



2015 SC PTA Legislative Advocacy Workshop

Presented by Joy Grayson
VP Advocacy SC PTA

Why You?

“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?

- Abbeville vs. State of South Carolina
- Molly Spearman, new state superintendent of education
- The State's Finances are Improving
- The House Education Policy Review and Reform Task Force created by House Speaker Jay Lucas

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 FY 2014-15, BSC is \$2,742 per child.

What is BSC now?

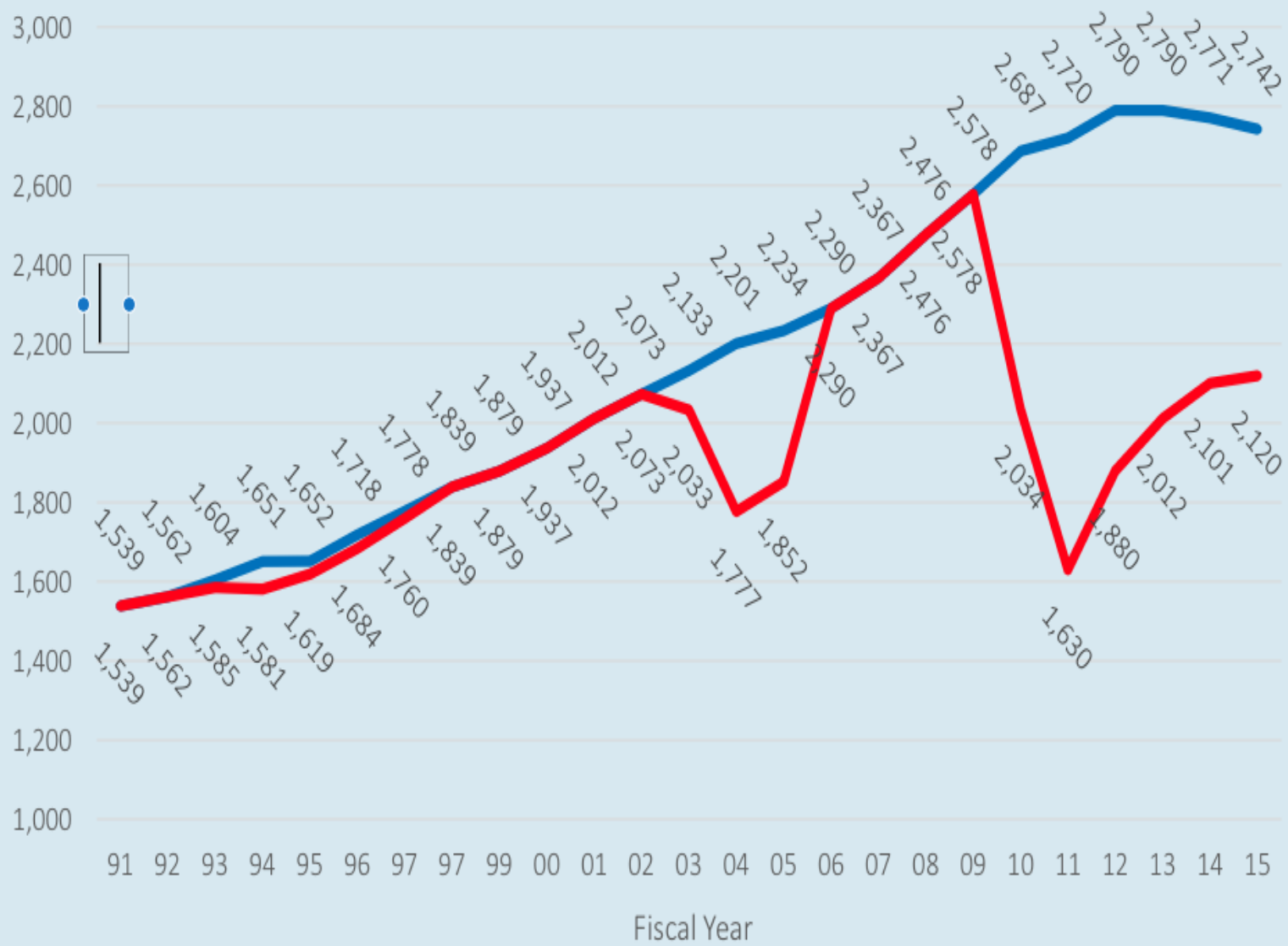
FY 2014-15 \$2,120

House budget raises to \$2,200 for FY2015-2016

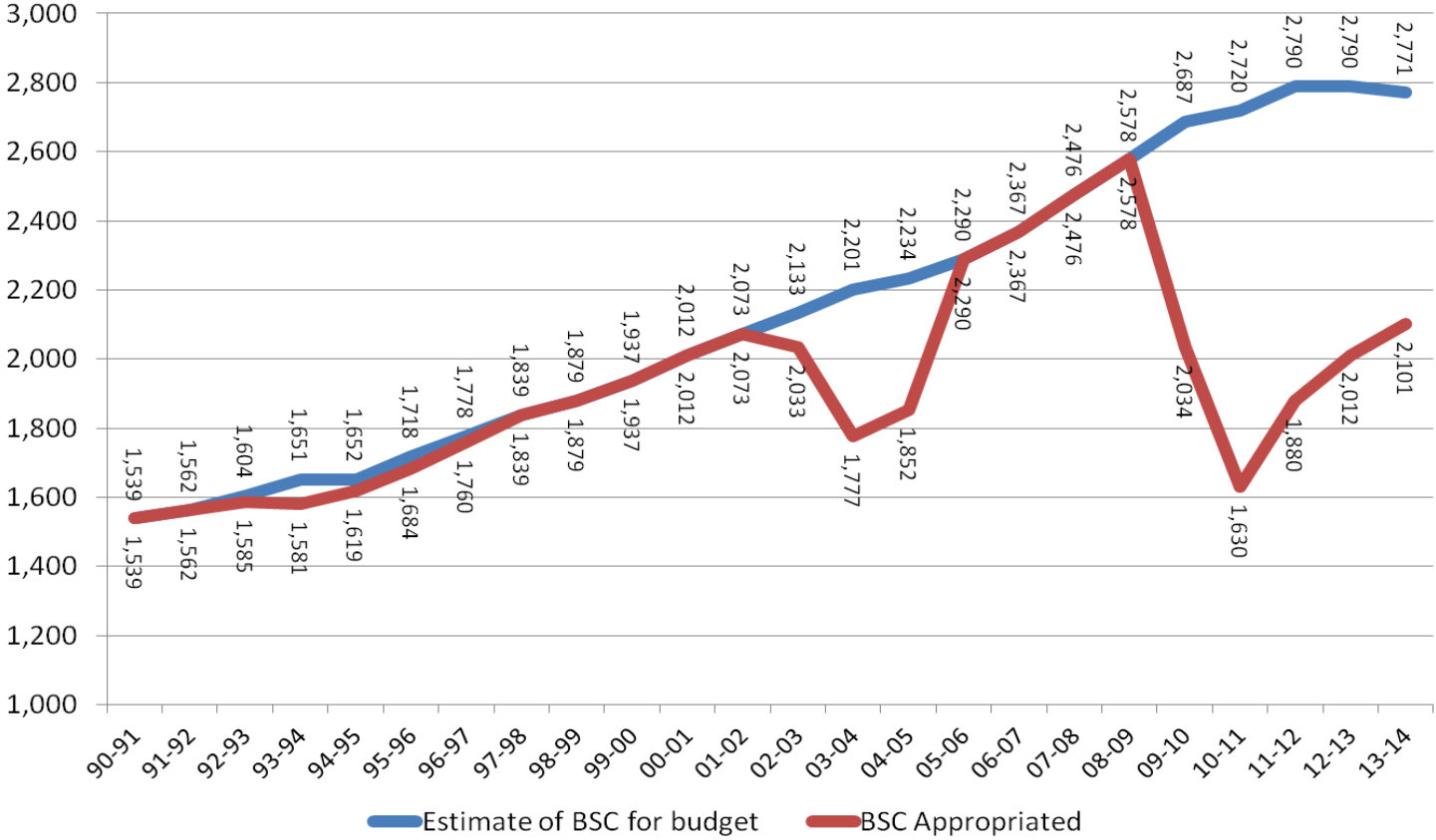
Current Funding Levels

- FY 2014-2015, BSC appropriated amount was \$2,120 (up \$19 from FY 2013-2014)
- Only 77% of the \$2,742 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



BSC Estimate Provided for the Budget and the BSC Appropriated



Source: Mike Shealy,
Senate Finance Committee

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 37th in the nation for teacher salaries, or 13th from the bottom*
- 5,300 teachers statewide left their job last year (1/3 within the first 5 years of teaching and 13% within their 1st 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.
- 60% fail to comply with the law
- Of the 5500 school buses, just 2174 comply with the 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.

How Can I help?

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

Questions?

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Legislative Advocacy Training Video



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

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