



# **Hanover County Public Schools Legislative Agenda 2013**

## **Introduction**

The School Board's *Legislative Agenda 2013* is adopted prior to the opening session of the Virginia General Assembly in January 2013. Therefore, the legislative program is intended to reflect the sentiment of the Board on matters that could be addressed by the legislators, or those issues that recur from time to time on the General Assembly's agenda. As important legislative issues arise before or during the session of the Virginia General Assembly, the School Board may amend its legislative program or determine its position on particular bills.

The Board's primary avenue of affecting legislation and communicating its concern or support is through personal contact with Hanover County's representatives in the Virginia General Assembly – Delegate John Cox, Delegate Chris Peace, Senator Ryan McDougle, Senator Donald McEachin, and Senator Walter Stosch. A strong working relationship, based on cooperation and mutual respect, has been demonstrated among these legislators and the School Board. The Board recognizes the important work of the General Assembly and is keenly aware of its effect on education in Hanover County and our Commonwealth.

Also, the Hanover County School Board recommends its legislative positions and recommendations on several important current or recurring topics on the national scene. The United States Congress adopts legislation of enormous impact and scope directly affecting education in Virginia and Hanover County. Therefore, the School Board deems it appropriate to communicate its local perspectives on certain issues of national interest to Senator Mark Warner, Senator-elect Tim Kaine, and Congressman Eric Cantor. The Board expresses its appreciation to these honored public servants for their personal commitment, dedication, and service to our country.

## **HANOVER COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**

Ann F. Hagan Gladstone, Chairman  
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Earl J. Hunter, Jr.  
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Jamelle S. Wilson, Superintendent of Schools

## SECTION 1: STATE EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

### The Hanover County School Board:

- **Urges the Virginia General Assembly to fully fund the cost of implementing the Standards of Quality (SOQ) in the second year of the current biennium (2012-2014).** These costs should reflect the actual operating realities of local school divisions, including instructional and support costs.
- **Opposes tuition assistance/voucher programs for private schools.** Money that is used to fund these programs, whether it is in the form of lost tax revenue or direct general fund appropriations, would be more appropriately and better spent on public education.
- **Urges state to increase teacher salaries.** Competitive wages support and enhance recruiting and retaining the best teachers for Hanover County students. The Board also recognizes the positions Delegates John Cox and Chris Peace and Senators Donald McEachin and Ryan McDougale have taken that teacher pay in Virginia reflect the regional average, while aspiring to achieve teacher pay which is more reflective of a national average. Currently, Virginia's teacher salary is nearly \$5,200 or 9% below the national average for teachers. The Board urges the state to increase funding in support of competitive teacher salaries. Additionally, the Board encourages the Virginia General Assembly to consider establishing July 1 as the date from which all future pay increases would be calculated for teachers and support staff (to coincide with each locality's fiscal year).
- **Supports the current provisions in state laws that limit the categories of students whose parents do not reside in Hanover and for whom Hanover is mandated to provide free public education.**

## SECTION II: NATIONAL EDUCATION ISSUES

### The Hanover County School Board:

- **Supports the goals of the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).** The National School Boards Association has adopted resolutions calling for the "reauthorization of ESEA and the need for targeted federal investments in public education to promote student achievement... Further, the NSBA urged Congress to act now and reauthorize ESEA to replace the flawed accountability requirement in No Child Left Behind."
- **Urges the federal government to fully fund the additional costs and requirements accruing to local school divisions for the implementation of federal accountability.**
- **Supports efforts of the State Board of Education and Virginia General Assembly to secure approval of the state's accountability systems to meet current federal accountability requirements.**
- **Urges the federal government to fully fund IDEIA 2004.** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975 indicated that the federal government would fund 40 percent of the cost of educating children with disabilities. Approximately 88 percent of the funding for special education comes from local and state taxpayer dollars. The United States Congress funded an estimated 12 percent of special education costs – less than 40% of its obligation.

Special education costs vary considerably on a case by case basis. In Hanover's most recent excess cost report, the average annual cost to educate a non-special education student was \$ 7,512; the average cost to educate a special education student in the same year was \$14,055 — an additional amount of \$6,540 per pupil to meet special education needs.