

JEFFERSON COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Draft 2018 Legislative Talking Points

Maintain 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.
- The General Assembly should ensure that funding for elementary and secondary education is maintained, particularly in light of rising costs, increased mandatory district pension obligations and relatively flat funding for education in recent years.
- JCPS supports maintaining funding for:
 - Full funding of SEEK;
 - Early Childhood Education;
 - Grant programs, including gifted and talented, Flexible Focus programs (extended school services, professional development, textbooks, safe schools, and preschool); and
 - Funds to support students with a history of adverse childhood experiences or other barriers to learning;
- JCPS also supports:
 - A statutory change to increase the factors used in determining per-pupil SEEK add-ons for students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, students receiving Exceptional Child Education (ECE) services and students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP); and
 - Increased funding for transportation.

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.
- The Commonwealth is faced with significant fiscal challenges – now is not the time to create a major new program that would take millions of dollars from the state General Fund.
- Non-public schools are not accountable to state achievement standards – if private schools are funded with public money, they should be expected to meet the standards established for public schools
- Non-public schools frequently have entrance criteria and can exclude students for a variety of reasons. Public school districts, funded with public dollars, are required to serve every student within their district.
- Moving students from public to private schools harm school districts because they cannot reduce their fixed facilities and transportation costs in proportion to the number of students who leave.
- A tuition tax credit program that allows scholarship recipients to attend private religious schools, may violate the provisions of the Kentucky Constitution that prohibits the use of public funds to “be used by, or in aid of, any church, sectarian, or denominational school.”

Continue Efforts to address KTRS & CERS Unfunded Liability and Increase Pension System Transparency

- Hardworking teachers and employees who empower and inspire our children every day deserve the support of the General Assembly.
- Promises made to our current employees and retirees should be honored.
- JCPS recognizes and supports efforts of the General Assembly and the Governor to increase transparency and address the problem of the unfunded liabilities of KTRS, CERS, and other parts of the state pension system.
- JCPS supports the implementation of a sustainable plan to fund and maintain KTRS and the CERS for the long-term.

Student Assignment

- JCPS is focused on improving school culture, climate, student learning, and [organizational coherence](#).
- The district acknowledges the challenges ahead, including maintaining efficient transportation, diversity and equity in our classrooms, and ensuring facilities have adequate space to enable safe and conducive learning environments for all students.
- JCPS supports keeping the responsibility for student assignment with local school boards, who understand the needs and concerns of their families and communities.
- We look forward to continued discussion with the legislature on this issue.

Essential Skills Legislation

- JCPS strongly supports Essential Skills legislation that directs the development and implementation of standards, assessments, and curricula designed to provide students with the opportunity to develop and demonstrate essential life and workforce skills such as adaptability, diligence, initiative, reliability, and collaboration.
- This aligns very closely with JCPS Vision 2020's goal of Deeper Learning, which encompasses both academic content mastery and "the development of the capacities and dispositions necessary for success in college, career, community, and life."
- A critical component of the Academies of Louisville model, being implemented in 11 JCPS high schools, is to impart to students essential skills that will help them succeed and thrive after graduation.
- The legislation should require KDE to establish state standards and criteria for attainment of essential skills, and instructional and curricular resources, and professional development, while permitting curriculum development to occur on the local level (as is the case for all other instructional areas).
- The legislation should be sufficiently flexible to permit schools and districts incorporate essential skills training across content areas.
- The legislation should be developed in close consultation with business leaders, economic development professionals, and school and district curriculum specialists.