



Education Reform Commission Meeting

November 19, 2015

[Voted on Final Recommendations]

As expected, the Education Reform Commission (ERC) voted to approve most of the recommendations it had been working on for the last few months with some significant exceptions. Senator Lindsey Tippins (R-Marietta), Representative Tom Dickson (R-Cohutta), and other legislators spoke up on behalf of public education by raising concerns about the expansion of charter schools, vouchers, and scholarship program increase for private schools. They also advocated ways to increase more funding to public schools over and above the current recommendations. GAE appreciates their voice on behalf of public education and our students. President Sid Chapman spoke at the end of the ERC meeting raising concerns about teachers not being at the ERC table to shape public education reforms for the future. He shared what he continues to hear from educators across the state about how they want to retire as soon possible or leave the profession all together. Sid warned that the ERC's recommendation to change teacher compensation may make the morale problem even worse.

GAE is gearing up for what could be a monumental legislative session ahead. The decisions that will be made next year could redefine public education for the next generation. We have been preparing for this moment all summer. GAE will have our Lobby Day on February 18, 2016. We will share our recommended actions over the next two weeks.

Please see the following summary of key items the ERC voted on yesterday:

- They recommended adding an additional \$209 million to their recommended funding formula if funds are available. This new recommendation would be added to the \$258 million already proposed resulting in a potential total of \$467 million over today's funding. Keep in mind, while these new funds would be helpful, the school systems would still be significantly underfunded using the current QBE formula. The new funding formula is a back-pack funding model that will be based on students and their characteristics (i.e. gifted, low income, special needs, etc.) along with other criteria. Based on our research, no other state has tried this approach to date. We will share more information in the days ahead.
- They recommended eliminating the state salary schedule and replacing it with local school district compensation models. ***GAE has major concerns with this recommendation. Please see our attached analysis [here](#).***
- While there was unanimous consent from ERC members on most of the recommendations, there were a number of commission members who dissented and voted against a number of recommendations to offer more financial and other support to charter schools. Two of the proposals for tax credits for private schools and voucher like saving accounts for parents were voted down by the commission which was a great victory for public education. We would like to thank the bipartisan legislators that stood together to vote

these proposals down. ***In addition, GAE has major concerns about most of the charter school recommendations that did pass.***

- Here are some positive recommendations that were made by the ERC that GAE supports:
 1. Increase funding for Pre-K by \$50 million using lottery funds. Proposals also include increasing pay and methods to increase the quality of Pre-K programs.
 2. Work to align teachers' salaries to meet or exceed the national average for teacher pay.
 3. State level funding program for providing compensation for teachers supervising teacher interns.
 4. Modify the implementation of Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) to allow fewer required classroom observations for effective teachers after a baseline of effectiveness has been established.
 5. Provide grants to support districts in developing strong teacher induction programs.
 6. Keep as a top priority of the education community the preservation of teacher planning time. To monitor implementation, the climate survey for LKES should be amended to include a question related to how well principals protect teacher planning time.
 7. Return to a "normal" curricular adoption cycle, and maintain a high bar before implementing major changes outside a 6 year cycle.
 8. Apply a high bar of consideration to any legislation and/or rules that adds new requirements, training, or job functions for educators. Repeal or sunset rules / requirements when not needed.
 9. Encourage regional and state-wide collaboration to make SLO assessments more consistent within the state.
 10. Support full implementation of the teacher career ladder and participation in the top levels of the Tiered Certification model.
 11. Investigate the benefit of re-instituting the service cancellable loan programs for students graduating from a University System of Georgia (USG) teacher education program.
 12. Reimburse the costs of the required GACE exams and edTPA which pre-service teachers incur while enrolled in a teacher preparation program of the University System of Georgia.

Georgia Association of Educators' Analysis
of the
Education Reform Commission's Teacher Compensation Recommendations
November 2015