



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2021

ADVOCATE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Newton County School System's Board of Education supports The Georgia Vision Project as the vehicle to raise awareness, address issues, and enhance public education in the state of Georgia.

www.visionforpubliced.org

LOCAL BOARD AUTHORITY

The board supports the authority of local boards of education to manage and control the operation of local public schools, opposing any legislation that attempts to override the constitutional authority of locally-elected boards to make educational decisions for their communities.

PROGRAM FUNDING

The board supports the complete funding of public education according to the state's current public education funding formula. The board further supports a fair and equitable state funding formula for public education in which the unique needs of each district are recognized and addressed. The board supports a funding formula that keeps pace with inflation, supports the current cost of maintenance, fully funds student transportation, preserves the state salary schedule and the funding structure that recognizes training and experience, sustains the current Teacher Retirement System, and provides equalization funds to districts in which the tax digest is low.

The board supports a funding formula that includes one School Resource Officer (SRO) and one mental health professional at every school.

The board opposes using public funds for private education in the form of vouchers, tax credits, and any other legislation that seeks to reduce state funding of public schools. The diverting of funds from public schools results in shortened calendars for students and staff, increased class sizes, a reduction in staff, and fewer programs and material resources for our public schools.

The board supports the continuation of full funding for the mid-term adjustment given to school districts experiencing student growth.



POLICY AND IMPACT

The board supports requiring a clear, timely, and complete description of the potential impact of state education legislation on the fiscal budget, operations, and programs of local schools and school districts.

For education legislation that creates new mandates or programs for school systems, the board supports a delay implementation of such legislation for a minimum of one year, thereby allowing school systems enough time to adjust budgets, implement programs, and reduce costs.

The board supports legislation that ensures reliable, high-speed Internet access for all communities whether rural, suburban, or urban.

Provide pandemic funding relief by holding school systems harmless for temporary drops in enrollment in FTE reported during the FY21 school year for the purposes of determining FY22 and FY23 QBE funding allotments.



FEDERAL LEGISLATION

The board urges Congress to eliminate unnecessary mandates and regulations on schools. The board also supports requiring a clear and complete description of the potential impact of education legislation on the fiscal budget, operations, and programs of local schools and school districts. The board also supports a fair and equitable distribution of federal funds that supports a well-rounded education, a comprehensive safe and healthy student program, and the effective use of technology.



TEACHING AND LEARNING

The board supports a universally fair, consistent, and equitable system of evaluation for all teachers, leaders, and contributing professionals that is based upon valid, reliable, and effective measures. The board supports the reduction of the number of state required assessments to the federal minimum.

The board supports the employment of retired teachers, without impact to their Teacher Retirement System benefits, to assist with teacher shortages.

The board supports a fair and consistent accountability system that utilizes a growth/progress model for student achievement using multiple measures for student and teacher performance. The accountability system must recognize the uniqueness of each school system (i.e. special populations, socioeconomics).

The board supports rigorous standards and assessments that can be compared nationally and internationally. The board supports providing additional support and professional development for mandated curricular changes as well as additional funding to support changes in learning resources required for mandated changes.

The board supports the advancement of technology for schools and students. Funding must be provided for instructional technology equipment, technology infrastructure, individual student devices, mobile hotspots to enable and ensure student/staff Internet connectivity, and the integration of technology in every classroom.