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March 28, 2022

Dear Honorable Members of the Spartanburg County Legislative Delegation,

On behalf of the Spartanburg District Five Board of Trustees, we want to express our immense gratitude for your commitment to public education and your continuous support of our students and schools. For many years, this Delegation has faithfully worked in partnership with Spartanburg County school districts to strengthen our education system, and seek ways to better support the students, families and employees we serve.

In the spirit of that strong partnership and collaboration, we have many concerns regarding the new funding model as proposed by the South Carolina General Assembly this year.

We applaud the House Ways and Means Committee's efforts to recognize the hard work and dedication of our state's teachers by proposing a pay raise as part of this year's budget. More than 700 certified educators serve the nearly 10,000 students in Spartanburg District Five Schools. **Our teachers deserve recognition of their commitment to the classroom, and we fully support a pay raise for their hard work.** However, without full funding support from the state, Spartanburg District Five would struggle to provide the proposed pay increase, as it would place a significant strain on our budget.

The proposed model leaves Spartanburg District Five Schools with a shortfall of \$5.75 million, if the district were to fully fund the base increase for teachers, including a \$4000 pay raise, fringe benefits, annual step increase, and the 18.1% increase to the employer share of health insurance costs. Without a teacher pay raise, the additional costs mentioned above would still leave a shortfall of \$1.86 million.

We recognize and appreciate the efforts to shift the local responsibility of school districts to a funding split of 75/25% (as opposed to the previous 70/30%)--- however, District Five's allocation increase under this model of \$1.3 million falls woefully short of covering everything the state is proposing.

Therefore, we respectfully request the following:

- 1) **Fully fund the pay increase for ALL South Carolina teachers**, and support our districts in recognizing them for the inspiring work they are doing
- 2) Address the enormous increase in fringe benefit costs for FY23
- 3) Fully fund the 18.1% increase in employer health insurance costs

- 4) Seek additional input from the impacted entities about their needs and concerns before making significant changes to funding formulas

Again, we applaud the legislature’s commitment to our students and schools. We appreciate your support, and look forward to working with you further as we strive to serve “Every Child, Every Day” in Spartanburg District Five Schools.

Sincerely,

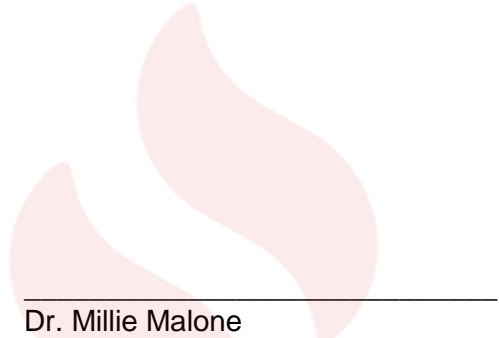
Jeff Boland, Chair
Board of Trustees
Spartanburg District Five Schools

Mark Cleveland, Vice Chairman

Meredith Gergley, Secretary

Scott Clement

Kevin Goode



Dr. Millie Malone

Ott Sizemore

Sherri Taunton

Derek Watchorn

cc:
Rep. Murrell Smith, Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Sen. Harvey Peeler, Chair, Senate Finance Committee
Rep. Rita Allison, Chair, House Education and Public Works Committee
Sen. Greg Hembree, Chair, Senate Education Committee