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Notes on the state board of education...

**April 6-7, 2005**

Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to [http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe\\_meetings/0504\\_sbagenda.html](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0504_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 -

*Report on High School Dropouts, Suspensions/Expulsions, and Positive Behavioral Expectations* - In recognition of the links between the issues of dropouts, suspensions and expulsions and the Positive Behavioral Expectations program, this month's Issues Session focused on these three topics and how they are related to each other. The dropout rate went up slightly in 2003-04 after several years of decline. The number of suspensions also increased by 10.4 percent for short-term suspensions and by .9 percent for long-term suspensions. Expulsions are down by 42 percent to 205 students, possibly reflecting the rise in the number of alternative school opportunities now available. The report pulled together a matrix of all SBE-approved recommendations intended to address these issues, and also highlighted some potential solutions underway.

Eagle Academy at Davie High School, Davie County, is a school-within-a-school model that was designed locally for incoming ninth graders who seemed like probable dropout candidates. The academy's focus is on small classes (a cohort of 80 students), and a daily schedule of intensive focus on academics. In addition, the academy focuses on meeting the specific needs of each student. Six teachers/counselors work with this group of students. Students currently participating in this school told the State Board that the Academy experience had changed their view of themselves and also changed their goals to include high school graduation and further education. They credited much of this success to the relationships they have been able to establish with their teachers and with each other.

The Positive Behavior Support program is funded through the NC State Improvement Program funded through IDEA. It began in 2000 in North Carolina and is currently being used in varying degrees in 58 LEAs with all populations of students. By providing common language and understanding on behavior expectations, this program has helped schools using the model to significantly reduce suspensions. While this program began through the Exceptional Children's area, it is a school-wide model that benefits all students. The goal of the program centers on preventing behavior difficulties through better planning of the school environment to eliminate inadvertently rewarding unacceptable behavior and by correcting behavior errors proactively. Schools in Durham that have successfully implemented the program gained instruction time for all students because of fewer behavior distractions and fewer suspensions and expulsions. African American students have gained the most instructional time through this model.

### Action Agenda

- *Presentation of 2005 Invitation to Submit Textbooks for Evaluation and Adoption in North Carolina* (HSP 1) - The call to submit new textbooks for adoption in English language arts, K-12, was approved. The revised Invitation is available at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/textbook/2005invitation.pdf>.
- *Proposed Cut Scores for Tests Approved for State Competency Testing Program Per HB 801* (HSP 2) - In March, the SBE approved tests that could be used as alternate means and standards for meeting state competency standards. At that time cut scores were not available for three tests, but they are now available and were presented for action. The tests and scores are ACT's PLAN (20 verbal; 20 for mathematics); ACT's COMPASS (83 verbal; 45 mathematics); and The College Board's ACCUPLACER (87 verbal; 82 mathematics).
- *Changes to NC Accountability Workbook for LEA Improvement Status Appeals Process* (HSP 3) - The central change made to the state's Accountability Workbook is that a school district could be placed in improvement if it missed Adequate Yearly Progress targets in each of the three grade spans (3-5, 6-8 and high school) in the same subject for two years in a row. The Board also approved changes to the appeal's process for LEAs being considered for LEA improvement status.
- *Revision of Interim Initial Licensure Reporting Requirements* (QP 2) - With the approval of these requirements, the compliance of local education agencies (LEAs), charter schools and non-public institutions with an approved Initial Licensure Program (ILP) with statutory and Board policy requirements as they relate to the support and assessment of beginning teachers will now be reviewed as part of the monitoring of teacher qualifications under No Child Left Behind. On-site monitoring reviews will be conducted to review records of teachers participating in the ILP, and Findings of Corrective Action could result from these reviews. Results will be reported to the State Board.
- *Proposed Revision of Program Approval Standards* (QP 3) - The most noteworthy change in the revisions approved this month to the Program Approval Standards is that institutions will now be required to designate a coordinator for alternative licensure programs, a change recommended by the Select Committee on Lateral Entry.
- *Proposed Revision of Master's Level Program Standards* (QP 4) - Changes to these standards were approved to better align the standards for master's level teacher licensure programs with the format used in other licensure areas. These changes do not require substantive changes in candidate performance expectations.

