

Date: October 26, 2017

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes X

No _____

FROM: Lois F. Berlin, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Ramee Gentry, Chair, and Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: 2018 Proposed Legislative Agenda

BACKGROUND: The Alexandria City Public Schools believes that local school divisions are best positioned to respond to the needs of students and families with the provision of adequate funding from the state to address mandates. To ensure that Virginia provides sufficient educational funding for its citizens, the Alexandria City School Board supports recognizing the educational needs of low-income students by providing more funding for the At-Risk Add-On in the budget.

While the school division benefits from state goals and guidance, local school divisions should have the autonomy and flexibility to determine policies in areas such as grading, instructional spending, school safety, calendar year and student discipline.

Growing enrollment, changing demographics and the student support needs in our schools require competitive teacher salaries, and increased funding to meet the Standards of Quality, particularly in the student services areas of psychology, counseling, nursing and other mental health supports. We support the work of the SOL Innovation Committee in its efforts to provide local school divisions with more options to demonstrate student learning, and encourage the General Assembly to return to the original schedule for full funding of the Virginia Retirement System. Given the role of public education in the health of our community and this nation, we oppose the diversion of any public education funds to non-public schools, private virtual programs or use of tuition tax credits, tax deductions, or vouchers, as a means of reimbursing parents for their children's K-12 education expenses.

ACPS will continue working with similar school divisions in our advocacy for more flexibility in instructional programming, cost of competing, and differential funding for educating students that require special services not in line with the local composite index.

RECOMMENDATION: The Superintendent recommends review of the ACPS Proposed Legislative Agenda for 2018.

CONTACT PERSON: Dr. Lois F. Berlin, 703-619-8001

ATTACHMENT: ACPS 2018 Proposed Legislative Agenda