

To: Members of the Select Committee on K-12 Funding

From: Kathy Maness, Executive Director
Palmetto State Teachers Association

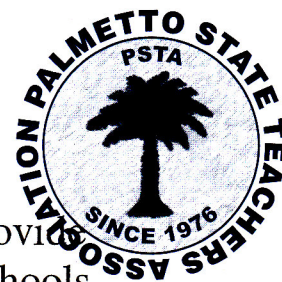
Date: September 21, 2010

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for taking your time to hear from the stakeholders today. I would also like to thank Senator Courson for bringing this committee together to study this complex issue- public school funding.

While PSTA does not come today with a proposal, you heard from many experts this morning that provided you with a variety of useful ideas that will be helpful as you begin writing the legislation that will be discussed next session.

I was very interested in looking at how the local, state, and federal funding has changed over the last forty-nine years. I took a look at the average percentage of local, state, and federal funding in 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, and the latest numbers from the State Department of Education, 2009. You will notice that in 1960, the state funded education at 70.9% and in 2009 at 47.4%. During the same period of time, the local districts in 1960 paid 23.3% compared to last school year 42.6% and as Sen. Davis well knows, some local districts paid much more than this local average.

Year	Local	State	Federal
1960	23.3%	70.9%	5.8%
1970	26.4%	59.5%	14.0%
1980	28.3%	56.8%	14.9%
1990	41.9%	50.0%	8.0%
2000	43.7%	48.0%	8.3%
2009	42.6%	47.4%	10.0%



Public school funding is a daunting task. We all want to provide the best possible education for the students in our public schools. With the budget cuts, the past few years have been very difficult. Our teachers have to do more with less - more students, less pay, less supplies, more mandates, and less days to do it all. Luckily, our teachers have stepped up to continue to educate South Carolina's students as effectively as possible, but this cannot go on indefinitely. We need to find a stable, dependable funding formula that school districts can use to move forward instead of backwards.

Thanks again for what you do. You can count on Palmetto State Teachers Association as we continue on this difficult journey.