



## Newton County Schools

### 2011 Legislative Positions

#### I. GOVERNANCE OF EDUCATION

- The Newton County Board of Education supports legislation calling for the non-partisan election of local school board members.

#### II. LOCAL BOARD AUTHORITY

- The Newton County Board of Education supports the concept that curriculum determination is the domain of state and local boards of education. Thus, NCBOE encourages the General Assembly to resist legislative attempts to mandate curriculum.

#### III. CAPITAL OUTLAY

- The Newton County Board of Education supports the continuance of state dollars for capital outlay projects for school construction at the \$200 million level; further NCBOE supports the funding of exceptional growth needs at the \$150 million level.
- The Newton County Board of Education urges the State Department of Education, when establishing facility guidelines/regulations which include formulas, to recognize Pre-K as part of facility needs.

#### IV. CHARTER SCHOOLS

- The Newton County Board of Education opposes the existence and actions of the Commission on Charter Schools (CCS). NCBOE believes that the CCS's authority and actions are in conflict with the constitutional authority of local boards of education to make decisions regarding approval or rejection of charter applicants and subsequent financial support of a charter school to be located in its own county.

#### V. OPTING OUT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS USING PUBLIC FUNDS

- The Newton County Board of Education is opposed to vouchers, tuition tax credits, or scholarships whose purpose is to allocate public funds to private schools or home study.

#### VI. PERSONNEL

- The Newton County Board of Education supports the requirement of a satisfactory annual written evaluation for all professional certificated personnel as a condition of eligibility for step increases on the state minimum salary schedule.

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**VII. PROGRAM FUNDING**

- The Newton County Board of Education urges the General Assembly to sufficiently fund the actual costs of textbooks, including texts and instructional materials on-line and/or other electronic forms.
- The Newton County Board of Education supports legislative proposals which appropriate funds needed for a quality basic education on weighted FTE student cost basis.
- The Newton County Board of Education believes that any program, project, or requirement mandated by state government should be funded by the state in such a manner that operation or implementation of the mandate does not impose financial or other burdens on local school systems.
- The Newton County Board of Education urges the General Assembly to increase the funding for maintenance and operation and transportation. There now exists a drastic difference in the level of state funding for these areas and their actual costs, causing increases in local property taxes as the only source local boards have for making up the difference.

**VIII. TAX REFORM, POLICY AND IMPACT**

- The Newton County Board of Education supports the General Assembly's developing a state tax policy which addresses the continued erosion of the State Revenue Base. Until such measures are developed, NCBOE supports a moratorium on changes in taxes which reduce the state revenue base and does not consider the state's ability to adequately fund public education and other state government operations.

**IX. CURRICULUM/ACHIEVEMENT**

- The Newton County Board of Education, like the Georgia School Boards Association, supports legislative initiatives to make improving student academic achievement the top priority of state education policy. This should be done in concert with the State Board of Education, State Superintendent, and members of Georgia's local education communities.
- The Newton County Board of Education urges the General Assembly to fund at-risk and remedial summer school programs commensurate with the number of students scoring below grade level as defined by the Office of Student Achievement and those not passing the high school graduation test.

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**X. STUDENT SAFETY**

- **The Newton County Board of Education urges the General Assembly to provide new state funds, through the funding formula, to enhance student safety of the school environment by equipping each classroom with communication equipment that provides the ability to have immediate voice communication between teachers and school administrators.**

**XI. FEDERAL ISSUES**

- **The Newton County Board of Education urges that the Georgia Department of Education’s rules and regulations governing the use of federal funds not be stricter than federal guidelines so long as their use results in benefits for eligible children.**
- **The Newton County Board of Education urges the Georgia Department of Education to work in concert with federal education officials and members of Congress to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act [known to many as No-Child-Left-Behind] so as to replace the current all-or-nothing determination of “Adequate Yearly Progress” by a more appropriate growth model that, among other things, takes into account the IEPs of individual special education students rather than one-size-testing-fits-all.**
- **The Newton County Board of Education urges the Georgia Department of Education to work in concert with federal education officials and members of Congress to fund Special Education at the 40% level as mandated by federal law.**