

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Draft 2017 Legislative Agenda

- **Maintain or Increase Funding for Elementary & Secondary Education in the Context of State Tax Reform**
JCPS supports comprehensive tax reform that diversifies and stabilizes revenue streams for the Commonwealth, that encourages robust economic growth, and that is fair and equitable, including for poor and working families. As changes to the tax structure are being contemplated, the General Assembly should ensure that the revenue generated is sufficient for elementary and secondary education funding to be maintained or increased particularly in light of rising costs and relatively flat funding for education.

- **Continue Efforts to address KTRS & CERS Unfunded Liability and to Increase Pension System Transparency**
JCPS recognizes and supports recent efforts of the General Assembly and the Governor to increase transparency and address the problem of the unfunded liabilities of the Kentucky Teachers Retirement System (KTRS), the County Employees Retirement System (CERS), and other parts of the state pension system. JCPS supports a continuation of that work, and implementation of a sustainable plan to fund and maintain the KTRS and the CERS on an actuarially sound basis.

- **Develop and Implement Innovative Assessment & Accountability Models**
In the context of the development of a new state assessment and accountability system, aligned with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, JCPS supports legislation to permit the development and piloting of innovative alternative assessment and accountability models to reduce the time devoted to statewide testing, and that measure student content mastery, critical thinking, and the capacities and dispositions necessary for success in life.

- **Legislation Regarding Charter Schools**
If the General Assembly acts to implement charter schools in Kentucky, JCPS believes that the legislation should:
 - Establish local school districts as the charter authorizers;
 - Permit only independent, non-profit entities to manage charter schools;
 - Create a pilot program, limiting the initial number of charter schools that can be authorized;
 - Require compliance with Kentucky Open Meetings and Open Records laws;
 - Include protections against financial mismanagement, fraud, and abuse;
 - Require charter school board members to complete the training required of district school board members;
 - Require charter school curricula created using public funds to be publicly available, not proprietary;
 - Require the student demographics (e.g. race, income, educational attainment) be reflective of the district within which the charter school resides;
 - Prorate funding for charter schools when a student leaves prior to the end of a school year; and
 - Incorporate national research- and evidence-based best practices developed through the experiences of states with charter schools.

- **“Red Tape” Reduction**

JCPS supports efforts by the Governor and the General Assembly to reduce or eliminate unnecessary and burdensome regulatory and statutory requirements on school districts, and to streamline required processes and procedures to increase effectiveness and efficiency, while maintaining appropriate oversight and controls on the management of schools and districts.

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Draft 2017 Legislative Policy Positions

■ **Oppose Use of Public Funds for Non-Public Schools**

JCPS endorses legislation that enhances and promotes public education, and opposes the use of public dollars to support programs that fund non-public schools, such as vouchers or tuition tax credits.

■ **Reform CERS State Pension Statutes that Address “Pension Spiking”**

JCPS supports legislation that maintains statutory provisions for the County Employees Retirement System (CERS) to prohibit intentional “pension spiking” and eliminates the penalty paid by districts when a pre-retirement increase in compensation is legitimate, and is not an attempt to inappropriately inflate retirement benefits.

■ **Retain Local Control of the School Calendar**

JCPS supports the position of the Kentucky School Boards Association to support continued local decision making regarding school calendars, and opposes any legislation that would take away community-by-community flexibility on issues of start dates, breaks in the school year, and other issues tied to the academic calendar.

■ **Permit a School District to Receive Daily Tax Receipts (Less Fee) from the Tax Collector**

JCPS supports legislation to amend KRS 160.510 to permit a district board of education, if it chooses, to receive tax receipts (less collection fee) on a daily basis from the tax collector, rather than on a once per month basis.

■ **Permit a Board of Education to Meet in Closed Session to Discuss Terms of a Superintendent’s Contract**

JCPS supports legislation to amend the Open Meetings statutes to permit a local board of education to meet in closed session to discuss the terms of a superintendent’s contract.