The Board of Education of Lakeland School System believes that local BOEs are best equipped and informed to make decisions that address the needs and challenges of their individual schools. We support measures to expand and improve the pool of qualified teachers, and we support pathways to alternative licensure. We strongly urge the General Assembly to fully fund the Basic Education Program (BEP) and not divert any funds away from public education or add any unfunded mandates.

**Lakeland School System (LSS) Position Statements:**

**Appointed Superintendents**
- LSS supports the appointment of Superintendents by the elected local board of education.

**Teacher Licensure**
- LSS urges the Tennessee General Assembly to create pathways for alternatives to standard licensure pathways and advancement to address teacher shortages.

**Education Funding**
- LSS supports increased funding for school counselors, social workers and mental health providers.
- LSS supports funding for federally mandated special education Pre-K classrooms which are currently completely unfunded by the BEP.
- LSS supports increases in the instructional component of the BEP to allow for higher teacher salaries to improve Tennessee’s ranking against neighboring states and address the growing teacher shortage.

**School Safety**
- LSS supports additional funding for school safety and security.
- LSS supports recurring funds for School Resource Officers in all schools.

**Diversion of Funds**
- LSS opposes any legislation that diverts funds from public K-12 education to charter schools, voucher programs, tax credits, or related schemes to fund private or home school education.

**Mandated Testing**
- LSS supports holding all schools that directly or indirectly receive Education Savings Account Dollars accountable to the same testing requirements as Tennessee public schools.

**Unfunded Mandates**
- LSS opposes the adoption of any legislation, policies, rules, or regulations by the Tennessee General Assembly, the Tennessee Department of Education, or the Tennessee Board of Education that require the implementation of unfunded mandates.