



The Southern Education Foundation's 2019 Legislative Policy Positions

The Southern Education Foundation's (SEF) policy positions stem from our historic legacy of advancing educational opportunities for African Americans in the post-Civil War South. SEF believes states, districts, and schools have an intrinsic duty to affirm equity and excellence so that every student receives the highest level of education. The following policy positions outline SEF's stances on key local and statewide K-12 education issues critical to the success of students of color.

Education Reform

SEF Supports:

- Charter school networks that are inclusive, evidence-based, transparent, and publicly accountable for serving all students despite disability status, academic history, race/ethnicity or any other student characteristic;
- The advancement of high-quality magnet schools with non-racial discriminatory admissions requirements;
- The expansion of high-quality early childhood and pre-kindergarten programs, including universal pre-kindergarten, as well as the professionalization of the early childhood teaching profession through professional development and fair pay;
- The implementation of a community schools approach or the provision of comprehensive wraparound supports for all students, but especially low-income students or students who have experienced childhood trauma;
- Parent and community engagement that results in shared accountability to improve school systems;
- Holding states, districts and school leaders accountable for academic achievement and/or growth for student subgroups; and
- The implementation or expansion of culturally relevant, rich and rigorous curriculums.

SEF Opposes:

- School vouchers, K-12 education savings accounts, tax credit scholarships, and those school choice efforts to fund private schools with public dollars; and
- Virtual charter schools and the for-profit charter school sector.



School Governance

SEF Supports:

- Limiting control of public education to the government closest and most responsive to the taxpayers and parents of the children being educated;
- Evidenced-based professional development for school board members, especially those who represent a high percentage of students of color; and
- State governance of public education that provides the necessary resources to school districts to implement whole school improvement strategies such as conducting equity audits, providing personalized learning and supporting effective instruction to bolster academic achievement in chronically underperforming schools.

SEF Opposes:

- Takeovers of school districts by state entities that perpetuate inequitable school funding practices and demonstrate no reasonable strategy to help school districts improve chronically underperforming schools.

School Finance

SEF Supports:

- Equitable K-12 state funding formulas that address historical and present-day opportunity and achievement gaps and fiscal inequities that negatively impact students of color;
- Increasing K-12 per-pupil expenditures and amending tax provisions to ensure districts have the appropriate level of resources to invest in providing college-and-career ready curriculums, professional development and support to attract and retain well-prepared and highly effective staff; and
- Teacher pay that is commensurate with experience and effectiveness and is competitive with other similar professional workforce salaries.

SEF Opposes:

- Efforts that would lead to disinvestments in public schools, including redistricting, consolidation of districts or township successions that lead to decreased funding for low-income communities and communities of color.