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sbe highlights

Notes on the state board of education...

November 3-4, 2004

Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to [/sbe_meetings/0411_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).

Issues Session - Family Involvement

Board members participated in an issues session regarding Family Involvement at their November meeting. The session was initiated at Board members' request to review research about effective family or parental involvement, to understand the federal requirements in this area and to consider the activities already underway at the Department of Public Instruction. Activities of the Department include a variety of initiatives to support parents, provide advisory or decision-making opportunities to families and parents and provide informational materials geared to this audience. Board members also discussed their views of the importance of stronger parental and family involvement and began conversation concerning a state policy on family or parental involvement and other next steps that the Board might take to enhance parental involvement.

Action Agenda Items

- *Standards for Honors Courses (HSP 1)* - The Board approved standards for the use of honors courses to be effective with the 2005-06 school year, with some exceptions. Career Technical Education courses that already have in place an industry certification will be eligible for five quality points for the 2004-05 school year. Honor versions of all other courses shall adhere to, align with and reflect these North Carolina Honors Course Standards. Local school systems have the responsibility of designating honors courses and ensuring that such courses are distinguished by a difference in the quality of work expected. In addition, and prior to the honors designation, the revised policy notes, there must be a curriculum guide and administrative review of each proposed course. The development, review and approval process must be established and ongoing in each school and/or system to ensure honors courses warrant the additional weighted credit. Honors courses may be in all academic disciplines including healthful living and arts education courses.
- *Compliance Commission Recommendation for ABCs to Include the Writing Scores in the Performance Composite of the ABCs for the 2004-05 School Year (HSP 2)* - The writing assessment results at Grades 4, 7 and 10 will be included in the performance composite of the ABCs using a statistically generated confidence interval effective with the 2005-06 school year. The writing assessments will be administered during the 2004-05 school year but will not be part of the ABCs growth or performance composite calculations. The writing results for the 2004-05 school year will be reported by school and district and the results will be used as part of the Student Accountability Standards policy for grades 5 and 8. The Board, responding to a recommendation from local superintendents, voted to delay using the writing scores in the performance composite this year to ensure that teachers are adequately trained in the new writing assessments.
- *State Evaluation Committee Program Approval Recommendations (QP 1)* - Teacher education program approvals were granted to Duke University for all undergraduate programs through 2010-11 with the stipulation that concerns related to the social studies program coordinator be addressed. Provisional approval for the MAT programs was granted through 2005-06. Methodist College received provisional approval through 2005-06. Methodist College withdrew the following programs from consideration: Middle Grades, English, French, Spanish, Academically Intellectually Gifted, and Reading. Wingate University gained full approval through 2010-11 pending Continuing NCATE Accreditation, with some stipulations.
- *2005-07 Biennial Budget Request (EEO 1)* - After a lengthy work session, the Board approved its biennial budget request for submission to the Governor's budget office. The budget request totals \$232.5 million in 2005-06 and \$229.45 million in 2006-07. Key priorities among the 19 items include eliminating the LEA discretionary reduction which requires LEAs and charter schools to return a portion of their allotment (\$44.3 million), providing supplemental funding for disadvantaged students, a key strategy to address the Supreme Court ruling on Leandro (\$25 million); providing full-time mentors at 1 per 15 teachers in their first three years of teaching as a tool for reducing teacher turnover (\$33.3 million); high school reform efforts ? expand the Learn and Earn program (\$5.3 million); and fund school technology facilitators in schools with 8th grade and increase funding for LEA on-line subscriptions (SAS in Schools) and distance learning (\$32.6 million). This budget request was developed with significant input from educators in local systems, as well as with input from other stakeholder groups and Board members. In addition, the Board's letter to the Governor stressed continued support for ABC bonuses and for salary increases for teachers.
- *Waiver Policy for School Calendar Start and End Date Changes (EEO 2)* - A policy on waivers to the school calendar law's start and end date changes was approved, paving the way for eligible school districts to prepare waiver submissions for consideration in December. Under the law, there are two circumstances that could make school districts or schools eligible for waivers: a history (eight days in four of the last 10 years) of being closed for inclement weather and for educational purposes.
- *Recommendation to Revoke the Charter of Laurinburg Charter School (EEO 3)* - The charter of the Laurinburg Charter School was revoked by Board vote effective at the end of the school's first semester or Jan. 15, whichever comes first. There were five grounds listed for the revocation, including failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management and failure to meet the requirements for student performance contained in the charter.

