

Allegheny County Public Schools

2016 – 17

Legislative Priorities

Allegheny County Public Schools (ACPS) supports the full funding of all mandates passed by the General Assembly. The partial funding or absence of funding for these mandates results in an added burden on local school divisions, local governments, and communities.

ACPS recognizes that the Support Position Cap has eliminated hundreds of millions of dollars in state funding and reduced the ability of local school divisions to meet the changing needs of their students and requirements from the State. ACPS supports the State Board's request that the SOQ Support Position Cap be removed.

While ACPS appreciates and overall supports the SOQ staffing changes recommended by the State Board, these changes must be accompanied by appropriate state funding in addition to staffing flexibility if qualified applicants cannot be found to fill these added positions. Until these conditions are met and the Support Position Cap removed, ACPS opposes the State Board's recommendation that the Class Size and Staffing Waivers contained in the Appropriations Act be eliminated.

ACPS requests that the Virginia Department of Education provide a cost estimate to local school divisions of any changes made to the Standards of Accreditation prior to their approval.

ACPS supports the General Assembly returning to the 2019-2020 biennium for full funding of the VRS Board of Trustees' recommended rate.

ACPS supports the work of the State Board of Education in identifying and implementing a revised balanced assessment and accountability model. This model must address issues of equity between both individual schools and school divisions based upon individual community needs and the diversity of student populations.

ACPS recognizes that there is a need to provide School Divisions with flexibility in the time, cost and staffing that it takes to come into compliance with parts of the new model being recommended by the State Board of Education. (i.e. - graduation and staffing requirements).

ACPS supports the Virginia Department of Education moving forward with the development of an appropriate alternative for English language learners to be used as part of the school accreditation process.

ACPS opposes any acceleration of the timeline to remove the VGLA for use with English language learners in determining school accreditation that is in advance of the date required by provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

ACPS supports the flexibility to use Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) Technology grants to meet the needs of its students and community as we strive to provide our students with 21st Century skills. The current system does not provide the flexibility needed to reach that goal.

ACPS requests that the United States Department of Education and the Virginia Department of Education create a fair and equitable process to resolve issues with the United States Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and the Virginia Department of Special Education and Student Services. The current process is extremely costly and school divisions have no alternative paths to resolve issues.