



# North Carolina State Board of Education

The State Board of Education is charged with supervising and administering "the free public school system and the educational funds provided for its support."

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## sbe highlights

Notes on the state board of education...

May 5-6, 2004

Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to [/sbe\\_meetings/0405\\_sbagenda.html](#) Click on the appropriate agenda category, High Student Performance (HSP); Quality Teachers, Administrators and Staff (QP); Effective and Efficient Operations (EEO); Healthy Students in Safe, Orderly and Caring Schools (SS); or Strong Family, Community and Business Support (FCB).

### Issue Session • All Kinds of Minds

Board members heard a presentation by Dr. Mel Levine, Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Clinical Center for the Study of Development and Learning at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine and Founder of All Kinds of Minds. His presentation, "Understanding the Needs of Different Kinds of Minds: Implications for Enabling North Carolina to Become a Future Guiding Light for American Education," discussed the importance of focusing on children's strengths in addition to their weaknesses as their strengths are often the gateway to their success in life. Levine said that educators are doing a disservice to the diversity of students' minds by treating all students the same and added that accountability is important but it should not come at the cost of individuality. He also said that it was important not to label children but to label their phenomenon. Following his presentation and comments/questions by Board members, Chairman Lee advocated for a closer relationship between the Board and Levine to take greater advantage of his expertise, especially in the area of professional development. Levine supported the suggestion but also encouraged the Board to consider systemic changes and not just professional development and that this will require a change in school priorities and stronger support of the All Kinds of Minds philosophy by the state.

### Action Agenda

*Report on the Expenditure of Funds Allocated to Provide Assistance to the State's Low-Performing Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and to Assist Schools in Meeting Adequate Yearly Progress as Required by NCLB (HSP 1)* • Board members approved a report to the General Assembly regarding the LEA Assistance Program. The required evaluation report described how LEAs were selected for assistance, the measurable goals and objectives for the assistance program, a description of the assistance provided and findings of the assistance program. Expenditure information and recommendations for future activities also were included in the report. The expenditures for 2002-04 have been approximately \$94,000, with an additional \$37,500 in projected expenditures. Assistance has been focused on the following school districts: Hoke County, Weldon City, Edgecombe County, Northampton County, Hertford County and Bertie County. The report recommends that the program be continued to provide support and assistance to systems with limited resources and capacity to assist schools; that the funding be increased so that the appropriate number of personnel can be contracted to adequately serve the needs in designated LEAs; that the program be continued to meet a No Child Left Behind requirement that states provide assistance to LEAs not making Adequate Yearly Progress; and that funds supporting this program be allowed to roll over to the next year rather than reverting at year's end. The Board requested that it be communicated to the General Assembly that, because of No Child Left Behind, the number of schools and districts needing assistance will increase significantly and the state's resources to address these needs must be adjusted accordingly.

*Additional Modifications to the NC Accountability Workbook for NCLB (HSP 2)* • Amendments to North Carolina's Accountability Workbook were approved. These amendments provide to North Carolina schools the same level of flexibility that other states have been able to provide to their schools. The amendments include: use of a 95 percent confidence interval when determining Adequate Yearly Progress; criteria for entering Title I School improvement will be not making AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area; testing exemptions for students with serious medical emergencies; procedures for the 1 percent cap for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities; assessment regulations for students with limited English proficiency assessments; procedures for targeted assistance schools; the new recognition category, Honor Schools of Excellence, for Schools of Excellence that make AYP; participation rate calculations using an average of last two out of three years; and a request to apply all US Department of Education changes retroactively. The Board asked that the discussion regarding graduation rates be postponed until the June meeting when the Superintendent would be present.

*Mathematics and Science Partnership Grants (EEO 2)* • A total of \$2.3 million in Mathematics and Science Partnership Grants were approved for the Appalachian Region Math Science Partnership; the Middle Grades Mathematics Science Partnership for Durham Public Schools; the CMS Summer Workshops in Mathematics (CMS SWIM); and the Pursuing Excellence in Middle Grades Math and Science (Nash-Rocky Mount Schools/Franklin County).

### Discussion Items

*Revision of Student Accountability Standards Policies (HSP 3)* • Revisions to the Student Accountability Standards Policies were discussed to correct typographical errors, correct an unintentional omission from original policy and align the policy with state and federal regulations.

*Request Permission to Revise the Healthful Living Standard Course of Study (HSP 4)* • Board members considered a request to revise the Healthful Living Standard Course of Study. Two focus groups of teachers, central office curriculum coordinators, teachers and IHE representatives met in November 2003 to consider the need for a revision to the current health issues in the Standard Course of Study as the result of the National Standards for Physical Education being revised. If a revision were approved, it would be finalized and presented for final approval in November 2005.

*Revisions in the Course for Credit Policy (HSP 5)* • As a result of the changes in the weighted credit policy, local superintendents have requested that the course for credit policy be changed. Proposed changes would exempt courses taken for high school graduation requirements at community colleges and private or public colleges/universities from the 135 or 150 instructional hours requirement that high schools must meet. Each local superintendent would ensure that all required and elective courses have sufficient rigor, breadth and depth to be awarded high school credit. The State Board requested that this item be further discussed at its June meeting as the policy has implications for high school reform.

