



The Douglas County Board of Education supports the following legislative priorities:

ISSUE: *Against the backdrop of the most recent incidences of violence in our country's schools, the presence of trained school resource officers in each school in our state is needed more than ever before. Lack of funding for personnel and training can often mean that schools do not have school resource officers or must share officers among multiple schools, resulting in a lack of immediate response to potential acts of violence.*

ANSWER: The Georgia Legislature should consider appropriating funds for the use of salary, benefits, and training of one school resource officer per school in each district.

ISSUE: *Each year, our school system is able to predict which schools will perform well on the CCRPI based on the prior year's performance. For example, in 2018 our elementary schools performed well. We predicted that our elementary CCRPI scores would fall for 2019, not because of a change in leadership or instruction, but because of the way the CCRPI Closing the Gap component is calculated. In the same way, we predicted that our high schools would perform well on the CCRPI for 2019 because of their relatively low 2018 scores, even though the student performance was approximately the same.*

ANSWER: Reconfigure the way the CCRPI is calculated so that it is a reflection of the current year's performance in lieu of a projected performance based upon 2017 data.

ISSUE: *It is imperative that our state maintains incentives that keep our teachers in the education profession. While teacher salaries may never be competitive with what an educator might receive in the private sector, teachers do appreciate that their financial sacrifices are recognized and rewarded with a secure retirement.*

ANSWER: Georgia's Teacher Retirement System (TRS) is vitally important to ensuring that talented teachers stay in the profession. Our legislature should remain steadfast in funding a robust TRS, which not only honors the promises made to the previous generation's educators but also encourages the leaders of tomorrow to enter and remain in the field of education.

ISSUE: *For a top quality school system, we must have the tools to attract and maintain non-certified personnel who work in the areas of maintenance and transportation. Currently, these groups of employees are not eligible to participate in Georgia's Teacher Retirement System (TRS). The retirement plan for these employees, Public School Employees Retirement System (PSERS), is significantly inferior to TRS. All employees in public education deserve a defined pension plan that offers a guaranteed minimum retirement.*

ANSWER: The Georgia Legislature should offer TRS benefits to all permanent employees in public education in the state.

ISSUE: *School psychologists, social workers, and counselors provide critical support for students in our schools. These mental health professionals support our teachers and aid students who are struggling emotionally or are troubled. Giving these students the proper support early can prevent tragic events later and make all of our students and staff safer.*

ANSWER: The state should provide funding to increase the ratio of mental health professionals to students.
