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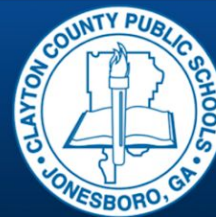
NEWS RELEASE

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Superintendent Meets with Tax Assessors Regarding Assessment of Airline Leases and Lost of SPLOST Funds to Clayton County

JONESBORO - Earlier today, Dr. Morcease J. Beasley, Superintendent/CEO of Clayton County Public Schools, appealed to the Clayton County Board of Tax Assessors during their regular scheduled meeting and submitted a request for an investigation and evaluation of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport “Airport Use and Lease Agreements” in Clayton County, Georgia. The investigations and evaluations would be for the purpose of determining if incidents of ownership are vested with the lessee and if estates in land that exist under Georgia law should be taxable. Adding taxable estates to the Clayton County digest would benefit the school system and its students as General Fund tax collections would increase in an amount that would more than replace the local general sales tax revenues recently lost.

Superintendent Beasley expressed his sincere appreciation to members of the Board of Tax Assessors for the opportunity to present. Dr. Beasley also extended gratitude to Ms. Jessie Goree, Chair, Board of Education, Mr. Jeff Turner, Chairman, Clayton County Board of Commissioners, Mayor Joy Day, City of Jonesboro, as well as a representative for Mayor Angelyne Butler, City of Forest Park, for their attendance to display their commitment and full support towards this matter. Dr. Beasley also recognized the Clayton County Board of Education, and the Clayton County Delegation along with other officials, community members, and stakeholders not able to attend the meeting today but are actively engaged in supporting outcomes that positively benefit Clayton County, its municipalities, and the school district as a whole.

The appeal made by Dr. Beasley comes after a previous ruling by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals to prohibit the use of general sales taxes collected at the City of Atlanta owned airport on aviation fuel for any purpose other than for the airport. Most recently, Clayton County and its school district collected \$24 million annually from local general sales taxes levied on aviation fuel transactions at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, a majority of which is located in Clayton County. The loss of the tax means that funds are not available for many capital improvement projects, for educational purposes, for new construction of facilities, major renovations, and modifications to existing facilities as well as transportation and technology enhancements for the district.

“While we are grateful that the Delta Foundation stepped in and replaced the lost funding through December 31, 2019, beyond that assistance, we are left with a lot of unanswered questions,” said Dr. Morcease J. Beasley, CCPS Superintendent/CEO. “Will the school system have to delay planned improvements or cancel much needed new construction projects? Will the district have to do without the

resources needed to prepare our students to compete in an ever-changing global environment? Additionally, can the \$60 million that will be lost over the next five years be replaced by revenues other than property taxes that come from the current County tax digest?"

"To put it plainly, Clayton County Public Schools needs these funds replaced to continuously provide our students with resources and facilities to ensure they are learning in globally competitive spaces with all the tools we can provide them to become successful contributors to our state, region, nation and world," said Dr. Beasley. "As elected officials, public figures and community members, we are all responsible for the advancement and sustainability of providing a quality education to the future leaders of tomorrow. It is in times such as these, we must stand together to take action and advocate for what is right for all children. As we prepare for the 2020 Georgia General Assembly, the school district will continue to lobby for replacement of aviation fuel tax funding through local, state and federal actions," he added.

These actions include but are not limited to the following:

- Appeal to the Clayton County Board of Tax Assessors and other officials to combine their efforts of support to replace the loss of funds;
- Request that the City of Atlanta, owner of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, the busiest airport in the world, and the airlines leasing space there pay their fair share of property taxes;
- Petition for the Georgia General Assembly to treat the extraterritorial Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport like the "mall-type business" it is and lift the exemption from county, local and school district property taxes; and
- Call for the U.S. Congress to understand the plight of Clayton County and reverse policies that do not benefit the federal airport system, but instead add to the profits of those in corporate America at the expense of America's public school children.

"We need the help of our strong supporters with getting out of this crisis," said Dr. Beasley. "It is our intent to advocate, educate, and mobilize all partners in education to support Clayton County students who would be greatly impacted by the loss of revenue. In addition, we will meet with local, state and federal officials to lobby on behalf of the school district. This includes meeting with Delta Foundation leaders to request a continuation of tax funding sources that support students and capital school improvement projects," said Dr. Beasley.

"It is my duty as Superintendent/CEO of Schools to advocate on behalf of over 55,000 students and 7,000 employees, that live, learn, and dream to prosper as vested residents of Clayton County. I will continue to raise awareness and mobilize help as necessary to address this issue," he concluded.

About Clayton County Public Schools

Clayton County Public Schools (CCPS) is fully accredited by AdvancED – Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement. The district offers a focused world-class program based on a challenging curriculum which is taught from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Serving over 55,000 students, Clayton County Public Schools is ranked among the 100 largest school districts in the U.S. and is the fifth-largest school system in Georgia.

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