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Notes on the state board of education...

## August 3-4, 2005

*Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to [http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe\\_meetings/0508\\_sbagenda.html](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0508_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

#### Video Presentation

The Board viewed a special video presented by Board member John Tate. The video, Thomas L. Friedman Reporting: Searching for the Roots of 9/11, was presented as a backdrop for considering the need for public school reform.

#### Update on High School Reform Initiatives

Since January 2004, when the New Schools Project began in earnest, this work has been joined by other state and local initiatives to reform and improve high schools. This month, the Board's Issues Session included a comprehensive update on these activities by Dr. Tony Habit, executive director, and Sofi Frankowski, program director, New Schools Project; Herman Norman, principal, and Cathy McCluskey, teacher, at East Wake High School; Carolyn White, director, Learn and Earn; and Dr. Elsie Leak, associate superintendent for Curriculum and School Reform Services at the Department of Public Instruction.

Efforts at high school redesign carry a strong sense of urgency to improve student performance and achievement, to improve teacher and administrator satisfaction and professionalism and to provide an educational foundation for North Carolina economic development. Several key goals support these efforts including improving student attendance, improving graduation rates, strengthening college/workforce readiness, improving teacher effectiveness and satisfaction, boosting school teamwork and decreasing behavior issues. Priorities of the New Schools Project are to build a consensus approach to redesign and innovation and to establish new high schools or redesign existing ones. Since January 2004, a total of 25 New Schools have begun operating. By September 2006, it is expected that 96 New Schools will be in place. The existing programs include East Wake High School.

Redesigned schools commit to academic rigor; effective, academic support; flexibility; a shared focus; relevance; changes in instructional strategy; wide access to college-level work; diversity of students; and the provision of work-based experience. The pace of change represented by the New Schools Project is a challenge, as is the work required to maintain a balance of effort and participation by the many partners involved in this work. Currently, the New Schools Project, the American Diploma Project, the Center for 21st Century Skills and also local high school innovation projects all are ongoing.

The Department of Public Instruction has been offering support for high school improvement and innovation in a variety of activities. These include efforts to reinforce literacy instruction across the high school curriculum, a Reading and Writing for Learning partnership with the Southern Regional Education Board, High School Writing Institutes, Second Language Literacy Sessions, professional development for mathematics teachers, online Advanced Placement courses, AP fee reduction efforts, the SREB High Schools that Work, and assistance to high schools designated as low performing.

### Action Agenda

- *Science Laboratory Safety (HSP 1)* — A new policy on science laboratory safety was approved concerning local Chemical Hygiene Plans for each school district and requirements for professional development in science laboratory safety. This item was presented and discussed over the past two Board meetings.
- *Report of the E-Learning Commission (HSP 2)* — The state's first virtual school pilot was approved this month, a product of the E-Learning Commission's work over the past several months. With this approval, the next step will be formulating a North Carolina Virtual (NCV) Advisory Board and naming an interim director that can carry out the operational plan contained in the E-Learning Commission's report. This Board will report directly to the State Board during the pilot year. Appropriate, existing online courses, professional development models and other structures will be included in the pilot year's activities.
- *Policy Delineating the Test Development Process for the North Carolina Writing Assessment (HSP 3)* — The Board approved a new policy describing the test development process for the North Carolina Writing Assessments at grades 4, 7, and 10. The policy describes the process used by DPI to develop the writing prompts, to conduct the range finding to set scoring standards, to conduct the hand-scoring, the involvement of the advisory committees, the involvement of the contractor and reporting the results.
- *No Child Left Behind HOUSSE (High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation) Components for Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science and Physics Teachers (QP 1)* — The HOUSSE for teachers who are not new to the profession and who teach a specific science subject was approved this month.
- *Revision of Licensure Renewal Policy for Expired Licenses (QP 2)* — In July 1999, the State Board adopted a policy to allow individuals whose non-provisional licenses had expired to be issued a validated license for three years. During the three-year period, the individual was expected to complete 15 renewal credits. Because individuals with validated licenses do not meet the federal definition of "Highly Qualified" and because school districts need to be able to employ such individuals, the renewal policy was revised to provide these individuals with a Standard Professional 1 or Standard Professional 2 license.
- *State Evaluation Committee Program Approval Recommendations (QP 3)* — Approvals for teacher education programs were provided as follows: Brevard College (temporary authorization for programs in art, elementary education, music and science); Chowan College (provisional approval for elementary education, comprehensive social studies education, music education and physical education through 2006-07 with a full revisit no later than spring 2007); Elizabeth City State University (full approval middle grades education and physical education programs to coincide with the institution's approval cycle); Guilford College (provisional approval for teacher education programs through 2005-06 with revisit in spring 2006 to verify that concerns have been addressed); Lees-McRae College (full approval through 2010-11 pending continued NCATE or TEAC accreditation); Lenoir-Rhyne College (full approval through 2010-2011 with the stipulation that concerns related to licensure of French Program methods faculty be addressed by December 2005); Livingstone College (full approval through 2011-12 pending continued NCATE or TEAC accreditation with stipulation that concerns related to Standard 1 for Physical Education program be addressed by December 2005).
- *Recommendations for Preliminary Approval of 2005 Charter School Applications (EEO 1)* — The Board approved one new charter school, Roxboro Community School in Person County. This school will serve grades 7-12 and will be based on William Purkey's Invitational Theory of Learning. This brings North Carolina to 100 charter schools, the current limit under state law.

