

# SPRINGFIELD AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## Education Platform

*Originally adopted by the Board of Directors - 11/15/99*

*Last Updated and Approved by Board of Directors – February, 2023*

### Vision Statement

The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce supports schools that emphasize academic excellence within an educational system that is accountable, visionary and equipped to prepare students for living and working in a global economy.

### Strategic Objectives:

- 1) To ensure that the region's school systems successfully prepare students for higher education and the local workforce.
  
- 2) To help Springfield Public Schools operate as Missouri's premier school district when measured by student achievement, graduation rates, resource utilization, and attendance rates.

### Policy Positions

#### **Preparing Students for the Future . . .**

We support academic and extracurricular programs that provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary for success in either post secondary education and/or in a productive career, as well as programs that develop good citizenship skills, enhance positive character traits and establish cultural consciousness/competency to effectively compete in and relate to a global economy and society.

- **Workforce Development**

An educated and trained workforce is a basic ingredient of a strong economy. We believe schools must take a leadership role, partnering with the business community, in developing a skilled workforce. Priorities should include understanding the current and future skill needs of business, adapting curriculum and teaching methods to most effectively teach these skills, and accurately measuring the student's applied skills.

- **Career Exploration**

Students can effectively learn about the working world and prepare for a productive career by experiencing it firsthand and making a direct connection between learning and the practical application of that which is learned. We support programs that provide opportunities for students to explore an array of careers. We consider it a priority to facilitate ongoing interaction among educators, students, parents and businesses both in the classroom and in the workplace.

- **Technology**

We support a strong commitment to technology as a strategy for preparing students for life in a high tech world.

- **Emphasis on Basics**

We support continued emphasis on the basic educational subjects, including math, science, and communication skills to ensure students are prepared for post-secondary education and the workplace. This includes ensuring students have the general competency and interpersonal skills they need to achieve their full potential and meet the demands of post-secondary education including employer standards and/or higher education requirements.

### **Managing our Resources . . .**

We support policies, programs and actions that utilize best business and management practices. We believe the Board of Education should set the vision and develop strategic goals, both short- and long-term, for the school district. Administrators, faculty and staff should develop action plans for accomplishing these goals, and be held accountable for results.

- **Teacher Attraction & Retention**

We support initiatives to attract and retain quality, experienced teachers by providing competitive compensation packages, a safe physical and cultural working environment, opportunity for advancement, recognition for excellence, and a team atmosphere.

- **Staff Leadership and Development**

We support initiatives and programs that emphasize professional development and continuity of leadership for administrative positions on the Springfield Public Schools staff.

- **Fiscal Responsibility**

We support fiscal policies that support the district's strategic plan and prioritize the needs of the school system as a whole, before the needs and wants of individual schools. Those policies should reflect the most efficient and cost effective use of existing facilities and support services to achieve the objective of being the premier public school district in Missouri.

- **Addressing Capital Needs**

Strategic planning for capital needs must be quantifiable, include community input, and be evaluated by measurable outcomes.

- **Communication and Civic Involvement**

The Board of Education should use all available resources to clearly and effectively communicate school district goals and activities to the community. Any communications strategy should emphasize two-way dialogue and encourage public involvement in the decision-making process. Board members should serve as an advocate for SPS education with elected officials, and work collaboratively with community stakeholders.

- **Safety and Security**

The safety and security of students, teachers and faculty is critical. The Board of Education should continue to prioritize the safety and security of the district through resource allocation, building design, staff training and security features in district facilities, policies and practices.

- **Progress & Transparency**

District progress – including student graduation rates, test scores and overall student success – should be measurable and clearly articulated. Key metrics for this success should be available to parents and community members and progress or challenges in this area should be communicated transparently to district stakeholders.

- **Good Governance**

The Board of Education should focus on governance responsibilities of the district and provide transparency and accountability to stakeholders. Similarly, board members should work collaboratively with each other and with other community stakeholders to seek solutions based on what is in the best interest of the district, students and families rather than advocating for any single issue or personal interest.