

## **SPLOST IV – Problematic**

Taxpayers, teachers, and parents should be concerned about the process used in creating SPLOST IV. There are many ‘red flags’.

### **❖ What comes first, funding or projects?**

A rational plan would require that a needs-based projects list should come first and a plan for funding should come last. With SPLOST IV, the CCSB determined the maximum amount of tax revenue that could be collected and then a projects list was backed-filled to spend it. This retrograde process promotes waste and inefficient use of educational tax money.

### **❖ Something for everyone**

Every elementary, middle and high school in Cobb County is getting something, even if a need doesn’t exist. Some of the schools are less than a year old. This wastes money on needless projects just to secure more votes.

### **❖ Notebook contains placeholders**

There are several projects in the Notebook, which are not even funded. These have been characterized by some on the CCSB as ‘placeholders’ to be done only if there is additional money in the SPLOST. What you think you’re getting, you may not get.

### **❖ Why a special election in March?**

Historically, voter turnout is less in a special election than in a general election. The CCSB knows that a non-vote is a yes vote. Let your voice be heard on this important issue. Be sure to vote and **Vote NO!**

## **The CAREER ACADEMY**

*A \$30 million, 95,000 square foot facility  
With details coming AFTER the vote!*

The Career Academy is probably the most blatant example of waste and poor planning in this \$773 million SPLOST.

The Project’s list calls for a \$30 million, 95,000 square foot facility to provide career training for high school seniors.

Superintendent Hinojosa admits that the academy’s location, number of students, teachers, staff, transportation, courses and operating costs have yet to be determined.

Chief academic officer Judi Jones said the district would need to hire a principal, an assistant principal, a counselor, three custodians, and possibly library, technology and lunchroom personnel. Since SPLOST can’t fund these salaries we can expect an additional tax increase if SPLOST passes.

Additionally, Jones said the cost to run each of the several academic programs, or clusters, at the academy could be between \$150,000 and \$200,000 annually, but said the costs could be offset by state grant money and business partnerships. So far, such grants and partnerships have not been identified.

Superintendent, Hinojosa and other CCSB members privately admit that the Career Academy may never be built. If not, on what would your money be spent? Yet another placeholder?

# **Why you should**

# **Vote NO**

## **on the**

## **ED-SPLOST (SPLOST IV)**

## **March 19**

## ***SPLOST IV – What it is - what it means to you and your children***

SPLOST IV is being touted as the Education SPLOST by those who have a special interest in seeing it passed. While we all want our children to have the very best education possible, the projects funded by this \$773 million tax fall far short of that goal and, in fact, will hamper our children's education and create a continuing, unsustainable budget deficit for the Cobb County School System.

## **Taxpayers Take Note!**

### **❖ Temporary tax evolving to permanent**

The SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) was intended to be a temporary tax for funding special projects above and beyond those paid for by the General Fund. Unfortunately, after three consecutive SPLOSTS it is apparent that the School Board has become addicted to the SPLOST and this temporary tax is on the verge of becoming permanent. Only you can break this chain of dependence. **Vote No!**

### **❖ Additional buildings mean new taxes**

\$773 million of new infrastructure generates additional maintenance costs. The law prohibits SPLOST money being used for maintenance or staffing; therefore, funds for these additional expenditures will come from **increased property tax, an additional sales tax, or repeal of the senior tax exemption**. If you don't want your taxes increased, **vote no!**

### **❖ The project list wastes tax dollars**

The political reality is that the Notebook is focused more on Special Interests than on Special Projects; therefore, projects are geared toward winning the election rather than educating children. For more efficient use of your tax dollars, **vote no!**

## **Teachers Take Note!**

### **❖ Class size is not addressed**

Many Cobb County classrooms already exceed Georgia Dept. of Education size requirements. Building new classrooms will not solve the problem if we can't afford additional instructors to teach in them.

### **❖ 56 additional classrooms – no teachers**

SPLOST funds are restricted from being used for salaries. However, 56 additional classrooms will be funded by this tax, and not one additional teacher. The school board (CCSB) is considering having teachers handle multiple classrooms simultaneously. Will that improve education in Cobb County?

### **❖ Teachers could be furloughed**

The School District's general fund currently is projecting an \$80 million deficit. Since the majority of the budget is for teacher salaries, furloughs may be the only way to balance the budget. The additional maintenance requirements generated by SPLOST IV will increase the deficit, making teacher furloughs even more likely.

Teachers should not take a back seat to infrastructure. **Vote no.**

## **Parents Take Note!**

### **❖ SPLOST doesn't improve education**

While the project list includes new athletic facilities, gymnasiums, track resurfacing and theaters, less than a third of it provides any instructional benefit for your children.

### **❖ SPLOST won't solve the CCSB deficit**

SPLOST funds can't be used for ongoing maintenance or salaries and can't legally be used to solve the projected \$80 million budget deficit. The burden created by additional infrastructure will worsen the deficit and will draw funding away from instruction to pay for maintenance.

### **❖ Career Academy lacks planning**

The proposed \$30 million Career Academy leaves too many questions unanswered. Where will it be located? Facing an \$80 million deficit, where will CCSB get funds to staff it? How will pupils get there and back? Superintendent Hinojosa's answer to the latter is, "If they want to attend the Career Academy, they'll figure out a way to get there."

### **❖ Replacement Schools – but where?**

SPLOST will spend \$73 million to replace a middle school and two elementary schools, but CCSB can't tell you which ones. If the need is so dire, shouldn't they know?

### **❖ Diverts funds from true needs**

Your \$773 million dollars can be spent much more efficiently for things that will truly improve your child's education.

**Vote no and demand a better plan**