



CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2012 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Board of Education

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PUBLIC EDUCATION: THE KEY TO GEORGIA'S FUTURE

The Cherokee County School Board encourages the Governor and General Assembly to make public education a priority for Georgia and a primary component for improving and sustaining our State's economy. Establishing and maintaining an educated workforce is vital for growing jobs in Georgia, as well as being the key to individual success. Accordingly, the School Board encourages the Cherokee County Legislative Delegation to support the following priorities:

1. Respect local control/local governance and the will of the people by maintaining current School Board representation and election methodology

[Public meetings and surveys conducted by the Board of Education indicate broad-based support for continued countywide election of seven school board members, which is the current system.](#)

2. Make full funding of the Quality Basic Education (QBE) formula a top priority

Establish a legislative goal to incrementally and fully fund the Quality Basic Education Act, including unfunded/underfunded state mandates such as transportation, special education and textbooks. Recognizing the extraordinary local impact resulting from difficult economic times, make no further State austerity budget cuts for fiscal year 2012-13. \$26.6 Million earned by CCSD under QBE, but withheld by the State for 2011-12, would have enabled the District to hire 400 additional teachers and reduce class size significantly . . . which would have had a direct, positive impact on teaching and learning.



Future lawmakers at Clayton ES sign their classroom version of the Constitution.

3. Continue capital outlay funding at current levels for regular and exceptional growth

State capital outlay funds help growing school districts provide adequate facilities to meet the needs of students. In addition, local communities need the option to continue bond and SPLOST referenda to generate funding for school construction and renovation projects, which are only funded partially by State capital outlay funds, as well as technology, for which local school districts receive no State funds.

4. Eliminate or curtail existing unfunded and under-funded state mandates; and prohibit new ones by:

- Requiring a clear and complete description of each bill's potential fiscal, operational and programmatic impact on local schools and school districts.
- Establishing a mandatory, minimum 12-month waiting period prior to implementation of state education legislation, except for budgetary items.
- Requiring the review, within two years, of all State Board of Education rules and mandates . . . to increase accountability while creating flexibility through elimination of burdensome, out-dated rules and regulations.

5. Support authorization of a statewide referendum on utilization of public funds for private education options

The Cherokee County School District supports a referendum in this regard to solicit broad-based constituent input on this issue.

6. Cap Local Fair Share and enforce the statutory 20% maximum

Cherokee County School District's 2011 five-mill Local Fair Share totaled \$39.1 Million . . . for the third straight year, that exceeds the statutory 20% formula maximum (by \$2.8 Million for 2011-12 alone).

STATE AUSTERITY CUTS TO CCSD OPERATING BUDGET: \$118.4 MILLION

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
\$5.2M	\$6.2M	\$6.2M	\$3.5M	\$3.1M	\$11.1M	\$31.2M	\$25.3M	\$26.6M	\$118.4M

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Allow Race To The Top (RTTT) participation to represent a school district's selection of a system of innovation and reform in fulfillment of state law requiring either IE2 or Charter District status selection.
- In light of significant and increasing employer and employee contributions required by the State Health Benefit Plan (more than \$150 Million in CCSD contributions alone during the past five years), in the form of rapidly rising health care premiums and out-of-pocket medical expenses, it should be a priority of the General Assembly to establish greater accountability and improved reporting to stakeholders on State Health Benefit Plan administration, performance and management of assets. Such efforts should include actuarial analysis for benefit/rate changes . . . to ensure timely delivery of information necessary for local budgeting and planning and to provide reasonable assurance of future financial stability.
- Modify the State statute that restricts student possession of electronic devices so that school districts can utilize student personal technology programs without having to request waivers.



Rep. Calvin Hill visits Avery ES.



Senator Chip Rogers with Chapman IS art teacher Mary Jo Mulvey.

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