2020 Legislative Positions

- **UNFUNDED STATE MANDATES**
  Supports that the General Assembly determine the financial impacts of legislation on local school districts and fully compensate school districts for all state directed mandates. When the Commonwealth considers a program important enough to mandate, it should consider the mandate important enough to fund.

- **COST OF COMPETING**
  Supports the continued use of the Cost of Competing factor, including the restoration of funds for the inclusion of all support staff, in the reimbursement formula for Planning District Eight.

- **SUPPORTS DUAL ENROLLMENT**
  Opposes any legislation or regulatory actions that makes dual enrollment courses less accessible to students through the implementation of a statewide uniform tuition rate and any other tuition proposal that does not appropriately factor the significant indirect costs borne by school divisions (facilities, teachers, materials, professional development, etc.) to offer dual enrollment opportunities for their students.

- **SUPPORTS OVERHAULING THE STATE PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING MODEL**
  The Standards of Quality (SOQ) used to calculate the State’s share of public education costs is inadequate. This is evidenced by the fact that EVERY school division in the Commonwealth exceeds most of the standards and has done so for many years. Other necessary costs associated with providing a quality public education are not even addressed in the SOQ and therefore not state funded at all. As a result, the current state public education funding model does not reflect the true cost of the state’s obligation to provide a public education. The Commonwealth has not fully funded its share of the true cost of public education in decades. As a result, local governments increasingly bear an ever-growing proportion of public education costs. The General Assembly should direct the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) to review the true costs of public education, the State’s responsibility for funding those costs and the methodology used for distributing State public education funds.

- **SOQ RE-BENCHMARKING**
  Supports full funding for the cost of the biennial SOQ funding re-benchmarking as adopted by the State Board of Education.

- **FULLY FUND THE NEW SCHOOL COUNSELOR SOQ**
  Supports full funding of the SOQ requirement for school counselors as recommended by the American School Counselors Association (ASCA), which is 1 school counselor per 250 students. The 2019 General Assembly passed Senate Bill 1406, which changed the name of guidance counselors to school counselors and required school boards to employ school counselors in accordance with new ratios, illustrated below (SB1406). The approved Virginia Budget Bill, House Bill 30, however, overrode the established ratios of SB 1406 and included only partial funding of the positions called for in the new SOQ. The HB 30 (Budget) ratios are effective with the 2019-2020 school year. To fully fund the SOQ as the ASCA recommends would require 1 school counselor per 250 students, regardless of grade. The Board supports changing the SOQ to this ratio, with full state funding provided for the new mandate. If the SOQ is not fully funded at the level recommended by the ASCA, the Board supports full funding of the SOQ for school counselors as enacted by the 2019 General Assembly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNSELOR TO STUDENT RATIO</th>
<th>SB 1406</th>
<th>HB 30 (Budget)</th>
<th>ASCA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>1 to 375</td>
<td>1 to 455</td>
<td>1 to 250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>1 to 325</td>
<td>1 to 370</td>
<td>1 to 250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>1 to 300</td>
<td>1 to 325</td>
<td>1 to 250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OUR MISSION**
Empowering all students to make meaningful contributions to the world

**CORE BELIEFS**
1. A culture of continuous improvement drives the fulfillment of our mission
2. Strong partnerships with families and our community enhance our excellence
3. An inclusive, safe, caring, and challenging learning environment serves as the foundation for student growth
4. Transparency and good stewardship of resources strengthen public trust and support

**STRATEGIC GOALS**
1. Develop knowledgeable critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors
2. Cultivate a high-performing team of professionals focused on our mission and goals
3. Deliver effective and efficient support for student success
In June 2015, the Loudoun County School Board adopted a Strategic Framework for empowering students to make meaningful contributions to the world. Since then, Loudoun County Public Schools has taken strategic actions to develop graduates who are not only knowledgeable, but are also critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, creators, and contributors.

Our students need the support of Virginia’s lawmakers. The School Board’s 2020 Legislative Program is aimed at precise sections of existing laws and at potential laws relating to instruction, funding, assessment and accountability, staffing, developing new schools, and governance that are vital to the success of its mission.

**SCHOOL SAFETY AND STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH**
 Supports the following package of items that target school safety and security by focusing on student mental health and the physical security of school facilities;
- Modifying the SOQ support position cap by removing school health and behavioral positions, including school nurses and psychologists, and social workers from the cap on funding;
- Legislative changes that authorize the school board to designate all school board owned or leased property as a gun-free zone; and
- Legislative changes at the state and national level to shift voting activities from weekdays to weekends in order to minimize interaction between the voting general public and public-school students to enhance school safety and safeguard the operational effectiveness of public schools in Loudoun County and throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**SCHOOL DIVISIONS OF INNOVATION – ENHANCED ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY**
 Supports legislation passed in 2017 which directs the Virginia Board of Education to authorize School Divisions of Innovation (SDIs), with demonstrated capacity and interest, to enhance assessment and accountability of student learning by replacing select SOL exams at designated schools (elementary and middle school science, Virginia Studies, and Civics and Economics) with locally scored and externally validated performance assessments.

**RETAIN UNSPENT APPROPRIATIONS**
 Supports legislative changes allowing local school boards to retain any unspent appropriations in a school board’s operating budget from one fiscal year to the operating budget of the following fiscal year.

**EFFICIENCY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
 Supports legislative changes to specifically permit school board members to participate in transactions (e.g. budget, benefits, personnel policies and related discussions) when school board’s immediate family members are employed by the school board and are in a group of three or more persons to be affected by the transaction and the required public disclosures required by subsection H of Section 2.2-3115 shall be fully satisfied by listing school board immediate family members employment in the annual financial disclosure form in Section 2.2-3117.

**SUPPORTS PERFORMANCE BASED ASSESSMENTS**
 Supports legislative changes to Item 130.D of Chapter 2 of the biennium Appropriation Act, House Bill 5002, approved June 7, 2018, for the period of June 30, 2019 to June 30, 2020 to allow school divisions to use locally created, externally verified performance assessment to award verified credit in History and Social Science as provided in the Board of Education’s revised Standards of Accreditation. Additionally, supports legislative changes that would require the Board of Education to allow the substitution of locally created, externally verified performance assessment to award verified credit in History and Social Science subject to Board of Education approval, and opposes any statute or appropriating language barring such prohibition.

**EXPANSION OF THE VIRGINIA HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**
 Supports legislative changes to expand the classifications contained in the Virginia Human Rights Act, Code of Virginia §§ 2.2-3900 and 2.2-3901, to include sexual orientation and gender identity and to further amend the Code of Virginia § 22.1-78, to allow local school boards to similarly expand the protected classifications contained in local school board policies and regulations.