

WHAT ARE YOUR LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

PAGE Wants To Hear From You...

PAGE is a democratically run association, relying on input from its members at the local level. Please review PAGE's Tentative Legislative Priorities that were discussed at the 2007 Summer Conference. The legislative priorities will be finalized at the Fall Conference. PAGE lobbyists will work for these priorities at the 2008 Georgia General Assembly.

Please rate each item from 1 (lowest) to 4 (highest) on the ballot below and return to the PAGE office by Oct. 26, 2007.

1 - unimportant **2** - could be considered **3** - important **4** - very important

I. Student Learning & Achievement

Through the state funding formula, provide the following:

___A. Fully implement the lower pupil-teacher ratio in grades K-8 as mandated by current Georgia law by providing for the required teachers and permanent facilities.

___B. Implement the lower pupil teacher ratio in grades 9-12 as required by the A+ Education Act of 2000.

___C. Enable districts to employ paraprofessionals in grades 1-8 for the purpose of enhancing the academic program, permitting teachers to focus on the instructional needs of individual students.

___D. Provide students with art, music and physical education teachers in grades K-8 at the rate of at least one of each for every 345 students (five-year phase-in).

___E. Preserve the middle school program by allowing for a curriculum that includes the core subjects but also provides for music, the arts, physical education and connections.

___F. Fully implement and fund the Early Intervention Program to include all instructional models.

II. Attendance & Student Services for All Students

Through the state funding formula, provide the following:

___A. At least one school counselor for every 400 students in grades K-8, regardless of funding category, mandating that 100 percent of these funds be spent on school counselors.

___B. At least one school social worker for every 1,200 students, regardless of funding category, mandating that 100 percent of these funds be spent on school social workers.

___C. At least one school psychologist for every 1,200 students, regardless of funding category, mandating that 100 percent of these funds be spent on school psychologists.

___D. Expand the alternative education program to include grades K-5.

___E. Include student support services in the definition of direct classroom expenditures under the 65 percent spending mandate.

___F. One full-time nurse at every school.

III. Attracting & Retaining Quality Educators

___A. Improve state support of the State Health Benefit Plan to reduce the rate of premium increase and enhance benefits.

___B. Allow educator input in the development and operation of the State Health Benefit Plan.

___C. Ensure that the salaries of Georgia certified educators reach and remain above the national average and lead the Southeast by increasing the state base scale by six percent.

___D. Add steps to the State Salary Schedule to extend salary steps through 30 years.

___E. Continue enhancement of salaries and retirement benefits of educational support personnel in the Public School Employees Retirement System.

___F. Provide for optional retirement with full benefits after completing 25 years of creditable service in the Georgia Teacher Retirement System (five-year phase-in).

___G. Increase the Georgia Teacher Retirement System multiplier from 2 percent to 2.5 percent (five-year phase-in).

IV. Professional Learning

___A. Provide program expansion and state support for the Teacher Support Specialist and mentor teacher programs.

___B. Make the National Board salary incentive program available to certified counselors, audiologists, social workers and school psychologists.

___C. Provide additional support for professional learning and leadership opportunities for educators.

PAGE POSITIONS (Do Not Rate)

Support

- The National Board Certification Program, including funding supplements for educators, in all Georgia schools, regardless of Needs Improvement status
- Utilizing alternative sources of funding for public education
- Maintaining a state salary scale for certificated personnel
- Applying the Fair Dismissal Act to all educators
- Using retired teachers to alleviate Georgia's teacher shortage
- Transferring full experience from one school system to another for all personnel
- Increase funding for technology (hardware and software)

Oppose

- Using Georgia lottery proceeds to supplant existing resources for educational purposes and programs
- Collective bargaining, legalized meet and confer, legalized permissive professional negotiations, binding arbitration, strikes, sick-outs, school closings and other militant tactics
- Diverting K-12 public-school tax dollars to private schools
- Merging the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia with the Employees Retirement System of Georgia
- Investing Teachers Retirement System funds or Employees Retirement System funds into venture capital

Please review and complete this form, and fax to the PAGE office at (770) 216-8589 or (478) 301-5013, or submit it electronically at www.pageinc.org.