

**CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

January 8, 2016

TO: School Board Members

FROM: Dr. Frank R. Petruzielo
Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: 2016-17 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET

Attached for your information is the School Board's 2016 Legislative Program, the Georgia Education Coalition 2016 Legislative Program and a worksheet for each Board Member to utilize in prioritizing fiscal needs and/or budget reductions they would like to see addressed in preparation of the Tentative 2016-17 FY Budget. When completing the worksheet, please keep in mind the items addressed in the Legislative Programs in order. We will discuss these priorities and provide you with an update on the 2016 Legislative Session at the Strategic Work Session on Thursday, January 14, 2016.

If you have any questions concerning this, please contact me or Kenneth Owen at 770-704-4244.



FRP

FRP/KO:th
Attachments (3)

cc: Superintendent's Cabinet
School Board Attorney

**CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER
PROPOSED FY2016-17 BUDGET PRIORITIES**

Please complete this worksheet and return to Melissa Whatley no later than February 5, 2016.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

School Board Member

Date

- IV. Make necessary corrections in evaluation models for teachers and administrators. Authorize necessary adjustments to current statutory requirements relative to student achievement assessment results and corresponding, formula-driven Student Growth Percentiles which impact annual teacher and leader job performance evaluations. Greater emphasis on actual observation of performance by professionally trained administrators/supervisors, rather than test scores, is needed.
- V. Implement 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.
- VI. Oppose any 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.
- VII. Undertake no modifications to federal funding access and availability that would delay or reduce local school districts' earned allocations.

2016 CHEROKEE COUNTY LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION

State Representative, District 20

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

State Representative, District 21

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

State Representative, District 22

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

State Representative, District 23

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

State Representative, District 46

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

State Senator, District 14

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

State Senator, District 21

Brandon Beach
303-B Coverdell Legislative Office Building
Atlanta, GA 30334
Brandon@beachforsenate.com

State Senator, District 56

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



2016

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Kyla Cromer, Chair

Patsy Jordan, Vice Chair

Mike Chapman

John Harmon

Clark Menard

Kelly Poole

Robert Rechsteiner

Dr. Frank R. Petruzielo
Superintendent
of Schools

*"A system of general instruction,
which shall reach every description
of our citizens, from the richest to the
poorest, as it was the earliest, so it shall
be the latest of all the public concerns in
which I shall permit myself to take an interest."*

- Thomas Jefferson

2016 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

- I. 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 . . . thereby empowering local School Boards to: maintain a 180-day school calendar for students; reduce class sizes to previous 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...from the QBE Act being signed into State law by Governor Joe Frank Harris in 1985 (with the first funds being distributed in 1986-87) and continuing thereafter until 2002.

CCSD FACTS: Since 2002, \$201M (\$11.1M this year and \$106.6M over the past five years) of statutorily-required QBE formula funding earned by CCSD has been unilaterally withheld by the Governor and General Assembly through so-called "austerity budget cuts"... during which time period CCSD student enrollment increased almost 51% (14,431 students).

- II. Address skyrocketing premiums and out-of-pocket expenses for participation in the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP)!

Develop and begin implementation of a statewide strategy for State Health Benefit Plan cost containment...rather than continuing to simply pass skyrocketing annual premium increases along to School Boards, teachers and other State 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, other state employees and retirees.

- Between 2008 and FY2012, the annual State Budget Line Item Appropriation of State Health contributions for Non-Certified health insurance premiums were initially and incrementally reduced and then subsequently eliminated.
- SHBP is currently projected to operate with an annual deficit of more than \$236 Million in 2016 and \$575 Million in 2017!

- 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 for teachers, non-certified staff and other state employees.

CCSD FACTS: Due to annual underfunding and cost-shifting by the Governor and General Assembly, CCSD has been forced to privatize custodial and grounds services. Costs increased by more than \$4 million for non-certified employees in the past three years (more than 350%)....from \$162.72 to \$596.20...and, effective Jan 2016, employer contributions for non-certified health insurance will increase to \$746.20 per employee per month! Each \$150 PEPM increases CCSD costs by \$2.2 Million. Local school systems cannot continue to absorb these extraordinary costs!

- ◊ While CCSD had approximately 650 fewer participants from FY09 to FY15, employer contributions for employees participating in SHBP increased \$15M (from \$21.2 to \$36.2M) during that same time period.

- III. Align current and future legislative initiatives (e.g., Governor's proposed Opportunity School District Constitutional Amendment) with State Constitutional provisions regarding local control and management of public schools, rather than usurping locally-elected School Boards' authority.

CCSD FACTS: Unlike the Governor's Office of Student Achievement, CCSD's School Board has a proven track record of successful governance and self-management, as evidenced by its selection as a "Board of Distinction" by the Georgia School Boards Association. CCSD 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 a governance-based Accountability Policy, the CCSD School Board has a transparent and proven ability to guide its schools in exemplary teaching and learning. As a result of CCSD's documented success in offering school choice and improving student achievement and school effectiveness, only 2.2% of public school students have chosen to attend the local State Charter Commission school in Cherokee County.

2016 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.