### Action on First Reading Agenda

- *The 2004-05 ABCs/AYP Report and 2005-06 Assistance Program (HSP 4)* — North Carolina students' proficiency rates dipped slightly in 2004-05, and 69 percent of schools met or exceeded academic growth expectations, according to accountability results approved by the State Board this month. This marks the final year that school accountability was measured with the original growth formulas of the ABCs of Public Education, North Carolina's nearly 10-year-old school accountability program. The State Board approved new formulas in May after a comprehensive review of the original formulas and their capacity to reflect accurately the academic growth of schools. The new formulas are to go into effect in 2005-06.

Results of the ABCs growth formulas showed that the formulas' effectiveness had decreased at the middle school level. As a result, middle school growth appeared unusually low for the second year in a row. Last year, when this occurred, the State Board of Education considered a variety of options, including calculating middle school growth without including sixth grade reading, the measure most affected by the formula's effectiveness. This year, because this phenomenon occurred for a second consecutive time, Board members chose to approve the ABCs results with sixth grade reading removed from the growth formula calculations. Sixth grade reading is only one of the six measures of middle school performance in the ABCs growth calculation. This action does not affect individual student scores and was one that was endorsed last year by the ABCs Compliance Commission for Accountability, an advisory group to the State Board.

In 2004-05, 490 schools, 21.9 percent, earned a designation as Honor Schools of Excellence, the highest category. Honor Schools of Excellence met at least Expected Growth, had 90 percent or more of their students' test scores at or above the proficient level and met the federal requirement of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Forty-six schools ( 2.1 percent) are Schools of Excellence, which means that they met at least Expected Growth and had 90 percent or more of their students' test scores at or above the proficient level. A total of 601 schools, or 26.8 percent, are designated as Schools of Distinction, which signifies that they met at least Expected Growth and had 80-89 percent of their students' test scores at proficient or better. A total of 273 schools, 12.2 percent, are Schools of Progress, which means these schools met at least Expected Growth and had 60-79 percent of their students' test scores at proficient or better. Six hundred seventy-four schools, or 30.1 percent, are Non Recognition schools. These schools did not meet their Expected Growth goals even though they had 60-100 percent of their students' test scores at the proficient level or better.

Fifty-five schools, 2.5 percent, are Priority Schools — schools with less than 60 percent of their students' test scores at the proficient level or better and making Expected Growth or High Growth and schools that have 50-59 percent of students' test scores at the proficient level or better regardless of growth. In 2004-05, 69 percent of all schools made Expected Growth or High Growth. This is down from the 75 percent that met Expected Growth or High Growth in 2003-04.

This year, four schools were identified as Low-Performing Schools. These schools have significantly less than 50 percent of their students' test scores at the proficient level or above and did not make Expected Growth or High Growth. The State Board of Education approved the assignment of a State Assistance Team to the following four schools: Northwest High School and Southeast Halifax High School, both in Halifax County; and T. Wingate Andrews High School and Middle College High School at NC A&T, both in Guilford County. Assistance teams of experienced educators have been assigned to some low-performing schools each year since the ABCs began to help these schools improve academic performance.