Action on First Reading

- *Annual Report from the NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission (QP 2)* - The Annual Report from the NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission was approved, including support for the Commission's request for legislative support of the Teacher Working Conditions Initiative. The Commission is working on a comprehensive public relations campaign to support the next working conditions survey, on becoming a repository of best practices for North Carolina schools and on establishing an electronic database of statewide professional development offerings, as is being recommended by the Education Cabinet's North Carolina Professional Development Initiative.
- *Approval of Federal Grants (EEO 4)* - Federal grants were approved in the following categories: Refugee Children School Impact Grants, NCLB Enhancing Education through Technology Grant Awards - Community Learning Centers, Fruit and Vegetable Program awarded to NC DPI from USDA, and Even Start Family Literacy Programs - Recommended Supplemental Grant Awards 2004-05.
- *Renewal Recommendation for Alpha Academy (EEO 5)* - The Alpha Academy Charter School was approved for a 10-year renewal.
- *2003-04 Annual Report on School Crime and Violence (SS 1)* - The 2003-04 Annual Report on School Crime and Violence shows increases in the number of acts reported by local school districts, yet nearly one-half (46 percent) of all schools reported no acts of crime or violence. Another 40 percent of schools reported five or fewer acts. There were 9,800 reportable acts of crime and violence for a rate of 7.371 acts per 1,000 students statewide. In 2002-03, there were 8,548 reportable acts of crime and violence for a rate of 6.581 per 1,000 students. State education leaders note that there has been a concerted effort over the past several years to improve reporting by standardizing definitions, clarifying what should be included in the report, providing statewide training, and streamlining the process for submission of data. The annual report tracks 17 reportable offenses, three of which were added in 2002 by the State Board of Education: bomb threats, possession of alcoholic beverages and burning of school buildings. About 40 percent of all local school systems experienced a decline in the number of reportable offenses, three school systems experienced no change, and 57 percent of school systems experienced an increase. As in the past, the four most frequently occurring incidents account for most of the reported acts of violence or crime on public school grounds. Accounting for 91 percent of all reported acts are: possession of a controlled substance in violation of law the law (3,848); possession of a weapon excluding firearms and powerful explosives (3,402), possession of an alcoholic beverage (841), and assault on school personnel not resulting in serious injury (834).
- *SBE/NC DPI Response to House Bill 1354: Short Title: Strengthen Domestic Violence Laws (SS 2)* - Board approval was granted to a preliminary report, including an overview of the antiviolenace/domestic violence topics highlighted in the House bill.