### Action on First Reading

- *Report on Reconfiguring the Exit Exam to Meet Requirements of No Child Left Behind* (HSP 4) - This report to the General Assembly recommends no further development of the Exit Exam and that the five end-of-course assessments required of all students in three courses of study (College/ University Preparation, College Tech Preparation, Career Preparation), along with a senior project, be used as an exit standard. The EOC assessments to be used are Algebra I, Biology, English I, Civics and Economics, and U.S. History.
- *Revision to Healthy Active Children Policy, HSP-S-000* (HSP 7) - The Healthy Active Children Policy (HSP-S-000) approved by the State Board in 2003 was revised this month to include a requirement for 30 minutes of daily physical activity during the school day for grades K-8. This activity may include such items as physical education, energizer activities, recess and intramurals. The Board also agreed to appoint an ad hoc committee of the SBE and stakeholders to study the feasibility of requiring specified numbers of minutes of physical education. A coalition of advocacy groups have been working on this item for legislation this year based on the recommendations issued by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention for providing physical education and physical activity for children.
- *Change Date for Educational Interpreters for the Deaf to Meet New Standards* (QP 5) - Educational interpreters for the deaf will have until July 1, 2006, to meet the Level I standard for interpreting. This schedule change will allow more time for training and for scheduling the needed assessments.
- *Late Item: Revision of Initial Licensure and Continuing Licensure Requirements to Facilitate the Employment of Teachers* (QP 12) - In January 2004, the State Board received a report from the Select Committee on Teacher Reciprocity listing seven recommendations to facilitate licensing of teachers from other states as well as from North Carolina teacher education programs. This month, the Board approved licensure changes in response to this work. These changes are designed to expand the pool of potential teachers available for hire while still maintaining strong standards for teacher quality. The changes, which will be effective for the 2005-06 school year, do the following:
  - The current Initial License will be replaced with the Standard Professional License 1.
  - To receive a Standard Professional License 1, an individual must complete an approved teacher education program and meet the federal definition of "Highly Qualified." Teachers who have completed approved teacher education programs in other states, who have met the requirements to be designated "Highly Qualified" in that state, shall be deemed to have met the "Highly Qualified" requirement in North Carolina.
  - The standard Professional License 1 shall be valid for three years of teaching.
  - The current Continuing License will be replaced with the Standard Professional License 2.
  - To be issued a Standard Professional License 2, an individual must:
    - have three years of satisfactory teaching experience, at least one of which must be in North Carolina; and
    - have the recommendation of the employing LEA; and
    - complete any professional development activities prescribed by the LEA; and
    - satisfy NC teaching requirements, or hold National Board Certification, or submit documentation of the ability to positively impact student achievement, or satisfactorily complete the NC High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) for the license areas. The State Board of Education will oversee HOUSSE evaluations and adopt the specific protocol to be used in documenting the ability to positively impact student achievement.

