



April 1, 2016

David Grosso
Chairman, Committee on Education
Council of the District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Building
1350 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Suite 402
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Chairman Grosso:

It is with deep concern that I write to you today on behalf of the DC State Board of Education, the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education, and the Office of the Student Advocate regarding the Administration's proposed FY2017 Budget. In short, the budget submission for the State Board does not reflect our need for appropriations and inaccurately states that it "reflects no change from the agency budget submission to the Administration's proposed budget."

The State Board is required to prepare and submit to the Administration estimates of expenditures and appropriations necessary for its operation for inclusion in the annual budget submitted to Council, pursuant to Part D of Title IV of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act (87 Stat. 798; DC Official Code 1-204.41 et seq.) and the State Board of Education Establishment Act of 2007 (Title 4 of D.C. Law 17-9; D.C. Official Code 38-2652). These estimates must be forwarded by the Administration, but may be accompanied by mayoral recommendations for action by the Council, pursuant to sections 446 and 603(c) of the Home Rule Act.

I have attached a copy of the required submission that was sent to the Administration's office on December 11, 2015. Since that time, the State Board has done its best to participate in the Administration's internal budget processes. Nonetheless, the State Board was not informed that the FY2017 Budget would neither comply with our submitted budget provisions, nor that our need for appropriations would be reduced by over \$200,000. While we appreciate the Administration's attempts to remedy sections of our budget that were inappropriately burdened in FY2016, particularly in personnel services, the proposed FY2017 Budget is simply not adequate for the DC State Board of Education to perform the statutory requirements of the agency.

Mr. Chairman, we look forward to working with you and the rest of the Council in the coming months to ensure that the State Board is able to continue its vital work.

Sincerely,

Jack Jacobson, President

cc: Mayor Muriel Bowser,
Members of the Council of the District of Columbia
Chief Financial Officer Jeffrey DeWitt

State Board of Education of the District of Columbia

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FY 2017 State Board of Education
Agency Program Estimate and Necessary Appropriations

Agency Code: GEO

Agency Title: D.C. State Board of Education

Date: December 11, 2015

Agency point of contact: John-Paul C. Hayworth, Executive Director, 202.741.0888

Budget Request Act Language: D.C. State Board of Education. - \$1,449,814

Annual Estimate of Expenditure and Appropriations

Pursuant to Part D of Title IV of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 798; DC Official Code 1-204.41 *et seq.*) and the State Board of Education Establishment Act of 2007 (Title 4 of D.C. Law 17-9; D.C. Official Code 38-2652) the State Board of Education is required to prepare and submit annual estimates of the expenditures and appropriations necessary for the operation of the Board to the Mayor for inclusion in the annual budget prepared and submitted to the Council. These estimates must be forwarded by the Mayor and may be accompanied by recommendations of the Mayor for action by the Council pursuant to sections 446 and 603(c) of the Home Rule Act.

In fiscal year 2017, the State Board of Education estimates a total need of appropriations of \$1,449,814 are necessary for its operation. This includes funding for the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education and the Office of the Student Advocate that are detailed below.

The State Board of Education's role is to advise the State Superintendent of Education on educational matters related to state standards, polices, objectives and regulations; approve state academic standards; approve high school graduation requirements and high school equivalence credentials; definitions of "adequate yearly progress", "highly qualified teachers" and "proficiency"; approve the state accountability plan; approve parental involvement policies; approve policies for supplemental education service providers; approve rules for residency verification; approve a list of charter school accreditation organizations; approve categories and format of the annual school report card; approve the list of private placement accreditation organizations; approve school attendance requirements and standards for home schooling. The estimated need for appropriations sufficient to perform the functions above in fiscal year 2013 was \$581,751. This amount is noted in the fiscal impact statement on the State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2012. It must be noted that the fiscal impact statement referenced above also notes that this estimate does not include resources of other District agencies to perform administrative, financial, and legal services on behalf of the State Board of Education. Adjusted for inflation using the DC Gross Domestic Product index, **the fiscal 2017 need for appropriations is \$659,784.** This amount would fully fund the State Board's current three (3) FTEs and allow for the Board to consider adding an additional FTE. It should be noted that the State Board's staff assistant serves a joint function for the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education and the Office of the Student Advocate. The remaining personnel services funds will be used to hire fellows to support the office.

The Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education (D.C. Law 17-9; D.C. Official Code 38-351 *et seq.*) is a neutral resource for public school students and their parents or guardians to address conflicts and issues related to educational programs and services. With an increasing caseload, there is need for additional staffing within the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education. An additional one (1) Assistant Ombudsman would allow the Office of the Ombudsman to strengthen and expand its role in the community. In the Fiscal Impact Statement for the "State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2012," the Office of the Chief Financial Officer wrote that an "appropriation of an estimated \$340,000 annually would be needed to make [the Office of the Ombudsman] operational." **The estimated need for appropriations for the Office of the Ombudsman for Public Education in fiscal year 2017 is \$471,000.** This need is based on previous fiscal impact statements on the FY2010 Budget Support Act of

2009, State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2012 and the Parent and Student Empowerment Act of 2012. Currently, the office is staffed by two (2) FTEs and one (1) shared FTE. The Committee Report on the State Board of Education Personnel Authority Amendment Act of 2012 notes that the Council envisioned the office to have a minimum of four (4) FTEs. In fiscal year 2017, the Ombudsman intends to hire an additional assistant ombudsman at the ES-3 level. The remaining personnel services funds will be used to hire fellows to support the office.

The Office of the Student Advocate (D.C. Law 20-76; D.C. Official Code 38-371 *et seq.*) guides and supports students, parents, families, and community members in navigating the public school system in DC to achieve equal access to public education through advocacy, outreach, and information services. The office was established by the Council of the District of Columbia through the Parent and Student Empowerment Act of 2013. This Act envisioned an office of three (3) FTEs. Currently, the office has one (1) FTE and one (1) shared FTE. **The estimated need for appropriations for the Office of the Student Advocate in fiscal year 2017 is \$319,030.** This appropriation would allow the Office of the Student Advocate to continue establishing the office as envisioned in the Parent and Student Empowerment Act of 2013 by hiring an assistant student advocate. The remaining personnel services funds will be used to hire fellows to support the office.