Discussion Agenda

- *Compliance Commission Recommendations Regarding Middle Schools and ABCs Results (HSP 4)* - Last week, the State Board of Education continued to review the 2003-04 performance of middle schools under the ABCs. Few middle schools (about one-third) met their growth goals, and there has been discussion across the state about whether the ABCs growth calculations should be re-calculated without including sixth grade reading - the subject and grade with the lowest performance. At the November meeting, Superintendent Patricia Willoughby presented the Board members with the views expressed by local superintendents, principals and teachers at their regular advisory meetings as well as the Compliance Commission's recommendations and described two options: (1) approving the Compliance Commission recommendation to re-calculate the growth without sixth grade reading, and (2) maintaining the results of the 2003-04 ABCs results. This item was on the Board's discussion agenda and will be brought back as an action item in December. In addition, the Superintendent reminded the Board that when the 2002-03 scores were tremendously positive, there had been recommendations to reevaluate the model to see if testing was rigorous enough. The advisory committees' recommendations in 2002-03 were to let the high scores stand and not to make changes based on one year of data. A comprehensive review of the ABCs model is underway, as required by law, and recommendations are expected in the early spring. These could apply in the 2005-06 school year.
- *Reappointment or Replacement of Compliance Commission Members and Appointment of a New Chairperson (HSP 5)* - Board members were asked to consider replacements for five departing members of the Compliance Commission. Also, a new chair of the Commission needs to be appointed. Action is expected on this item in December.
- *Evaluation of High Priority Schools Initiatives: Second Annual Report (HSP 6)* - The second annual evaluation of the High Priority Schools Initiative found that the initiative has been fully implemented in nearly all High Priority Schools by 2003-04, although these schools still face a number of challenges in implementation. These include recruiting, hiring and retaining fully certified and experienced teachers and developing parental involvement strategies. Three key recommendations were provided: Offer guidance on best practices for implementing the four components of the HP Schools Initiative; provide the HP districts and schools with more flexibility to design the extended school year component in a way that best meets local needs; and explore the extent to which the HP districts may already be using a K-2 assessment that could provide evaluation data for those target grade levels.
- *Revision of the North Carolina Second Language Standard Course of Study (HSP 8)* - The North Carolina Second Language Standard Course of Study was last revised in 1999. Based on input from stakeholders only minor revisions were made to incorporate the Latin curriculum, the Spanish for Native Speakers curriculum and Advanced Placement courses. This item will be submitted for approval in December. The new curriculum can be accessed at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/second_languages/index.html.
- *English Language Arts Standard Course of Study Clarification (HSP 9)* - In August 2004, the State Board of Education granted permission for minor clarification of goals and objectives of the North Carolina English Language Arts Standard Course of Study, last revised in 1999. These minor changes will allow more understanding of the intent of the original document and support teachers' implementation of the standards. Standards for English Language Arts Advanced Placement courses also are included with this version of the course of study. This item will be submitted for action in December. The new curriculum can be viewed at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/languagearts/>.

Good News

IMPACT Schools Update - Last March, the State Board approved funds totaling \$450,000 per year for three years to 11 schools that needed assistance in helping teachers integrate technology into their teaching practice. The grants funded technology personnel, resources and access. Billy Stallings, Principal at Perquimans Central School, and Dr. Kenneth Wells, Perquimans Superintendent, described the effects of the IMPACT grant on their schools. So far, the grant has helped to improve school environments and to promote different learning and teaching styles. Teachers lessons are now more likely to incorporate student centered activities, extended projects, lab and fieldwork, media presentations and the use of computers. Teacher retention and recruitment, collaboration, and a sense of excitement and exploration have been enhanced. IMPACT Model schools provide a technology-rich teaching and learning environment and a resource-rich teaching and learning environment to support collaboration among teachers and media and technology personnel and strong administrative leadership and support.

Superintendent's Report

Hoke County and Local Education Agency Assistance Program Update - The eleven school districts receiving Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding (DSSF) are now working to implement their plans and this process is going smoothly. Five additional systems are working toward completion of plans to access DSS funds recently made available to implement the LEAAP model to eligible DSS districts.

DPI Reorganization - The Board reviewed a proposed reorganization of the Financial and Business Services area that is designed to maximize resources, assure quality and compliance and emphasize service delivery. The reorganization would place in the School Business Division all functions that serve local education agencies directly, including school allotments, information analysis and reporting, school personnel support and monitoring and compliance. The new structure consolidates five major work areas into four, assigns a financial analyst to Charter Schools, consolidates all agency functions into one division and moves textbook services into the School Support Services Division.

NC WISE Update - The Wave 1 rollout of NC WISE is proceeding smoothly and the new business technology project is now operating in 361 schools and serving more than 24,000 teachers and housing 286,008 student records. NC WISE was piloted for three years in six districts across the state, and began rollout this fall to the first wave of districts to the next two school years. SIMS, the 20-year-old model that NC WISE replaces, will no longer be supported after 2007. At that time, NC WISE is expected to be fully implemented.

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