


ACT NOW TO ADVOCATE FOR RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS!

The best way to show love for our kids is by advocating for RPS to get the support and funds it needs to provide an amazing education.

Your voice is critical during the General Assembly session in January and February. Phone, email, and legislative visits are all great and accessible ways to get involved. RPS has six legislative priorities, and your perspective will help our lawmakers understand why kids need them.. For more information and resources to support advocacy, visit the RPS website at rvaschools.net/advocacy.

 Find your legislators and their contact information on the Virginia General Assembly website at viriniageneralassembly.gov.

Priority 1 — Reform the Local Composite Index

Richmond faces budget challenges despite the city becoming richer. The latest state analysis suggests Richmond should pay for 57.4% of school costs, **leading to less money from the state**. A recent report suggests a fairer way to calculate education costs, using a three-year average, **which could mean more money for Richmond schools**. Families supporting this change could mean more funding for Richmond schools and ensure kids have what they need to learn.



LOCAL COMPOSITE INDEX (LCI)

The state's formula for calculating **how much money Richmond should pay** for Richmond Public Schools.



Priority 2 — Reform the At-Risk Add On



Recent findings shed light on a concerning funding gap for RPS's economically disadvantaged students, and the existing funding program falls short of addressing their educational needs. Families should support adopting the federally approved **Identified Student Percentage** measure for precise calculations, which includes consolidating existing programs into a **new At-Risk Program under the Standards of Quality**, which could yield a substantial **\$250 million infusion** in additional aid.

Priority 3 — Strategically Support Extending Stimulus-Funded Investments



Federal COVID funds have helped schools hire **mental health staff**, but this support is ending. Schools may have to cut these positions when we know our students need more mental health support now. Additionally, the General Assembly should provide funds for a **grant program** to **aid schools facing high community violence**.



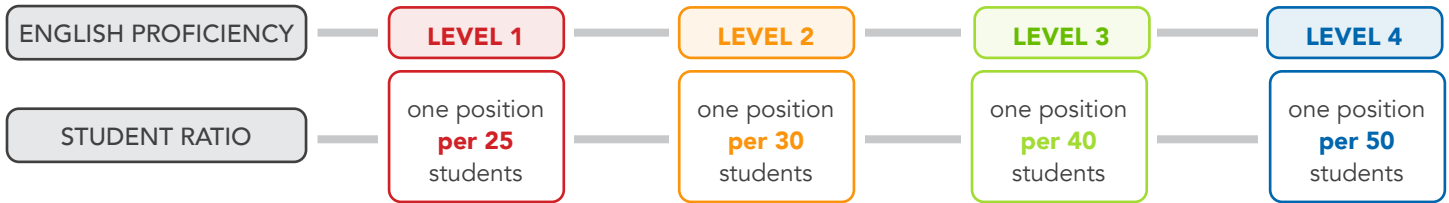
Additional instructional time is a proven strategy for recovering from learning loss. Based on the preliminary success of the RPS200 program, the General Assembly should **expand the extended-year grant program**, which provides funding to support schools interested in adopting a **200-day calendar**.

Priority 4 — Supporting All English Learners (ELs)

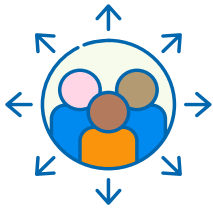
IMPLEMENT PROFICIENCY-BASED RATIOS FOR ENGLISH LEARNER TEACHERS

Virginia needs to better support English Learners. The current ratio of having one teacher for every 50 EL students isn't equitable or fair because **students have different needs**. Changing the law so each teacher has a number of students **based on their English proficiency** would make a big difference, especially for our Newcomer students, who are learning English for the first time.

The EL teacher ratio **should be amended** from 20 positions per 1,000 EL students (1 per 50) to a **sliding scale**.



Priority 5 — Invest in Teachers and Support Staff



ELIMINATE THE SUPPORT-STAFF CAP

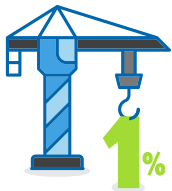
Since the Great Recession in 2009, there's been a cap on state-funded support staff like nurses and social workers. These staff members are **crucial for helping students facing challenges**, and we currently fund some of these positions without any state support. The General Assembly has started undoing this unfair cap, but should undo it completely to restore the funding for these critical staff.



INVEST IN TEACHER AND STAFF COMPENSATION

Compared to other states, **Virginia's teacher salaries are not very competitive**. RPS has worked to increase pay, and the state has improved teachers' ability to negotiate, but **we still need help from the state to pay our staff fairly**. Virginia is also facing a shortage of school staff. To catch up to the national average for teacher pay, **we need to increase salaries by about 10 percent**. The General Assembly should keep working towards this goal.

Priority 6 — Support Localities in School Construction and Modernization



LET VOTERS FUND MODERN FACILITIES

With about **\$25 billion in documented needs** statewide, we need the state to keep helping us build and update safe, modern buildings. We're asking the General Assembly to let us have an **optional 1% Local Sales Tax for school construction**. This means we can ask voters to increase the sales tax by 1 percent, and the money will go to building and updating schools.



FUND SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION GRANTS

Given the state's infrastructure needs, we need the General Assembly to add **\$2.5 billion to the School Construction Grant and Assistance Program**. This includes \$500 million for direct grants in the **School Construction Grant Program** and \$2 billion for competitive grants in the **School Construction Assistance Program**.



For more updates and resources, visit the RPS website at rvaschools.net/advocacy.