### Discussion

- *Evaluate Validity of ABCs Accountability System Based on HB 1414* (HSP 5) - Board members continue to consider the evaluation of the ABCs and accompanying recommendations for changing the ABCs formulas. This item was explored in detail in March, with action expected as early as May.
- *Mathematics and Science Tests Implementation Schedule and ABCs Update* (HSP 6) - In February 2005, State Superintendent Tricia Willoughby shared with Board members the U.S. Department of Education's response regarding the proposed mathematics implementation schedule. The U.S. Department of Education would require North Carolina to enter into a compliance agreement if mathematics in grades 7 and 8 are not tested during the 2005-06 school year. In response, the DPI has chosen to modify the implementation schedule to include testing mathematics in grades 7 and 8 for the 2005-06 school year rather than enter into a compliance agreement. A change in the schedule for science also was presented to align with the use of Biology in the 2006-07 school year as part of the proposed high school exit standards.
- *High School Exit Standards Model Recommendations* (HSP 8) - The Board continued to consider recommendations for new high school exit standards that are proposed to be effective with the freshman class of 2007. DPI staff have recommended requiring students to pass all five required end-of-course assessments and a senior project with re-test and review processes that are aligned with current retesting opportunities for the Student Accountability Standards at grades 3, 5 and 8.
- *State Board Definition of Academic Rigor, Relevance and Relationships* (HSP 9) - A definition of academic rigor, discussed. Academic rigor, according to the policy definition, is based on expectations established for students and staff that ensure that students demonstrate a thorough, in-depth mastery of challenging and complete curricula.
- *Proposed Revision of License Renewal Requirements for School Administrators* (QP 7) - Proposed revisions discussed this month would require school administrators to focus renewal credits on teacher effectiveness, teacher support, teacher leadership, teacher empowerment and teacher retention. The revisions are from the SBE Task Force on Teacher Retention, which recommended that the renewal requirements should be focused in this way in recognition of the critical role school administrators play in recruiting and retaining quality teachers.
- *License Renewal Credit for National Board Certification Renewal* (QP 8) - A plan to grant five hours of renewal credit to teachers completing the National Board certification renewal process was considered by the Board. This item will be considered for approval in May.
- *Proposed Revision of Lateral Entry Licensure Policies* (QP 9) - A variety of revisions to the lateral entry licensure policies were proposed as a result of the recommendations offered by the Select Committee on Lateral Entry. These revisions recognize the role of community colleges in teacher preparation and offer a review of systems for oversight, monitoring and mentoring of lateral entry teachers.
- *NCLB Highly Qualified Requirements for Exceptional Children's and ESL Teachers* (QP 10) - Revisions were proposed to bring licensure policies in compliance with the newly reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

### Information Agenda

- *Articulation Agreement and Promising Reform Initiatives in Career-Technical Education* (HSP 10) - Title I of the Carl D. Perkins Career-Technology Education Act specifies that the state is to develop program improvements in curriculum areas that are responsive to growing labor market needs and emerging technologies. Two programs were highlighted in this area: the NC Business and Information Technology Education courses e-Commerce I and II with students from West Stanly High School describing the work they do in these courses; and the CTE Early Childhood Education program and on-site five-star child care center at Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Career Center.
- *Report of Student Performance in Writing* (HSP 12) - The results of the 2003-04 writing assessments were presented for information. For the fourth grade, 10 percent of students received Achievement Level I, 51 percent received Achievement Level II and 37 percent of the students received Achievement Level III, the score considered to be passing. Less than 2 percent received Achievement Level IV, the highest possible score. For seventh graders, 6.5 percent of students received Achievement Level I, 48 percent received Achievement Level II, and 45.5 percent received Achievement Level III. Less than 1 percent of seventh grade students received Achievement Level IV. For 10th graders, 9.4 percent of students received Achievement Level I, 38.1 percent of students received Achievement Level II and 51.9 percent received Achievement Level III. Less than 1 percent of 10th graders received Achievement Level IV.
- *Update on the Online Test of Computer Skills* (HSP 13) - A new online Test of Computer Skills and the alternate assessment are scheduled for use in the 2005-06 school year. This new test will replace the current assessment that is now designed to operate on nearly 30 different computer platforms. The alternate assessment is being made available for the approximately 15-20 percent of schools that lack the proper technology to allow students to take an online assessment. The Board questioned the feasibility and equity of implementing the new test if some schools are still unable to accommodate the new platform. The Board decided to appoint a sub-committee to study this issue.
- *Annual Report: State Advisory Council on Indian Education* (HSP 14) - The Annual Report from the State Advisory Council on Indian Education was presented for information. The report included six recommendations, including the creation of a position at DPI to focus on Indian Education issues, more research on suspensions and expulsions of American Indian students, continued emphasis on improving the quality and quantity of data regarding American Indian students, support for programs and initiatives to support American Indian students, and continued support for professional development for teachers to enhance their knowledge of American Indian history and culture. This year's report was dedicated to Priscilla Maynor, for her exemplary service to Indian Education. Maynor is the executive director for Internal Operations at DPI.

### Good News

*NC Counselors Association: Counselors and Accountability* - Representatives of the NC Counselors Association presented information about the important role of the professional guidance counselor and offered recommendations to the Board. These include aligning the school counselor job description with the American School Counselor Association's description, protecting school counselors' time for direct student services, ensuring school counselors are not employed as test coordinators and lowering the ratio of students to counselors to 250:1. The Board agreed to study the current job description and asked staff to bring back this information at a future State Board of Education meeting.

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