



## SCHOOL BOARD LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

### FUND 100% OF STATE MANDATES AND PROVIDE K-12 BASIC AID ABOVE THE FY 2018 LEVEL

- Schools cannot maintain the status quo, much less achieve improvement, if basic funding is not increased. The state should increase Standards of Quality (SOQ) funding, coming from general fund revenues, appropriated to elementary and secondary education. Full funding of the SOQ, without policy modifications to the formula, should be the goal. The state budget overall grew by 8%, while state K-12 funding grew by only 4%. ***The General Assembly should heed the conclusions in the annual JLARC report on state K-12 funding.***
- Personnel expenses make up a major portion of our school division costs (from 83% to 87%); retraction of the FY 2017 teacher pay raise funding by the state reflected poorly upon our General Assembly. Failure to fund realistic raises for teachers means they fall further and further behind the inflation rate. ***The General Assembly should demonstrate the value of current educators and enable our school division to attract and retain talented educators by enabling school divisions to offer adequate pay raises and attractive salaries to new employees.***
- The General Assembly's decision to accelerate the VRS payment plan while at the same time continuing to under-fund K-12 education has placed additional stress upon both local school divisions and the localities that are being forced to make-up for the state's failure to meet its obligations. ***The General Assembly should support the VRS Board of Trustees recent certification of the employer contribution rate of 15.68% for the teacher plan for the 2018-2020 biennium budget.***
- Educational technology is an important element of cost-effective, quality public education. It is essential to enabling our graduates to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global workforce. Bringing broadband access to all schools is an investment in our students, our economy, and Virginia's global competitiveness; therefore, increased state funding for technology, particularly in rural and underserved areas, is essential.
- Oppose any new "unfunded mandates." ***If it is a new requirement and additional funding to our division is not included, it is an unfunded mandate.*** We oppose legislation requiring local school divisions to manage "personal education savings accounts" due to the excessive burden this would place upon our division staff.

### PRESERVE LOCAL CONTROL OF OUR SCHOOLS

- Support legislative efforts that maintain local control of local schools. The ongoing trend of state K-12 schools funding representing a decreasing share of total K-12 educational costs is paradoxical when viewed against the trend towards increased state mandates and attempts to centralize control at the state level. ***The General Assembly needs to leave discipline under the control of local school boards—don't tie our hands when it comes to making decisions about the safety of our children and quality of the learning environment in our schools.***

### BASE THE COMPOSITE INDEX FORMULA ON A LOCALITY'S TRUE ABILITY TO PAY FOR K-12 EDUCATION

- ***Include allowance for the impact of Land Use upon a locality's taxable real estate property value.***
- Replace total adjusted gross income with median adjusted gross income; so that a small number of very wealthy residents does not skew the current index such that it does not accurately reflect the actual local income level.
- ***Add a factor for percentage of enrolled students eligible for free/reduced lunch;*** this is a fair indicator of the local poverty level and will improve the accuracy of the index for both large urban and rural areas.

APPROVED by the RCPS SCHOOL BOARD on November 7, 2017