

Ensure our Economic Future: Vote "YES!" to Continue E-SPLOST on March 21<sup>st</sup>

# GOOD EDUCATION MAKES FOR A GOOD COMMUNITY

The Coweta County Board of Education has called for a referendum on Tuesday, March 21 to continue the current one-penny Educational Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (E-SPLOST) from July 2017 until June 2022. Early voting begins February 27 and ends March 17.

**This is a continuation of the current tax – not a new tax.** When approved, it will NOT be used for salaries or educational programs. It will be used to fund improvements to older schools, upgrade security and purchase school buses, books and technology.

## What does the continuation of E-SPLOST mean to Coweta's future?

### Competitive Advantage

Coweta's comprehensive retail and restaurant base gives us an important advantage over more commuter-oriented counties. Because Coweta County is a shopping destination and a healthcare destination, some of the E-SPLOST will be contributed by visitors. Counties without this base depend entirely on property taxes and issuing bonds.

### Additional Resources

There are significant state tax dollars available to Coweta's school system provided we identify local funding to complete state-recommended construction projects. The E-SPLOST funds will provide this local match.

### Credible Track Record

Coweta will be able to continue its excellent track record as a well-managed and efficient system. Most importantly, Coweta's school system will remain debt free.

### Progressive Community Attitude

Continuing E-SPLOST shows business investors that Coweta is an efficient and progressive county worth considering for locating or expanding business operations. This commitment helps create new and higher-paying jobs as well as new sources of tax revenues.

### Quality of Life

The continuation of this one-penny sales tax allows everyone the chance to maintain Coweta County's excellent quality of life. It provides Coweta's students the facilities and tools to grow into good citizens.

## What happens without the extension of this very important funding source?

### Decrease in Quality and Rankings

Coweta County is a leader in the Move Forward When Ready initiative and provides cutting-edge technology to students and teachers. These signs of a healthy and well-managed school system will be threatened and will harm Coweta's ability to maintain its position as one of Georgia's premier school systems.

### Increased Burden on Property Owners

Property taxes could increase for all Coweta property owners. For nearly 20 years Coweta has paid off its debt and financed capital building projects with a pay-as-you-go system. This is a significant advantage that Coweta has over more residentially oriented counties.

### Decreased Job Growth

Coweta residents could see less new investment by industries, retail and commercial businesses.

### Erosion of Economic Opportunity

Residents can remember when Coweta envied the jobs and investments in other communities. Many businesses have chosen Coweta County because of the high-quality school system. We risk losing these opportunities.

### Unable to Meet Rigorous Standards

Support systems, including standards for safety and technology, are necessary to meet rigorous standards required for ongoing Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation.

## How can you help keep Coweta's schools at the top of the rankings?

- Mark your calendar for early voting February 27–March 17, or March 21, then make sure that you go vote "YES" on one of these days!
- Make it your goal to identify and convince ten of your neighbors, co-workers and friends to vote "YES."



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Chamber Mission: To champion increased economic prosperity for our members

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## Thanks to previous E-SPLOST dollars, our community enjoys competitive advantages like:

### Nixon Centre for Performing Arts

Since its completion, this jewel has provided local audiences and students with artistic education through its state-of-the-art facilities. The Centre brings in tourism dollars, educational benefits and recognition for our county as a progressive Southern community.

### Central Educational Center

This exceptional tool for training students to immediately become productive workers upon graduation has been recognized as one of the most successful charter schools anywhere. These trained new workers are essential in the attraction and retention of industries in Coweta.

### Quality, State-of-the-Art Facilities and Resources

New classroom space and facilities to keep up with growth, upgrades at older, existing schools, land acquisition, textbook and technology purchases, security and safety improvements and additional school buses to accommodate high student growth were made possible, helping Coweta maintain its position as one of the top school systems in Georgia.

### Ninth Grade Academy

Allowed for extended capacity for Coweta's three high schools and helped make this developmentally critical transition year easier for students.

## Did you know?

- ▶ Coweta has one of the State's superior educational systems.
- ▶ It is less expensive to *maintain* a superior system than it is to build one or repair one.
- ▶ E-SPLOST provides a way to capture out-of-county dollars.
- ▶ Coweta's future economic and job growth depends on an excellent school system to make it stronger.
- ▶ Higher-quality employers will not invest in a community that does not have a quality school system.
- ▶ More economic and industrial growth means lower taxes to residents.
- ▶ The Coweta School System has no debt.
- ▶ The school system has been recognized at the state and national level as a fiscally responsible system which produces high levels of student achievement with low levels of cost to taxpayers – for providing one of the highest "Returns on Educational Investment" in Georgia.
- ▶ Previous E-SPLOST funds have provided improvements and launched safety and security upgrades planned for every school in the system.

## The Facts tell the Story: Coweta's School System is Excellent!

Coweta County high schools have average SAT and ACT scores above the national average while per student expenditures are lower than the state average.

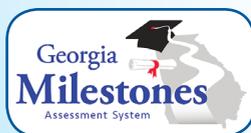
Coweta's school system boasts an 85 percent on-time graduation rate.

Coweta's three high schools have appeared numerous times in recent years on the Washington Post's "Most Challenging US High Schools" list.

Coweta schools rank among the highest in Georgia in overall student achievement.

Coweta County Schools have boasted of two National Distinguished Principals in recent years, as well as a Distinguished Assistant Principal, a Horace Mann NEA Nominee, state teacher of the year finalists and other honors.

Coweta is the home to the Central Educational Center (CEC) charter school, an internationally lauded model, National Model High School. This engine of innovation was created through local initiatives and partnerships, and is the model for Georgia's 30 Career Academies.



### An Excellent School System

Overall, Coweta County School System students have outperformed their peers statewide for the first two years of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System.



### An Exceptional School System

Recognition by the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts for **Excellent System Financial Reporting** in 2014, 2015, 2016.



### An Exemplar School System

During its 2016 accreditation review, the Coweta County School System **scored significantly above AdvancED's international averages** for Teaching and Learning, Leadership Capacity, and Resource Utilization. AdvancED's independent review team described Coweta Schools as an 'Exemplar' - an example to other school systems - as they recommended re-accreditation.

## Vote "YES" on March 21 for E-SPLOST

(Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax)



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