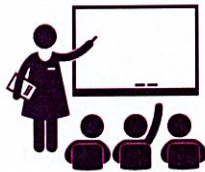


CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

2024 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Introduction: The Chatham County Schools Board of Education is committed to advancing the quality of public education in our community. The following legislative priorities outline key areas of focus for collaboration and discussion with the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, local elected officials, and our local and regional delegation to the NC General Assembly. These priorities aim to address critical issues and enhance the overall educational experience for our students.



1. Retaining Top Talent & Improving Working Conditions: Address the shortage of full-time teachers by providing competitive salaries, prioritizing experienced teachers, and investing in initiatives to enhance teacher retention.

Priorities:

- Ensure competitive market salaries for teachers to attract and retain talent.
- Restore master's pay and provide incentive pay for mentor teachers.
- Increase the local supplement to support teacher workload, ensure quality of service and to ensure continued high levels of student performance.



2. School Safety: Enhance safety in schools by securing funding to support enhanced security features in our schools, to include upgrading cameras and other preventive measures, school resource officer (SRO) in every school and improving and increasing access to mental health support personnel.

Priorities:

- Secure increased state funding for SROs to ensure a safe environment.
- Provide higher salaries for mental health support personnel to address the growing student mental health needs.



3. Accountability System Reform: Improve the school grading formula to better reflect overall school quality and student performance, along with modifying the definition of low-performing schools.

Priorities:

- Revise the school grading formula to provide a more accurate assessment.
- Modify the definition of low-performing schools to better reflect school success.



4. Student-Centered Calendar: Allow more local authority for school districts to create calendars that align with community colleges and universities, improving opportunities for students.

Priorities:

- Grant increased local authority for school calendars to better meet the needs of local communities.
- Align second-semester schedules with higher education to enhance student outcomes.

5. Enhancing Employee Compensation and Benefits: Improve compensation and benefits for all school employees, with targeted increases for critical shortage areas and reforms to the principal pay plan.



Priorities:

- Ensure the local supplement remains ranked in the top 10 in the state and in the top 5 in the region.
- Target increases for critical shortage areas to attract and retain skilled professionals.
- Implement reforms to the principal pay plan and benefits to provide stability and recognize exceptional performance.

6. Adequate & Equitable Resources: Ensure equitable distribution of resources, focusing on key allotments for student learning and providing additional state support for children with disabilities.



Priorities:

- Support key allotments focused on student learning to enhance educational opportunities.
- Provide additional state support for children with disabilities to address differentiated costs and ensure inclusivity.

7. Student Health & Well-Being: Strengthen student mental health support through improved staff ratios and permanent funding for the School Safety Grant Program.



Priorities:

- Create a School Mental Health Support Personnel Allotment to enhance support ratios.
- Secure permanent funding for the School Safety Grant Program to ensure ongoing safety measures.
- Identify funding sources at the local, regional, and state levels to increase supports for the mental well-being and Social and Emotional support of students, staff, and families.

8. Infrastructure and Funding Support for Population Growth: Address the impact of population growth resulting from recent business announcements (VinFast, Wolfspeed, Toyota, FedEx, Coca Cola) and housing expansion in Chatham Park, and other proposed residential growth in the next 3-5 years. This will impact school enrollment growth, necessitating additional new school facilities, as well as maintenance of existing school facilities.



Priorities:

- Secure infrastructure supports to accommodate the influx of students from business and housing expansion.
- Secure funding for new school facilities and maintenance to ensure readiness for population growth.
- Pursue innovative strategies to increase the access and availability of affordable housing to encourage and entice school district employees to live, work, and raise their families in Chatham County.

These consolidated priorities represent our commitment to comprehensive improvements in Chatham County's public education system. We look forward to collaborative efforts with the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, local elected officials, and our local and regional delegation to the NC General Assembly to achieve these goals for the benefit of our students and community.