



Newton County BOE Legislative Priorities 2019

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 opposes using public funds for private education in the form of vouchers, tax credits, and all 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 funding of the state's employee health benefits program so as to provide state employees with flexible plan options. Since **January 2011**, insurance costs have increased more than **359%** for classified (non-teaching) employees.

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.

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. The board supports the flexibility provided in Senate Bill 364 which reduces the number of state-required assessments, the requirement of online testing, and allows for the development of a pilot model of assessment. The board supports the use of Iowa Assessments for pre and post-test measures in lieu of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade Assessments (in grades three-eight.)

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). To that end, the board supports the consolidation of the Governor's Office of Student Achievement and the Georgia Department of Education so as to streamline processes and procedures related to achievement, school progress, and reporting of results to the public.

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, infrastructure, individual student devices, and the integration of technology in every classroom.