PRIORITIES

LOCAL CONTROL & GOVERNANCE

- Ensure 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 mandate and corresponding responsibility to involve their local constituency, develop locally-derived educational policy and oversee continued performance improvements among their students.
- Allow for internet/electronic publication of legal advertisements by newspapers selected as the County's "Legal Organ" . . . thereby providing timely, comprehensive advertisement of important, legally-mandated notice/information to citizens.
- Oppose any effort to eliminate limited sovereign and official immunity . . . thereby protecting K-12 public school districts from lawsuits over day-to-day school operations (e.g., grades, discipline, classroom placements, etc.).
- Eliminate State-mandated use of schools as public polling locations during regular school days . . . thereby increasing safety and security for its students, staffs and buildings.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Provide high school graduates in Georgia with an alternative diploma option in the area of Career/Technical Preparation . . . thereby further ensuring students' workforce readiness skills and preparation for transitions directly into careers or secondary-level career educational opportunities.



Cherokee County
School District

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

FUNDING

- Consider modification and update of the QBE formula to accurately reflect inflation, true costs of transportation; and, to include a funding weight for poverty, funding for safety and security and increased allocations for counselors, social workers, psychologists and nurses . . . thereby providing services for critically-needed student support functions.
- Include any teacher compensation increases into the State teacher salary schedule . . . thereby communicating the State's long-term commitment toward providing competitive compensation to teachers and allowing local school districts to concentrate local revenues on offsetting State-required employer rate increases in health care premiums, retirement plan contributions and locally-determined benefit plans (e.g., disability, life, dental, etc.).
- Oppose 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 . . . thereby ensuring a solid revenue base for state funding of public education.

FACTS ON FUNDING PRESSURES: (impacting funding availability for classroom instruction)

Student Transportation:

CCSD will receive \$2.1M in QBE funds for student transportation for FY19. The total cost for student transportation during this budget cycle is \$21M.

Employee Retirement:

The Teacher Retirement System of Georgia has increased the employer (CCSD) contribution rate in each of the past three years, from 14.27% (FY17) to 16.81% (FY18) to 20.9% (in FY19) ... and has announced a rate of 21.14% for FY20. CCSD's annual payment to TRS on behalf of its employees for FY19 is expected to exceed \$46.9M (local share will be \$8.45M), up from \$37.8M in FY18 (local share was \$6.8M).

Employee Health Insurance:

- Beginning in FY08, the State's contribution for non-certified employee health insurance premiums was reduced and then eliminated by FY12 (from over \$500M to \$0), requiring local school districts to fully absorb the additional costs since that time. CCSD's employer contribution toward the annual cost of providing health insurance for a non-certified employee has risen from \$2,000 in FY10 to \$11,340 in FY19... this cost, nearing \$1,000 per month/per participating employee, represents a 467% increase in just eight years.
- CCSD's total benefit costs for non-certified employees are projected to be

\$15.9M for FY19, rising incrementally and ultimately doubling the required \$7.5M cost in FY14. The extraordinary financial impact of continuing increases in employer contributions rates for State mandated benefits without corresponding State funding continues to be of great concern. As such, CCSD was forced to privatize custodial and grounds services and increase the use of part-time/temporary workers for non-certified staffing as cost-reduction measures.

Cherokee County School District
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2019 CHEROKEE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

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