

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

**PTA<sup>®</sup>**

*everychild.one voice.<sup>®</sup>*

2016 SC PTA Legislative Advocacy Workshop  
April 16, 2016

Presented by Joy Grayson  
SC PTA Vice President of Advocacy

# Why Advocate ?

“Every Child, One Voice.”

- The main mission of the PTA is Advocacy – to improve the lives of S.C.’s children.
- In order to fulfill our mission, we must speak up about laws affecting the education of our kids.

# S.C. Constitution

“The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free public schools open to all children in the State and shall establish, organize, and support such other public institutions of learning as may be desirable. “

Article XI, Section 3

# Why Now?

- Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman understands the need to fully fund the EFA and needs our help.
- The State's Finances are Improving.
- Each year, the General Assembly is pressured to raid the General Fund to provide other services.
- No fiscal impact studies to determine their effect on education.

# What Can PTA's Do?

- Politics are off limits for 501(c)(3) organizations
- Cannot support or oppose any candidate.
- Cannot give campaign contributions

# PTA's CAN

- Invite Legislators to come to schools to meet with PTA members
- Advocate on issues important to children
- Ask legislators to support a particular bill, as long as it is not the main focus of the organization.
- Host a candidate forum, if all candidates are invited and everyone is treated fairly.

# PTA's CAN

- Host a voter registration drive at your school
- Publish a PTA voter's guide.
- Circulate a PTA candidate questionnaire with uniform questions and unedited candidate responses.
- Host a candidate debate for local candidates for public office.
- Host a Get-out-the-vote drive

# SCPTA Legislative Platform

- Fully fund the Education Finance Act
- Raise teacher salaries to the national average
- Follow the state's 15-year bus replacement law



# Support State Funding of K-12 Education at the Levels required by the Education Finance Act

What is the Base Student Cost?

S.C.'s main funding mechanism for schools is called the "Base Student Cost," an amount established by the Education Finance Act in 1977. It is used to pay for teacher salaries and to fund school operations.

What is the BSC supposed to be?

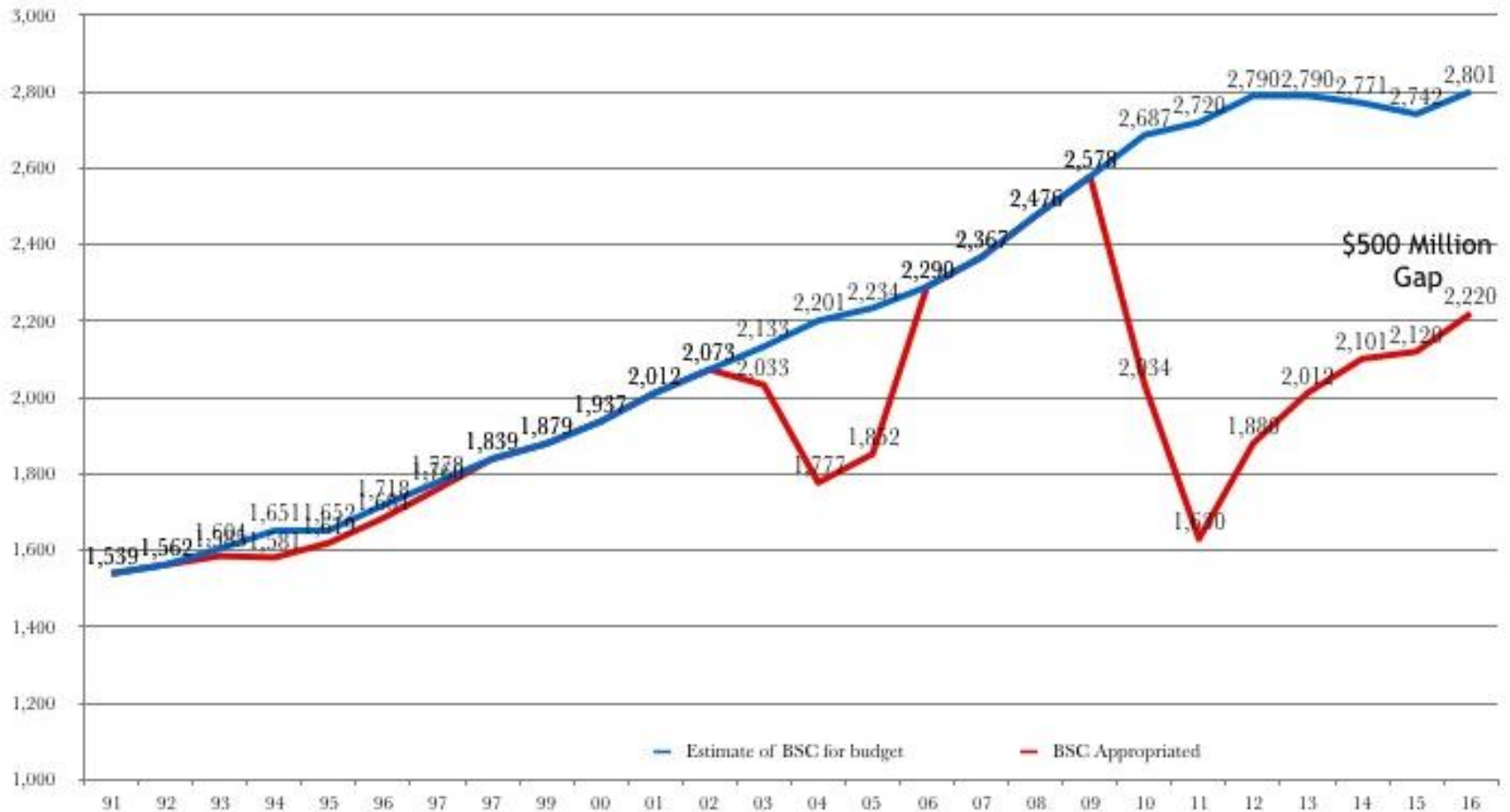
For 2016-17 House Budget calls for funding BSC at \$2,350.

