

March 3, 2008

ISSUE: Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind

The Camden County School System is committed to supporting the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act objectives of strong academic achievement for all children and closing the achievement gap among subgroups of students. We believe the federal government plays a critical role in achieving those goals through its support of the Impact Aid Program. In September of 2006, over ninety percent of the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) membership including Camden County approved the association's Impact Aid reauthorization proposal. The proposal that will be submitted to the House and Senate authorizing committees includes language that would:

- Ensure eligible students and eligible school districts conform to the purpose of the program, i.e. tax loss imposed on the district; and distribute un-obligated dollars before they revert back to the treasury.
- Keep the law in tune with the ongoing Department of Defense (DoD) housing privatization initiative to ensure funding stability.
- Make certain changes to Section 8003(b)(2) - Heavily Impacted that attempts to standardize both eligibility and payment calculation.
- Leave the weight calculation for student categories the same and maintain the four local contribution rate options.

It is desired that Congress will adopt the language of the NAFIS Impact Aid proposal as submitted although it is more than likely some changes will be evident in the final draft. Whether it's the NAFIS or some other proposal, reauthorization language must be scrutinized carefully to ensure the integrity of the program is maintained and intended benefits are realized by school districts facing the challenges of serving a federally connected population. We encourage you to seek input from the educational leadership in Camden County as Impact Aid is reauthorized and invite you and your staff to use Camden County Schools as a resource on any issue concerning education. We hope our names and email addresses will become common knowledge among staff who evaluates the effects of legislation on schools in Georgia.

As you consider the current and future needs of students who live in districts that are impacted by a Federal presence, please take into account:

- Current and future increases of military children within the Impact Aid Program due to DoD restructuring efforts.
- A 4.6% increase for FY 08 in the average per-pupil expenditure (according to DoD estimates).
- Rising costs due to inflation.

Recommendation: We respectfully request you consider the implications of NCLB reauthorization to Georgia school districts and fight any measure that would compromise Camden County Schools and an entire community whose educational programs are so heavily impacted by a military presence. We also ask that you adopt the language of the NAFIS Impact Aid proposal as submitted.

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