*Recommendations for Suspended and Expelled Students (HSP 6)* • Short- and long-term suspensions and expulsions significantly increase the likelihood of inappropriate student outcomes and unproductive behavior. In recognition of this, DPI and various external agency partners did a comprehensive review of research on school suspension and expulsion data and developed recommendations to help reduce suspensions and expulsions so that students lose less instructional time. Board members discussed the 10 recommendations this month. They include:

- requiring local school districts to incorporate goals and objectives related to suspensions and expulsions into their School Improvement and Safe Schools Alternative Education Plans;
- providing training on topics such as diversity, classroom management, conflict resolution, instructional practices and Student Services Management programs to school district staff who work with students who have behavioral and academic problems;
- encouraging local programs designed to address needs of suspended and expelled students;
- encouraging collaboration between local schools, community resources and faith-based groups to reduce suspensions and expulsions, to bring awareness to the importance of keeping all students engaged in school and to identify successful strategies.

This report will be considered further in June.

*Approval of Plans for Flexible Use of Mentoring Funds (QP 1)* • Fourteen local school district plans for the flexible use of mentor funds were considered this month. These plans have been submitted under the 2003 Budget Bill special provision that allows local education agencies to have flexibility in the use of mentor funds provided the local board's plan for use of the funds is approved by the State Board of Education. Action on this item is scheduled for June.

*Revision of Teacher Education Specialty Area Standards (QP 2)* • Revised specialty area standards for Academically/Intellectually Gifted, Health Education, School Media Coordinator and Speech/Language Pathology were considered with an effective date of Fall 2005. Teacher Education Programs are reviewed every seven years for revision.

*State Evaluation Committee Program Approval Recommendations (QP 3)* • Full approval has been recommended for Teacher Education Programs at Barton College, Bennett College, Campbell University, Johnson C. Smith University and Shaw University (Birth-Kindergarten program only). Action will be taken on this item in June.

*Title I School Improvement Funds (EEO 3)* • A new formula for allocating Title I School Improvement funds was considered this month. Each state reserves an amount from its Title I, Part A allocation (2 percent in 2003-04 and 4 percent beginning with the 2004-05 school year) for Title I school improvement activities. A new allocation formula for these dollars has been developed because the current formula for allotting Title I School Improvement funds will not accommodate the increase in the number of schools expected to be in Title I school improvement in 2004-05. The new formula would allocate funds using two components: a base amount per local education agency and a per pupil amount. The Board will consider approving the new formula at its June meeting.

*Rural Flexibility ?hly Qualified Teachers (EEO 5)* • In March, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige announced additional flexibility in the area of highly qualified teachers. One element allows designated rural school systems to have additional time to meet the highly qualified teacher requirements. In North Carolina, Hyde County Schools and approximately 26 charter schools will be able to use this flexibility because they are the only school systems that meet the federal definition of rural (less than 600 students in average daily attendance or less than 10 persons per square mile and all schools in the system classified as rural using National Center for Education Statistics data). This month, the Board considered language that will be added to North Carolina's Consolidated State Application to incorporate this new flexibility into North Carolina's strategies for recruiting and retaining "Highly Qualified" teachers. This item will be considered for approval in June.

### Information Items

*Annual Report: State Advisory Council on Indian Education (HSP 7)* • In 2002-03, the percentage of American Indian students in grades 3-8 performing at or above grade level (Level III) on reading and mathematics end-of-grade tests jumped nearly 10 percentage points, to 72.3 percent. This is the highest point yet for this group of students. At the high school level, American Indian student performance also continued to improve reaching a level of 58.2 percent of students proficient in five core courses. Although these improvements are very positive, American Indian students continue to have high dropout rates and to perform below other groups of students on state tests. The State Advisory Council on Indian Education highlighted such information in its 2004 annual report, "Our Voice, Your Voice, One Voice: Nurturing American Indian Families for School Success." In addition, the report provided four key recommendations to help American Indian students to continue making impressive strides in academic achievement. These recommendations are:

- Improve the quality and quantity of data available regarding American Indian students and their educational trajectories.
- Foster partnerships between high schools and the local business community with a specific focus on American Indian students' preparation for and attainment of skilled, year-round employment.
- Actively support professional development for teachers to enhance their knowledge of American Indian history and culture.
- Actively support programs that nurture American Indian families for school success.

The Board asked for specific recommendations from the Council as to how it might address the disturbing number of American Indian students dropping out of school.

### Good News

The State Board of Education recognized a number of recent recipients of special recognition or honors:

- National Education Association's 2003 National Teaching Excellence Award - Tommy O'Briant (Brian) Freeman, second grade teacher, Robeson County Schools
- 2004 National Middle Schools to Watch
  - Dixon Middle School, Onslow County Schools
  - East Burke Middle School, Burke County Schools
  - East Lincoln Middle School, Lincoln County Schools
  - John Griffin Middle School, Cumberland County Schools
  - Reid Ross Classical School, Cumberland County Schools
  - South Charlotte Middle School, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
- 2003 Blue Ribbon Schools
  - Arlington Elementary School, Gaston County Schools
  - Washington Park Elementary School, Scotland County Schools

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