\$130 per child increase over this year's \$2,220.

# Current Funding Levels

- FY 2016-2017, House BSC appropriated amount is \$2,350 (up \$130 from FY15-16)
- Only 80% of the \$2,800 estimated by the Board of Economic Advisors to be required to fund a child's education
- Prior to 2002-03, the state never funded the base student cost at less than 90%.

# BSC Estimate Provided for the Budget and the BSC Appropriated



# Compete Nationally on Teacher Salaries

Salaries are important for attracting, developing, and keeping a top-notch teaching force in place in each zip code. National buying power of teacher salaries has declined.

- S.C. ranks 37<sup>th</sup> in the nation for teacher salaries, or 13<sup>th</sup> from the bottom\*
- 5,300 teachers statewide left their job in 2014 (1/3 within the first 5 years of teaching and 13% within their 1<sup>st</sup> year)
- Senate panel, chaired by Sen. Wes Hayes (R. Rock Hill), has been created to study the issue of teacher retention.

# Promote Compliance with 15-Year Bus Replacement Cycle Law

- South Carolina is the only state that provides the buses for their school districts.
- A law passed by the state legislature in 2007 requires a 15-year bus replacement cycle.
- Approximately 1/15th of the school bus fleet is to be replaced each year with new school buses, resulting in a complete replacement of the fleet every 15 years.
- Most of our school buses are not in compliance with this law

# State Funding of School Buses

- The state has not met the requirements of this law since 2008
- 2010 - The state purchased 130 used school buses averaging 18 years old from Kentucky and other states. Money to purchase these buses came from the sale of junked buses for scrap metal.
- For 2012-13, the state provided \$12.7 million for the purchase of new school buses, about 1/3 of the annual amount needed to meet the requirements of the 2007 law.
- For 2016-17, House has appropriated \$20 million for the lease or purchase of buses. Superintendent Spearman requested \$34 million

# How Can I help?

1. [Join the SCPTA Advocacy Unit Today](#)
2. [Show the Advocacy video to your PTA](#)
3. Visit [www.statehouse.gov](http://www.statehouse.gov)
4. Click “Find Your Legislators” Tab
5. Enter your address
6. Add your legislators’ contact information to your phone

Popular 20th Century English Philosopher Sir Michael Philip Jagger  
wrote in 1968

- You can't always get what you want,
- but if you try sometimes,
- you just might find,
- you get what you need!
- Thank You!



# Joy Grayson

VP of Advocacy

[vplegislation@scpta.org](mailto:vplegislation@scpta.org)

Follow me on Twitter: [@JoyAGrayson](https://twitter.com/JoyAGrayson)

[joy@joy4education.com](mailto:joy@joy4education.com)

(864) 421- 4650

[www.scpta.org](http://www.scpta.org)

[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

1-800-743-3PTA

# Legislative Advocacy Training Video