- *State Hearing Review Officers (HSP 5)* — Four individuals were approved as State Hearing Review Officers who will serve in the state's two-tier hearing and review system for special education due process hearings. These officers are Dr. George Griffin, assistant professor, chair of educational leadership, technology and research at N.C. Central University; Dr. Ralph G. Hall, attorney and Certified Mediator and Arbitrator for the State of North Carolina with the College of Education, Appalachian State University; Dr. Betty A. Levey, retired professor, special education/specific learning disabilities, East Carolina University; and Dr. Joe Walters, retired associate professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations, Western Carolina University.
- *Approval of Supplemental Education Service Providers for 2005-06 (HSP 6)* — Under No Child Left Behind, eligible students attending schools in the second year of Title I School Improvement have the option of receiving Supplemental Educational Services paid for with Title I funds. This month, the Board approved the list of supplemental education service providers from which parents may choose. Action was taken on first reading so that schools can begin contacting parents and offering service options at the beginning of the 2005-06 school year. A total of 66 applications was submitted by service providers, and 47 of them were approved. All local school districts will have a choice of providers.
- *Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding Program for 2005-06 (HSP 7)* — The 2005-06 school year is the second and final year of a pilot program for 16 school districts targeted to receive Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding. The goal of these funds is to support strategies to decrease the number of students who have not yet reached proficiency, Achievement Level III. All but five of the local districts' plans were approved this month. The remaining plans will be considered for approval the next meeting. Participants are Edgecombe County, Elizabeth City/Pasquotank, Franklin County, Halifax County, Hertford County, Hoke County, Hyde County, Lexington City, Montgomery County, Northampton County, Robeson County, Thomasville City, Vance County, Warren County, Washington County and Weldon City. Allotments total \$22.5 million for all districts, with individual district allotments based on \$250 per child.

### Discussion

*Policy Delineating Use of End-of-Course Tests for Accountability (HSP 8)* — Changes to the State Board policy HSP-C-003, were presented for discussion this month. These changes affect students taking Integrated Math courses. The changes specify that student enrolled in the Integrated Math sequence shall be administered the Algebra I end-of-course assessment at the end of the Integrated Math II course and be administered the Geometry and Algebra II end-of-course assessment at the end of the Integrated Math III course. There was some discussion that the Geometry end-of-course assessments would be administered during the Integrated Math III course so that there would not be two end-of-course assessments at the end. This item will be considered for action in September.

### Information Agenda

*Citizen-Soldier Support Program (FCB 1)* — Peter Leouis, deputy director of the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science at UNC-Chapel Hill, and Dr. Gloria Harbin, a senior scientist at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute and an associate professor in the School of Education at UNC-Chapel Hill, gave a presentation on the Citizen-Soldier Support Program. This program is a national demonstration program to mobilize community organizations and services to support and strengthen citizen-soldiers (National Guard and Reserves). The program targets a variety of public, governmental and non-governmental community groups to help provide this important support. Community liaisons are used to help make connections among these groups in support of these citizen-soldiers. Public schools are seen as a key factor in helping these families thrive, even in times of deployment. In North Carolina, there are more than 20,000 Guard and Reserve assigned to 137 troop units located in 92 communities. Reserve components make up about 38 percent of total military nationwide. More information about this program is available at [www.RibbonsToReality.org](http://www.RibbonsToReality.org).

### Good News

*Project Bright IDEA 1* — Dr. Daniel Cockman, superintendent of Thomasville City Schools, and Phyllis Lupton, principal, Thomasville Primary School, presented information about how their schools have been successful through the Project Bright IDEA 1 program. This program is designed to nurture potential and developing talent in K-2 children, with a special emphasis on meeting the needs of the gifted and underserved populations. The program, sponsored by the Exceptional Children division at DPI with strong collaboration from the Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps section, the American Association for Gifted Children at Duke University and a variety of other researchers and consultants, integrates the state's Standard Course of Study with Beginning Building Thinking Skills (Parks and Black) and incorporates New Taxonomies of Educational Objectives (Revised Blooms and Marzano). It represents a new way of thinking and teaching with a strong professional development component that helps teachers develop concept-based multicultural literature units that are supported by research. In Thomasville, students in the Bright Ideas program have made significant gains over their peers who were in traditional K-2 classrooms.

### Special Recognitions

*New SBE Advisors* — The Board formally welcomed its new advisors. They are Wendy A. Miller, 2005-06 North Carolina Teacher of the Year; Margaret E. Hyatt, 2005-06 Wachovia Principal of the Year; and William R. McNeal, 2005-06 SBE Superintendent Advisor.

*Senior Project State Board of Education Awards* — The Board recognized the winners of its annual Senior Project Awards. They are JoAnna Riddle, Rosman High School, Transylvania County, Senior Project Student Award; Kathleen Burr Bost, Alleghany High School, Senior Project Coordinator Recognition Award; and E.E. Smith High School, Cumberland County Schools System, Senior Project High School Recognition Award.

### New Business

*SBE Meeting Schedule for 2006* — The 2006 SBE meeting schedule was tentatively set as follows: Jan. 4-5, Feb. 1-2, March 1-2, April 5-6, May 3-4, May 31-June 1, July 12-13, Aug. 2-3, Sept. 6-7, Oct. 4-5, Nov. 1-2 and Dec. 6-7. In addition, it was announced that the October 2005 SBE meeting would be held in Charlotte.

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