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Notes on the state board of education...

Aug. 31- Sept. 1, 2005

Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0509_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

Additional Analyses of the 2004-05 ABCs Results — Additional analyses of the ABCs results were presented to Board members this month. A special focus of these analyses was the transitions that students make from one achievement level to another. For example, students who scored within three points of the Achievement Level cut scores had a higher tendency to move from one Achievement Level to another. Students with Disabilities transition from Level I to Level II at the same rate as other students, but they transition from a higher level to a lower level more frequently. Academically/Intellectually Gifted students transition from Level III to Level IV at about 2.5 times the state rate. When differences among racial/ethnic groups are considered, black, Hispanic and Asian students transition up in reading at the same rate as white students, except at Level IV. Black students transition down in reading at a higher rate than white students. Differences in transitions between black and white students were not as large in mathematics as they were in reading.

In addition to receiving information about student transitions from one achievement level to another, the Board received information about ways to raise achievement for high-performing students and concerns about addressing achievement gaps. Some barriers to closing achievement gaps include instructional delivery challenges, too little attention to scale scores, lack of rigor in designated "rigorous" (honors) courses, and other issues.

The main theme for addressing the needs of Academically/Intellectually Gifted students is to increase academic engagement, prowess, competition, and inquiry-based thinking. Approaches include using the Balanced Curriculum documents for elementary and middle grades to ensure that all areas of the curriculum, not just those that are tested, are taught; reviewing North Carolina's AIG programs statewide for consistent quality and academic strength; using differentiated instruction for meeting student needs; incorporating leadership roles and the art of oration as required components of study and behavior for Level III and IV students; designing expert projects as requiring students to do in-depth study and research; and create mentoring programs that enhance skills and abilities in academic areas where students exhibit special talents.

Action Agenda

- Policy Delineating Use of End-of-Course Tests for Accountability (HSP 1) ? The State Board approved changes to its policy on the use of end-of-course tests (HSP-C-003) to require students in Integrated Mathematics courses to take the Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry end-of-course tests. This vote initiated the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) rule-making process.

Action on First Reading Agenda

- Corrections to the ABCs/AYP Report (HSP 2) — Each year, the State Board approves corrections to the ABCs/AYP Report. This month, the SBE approved changes that place the following schools in the ABCs/AYP designations as listed:

Asheville City
o Hall Fletcher Elementary, ABCs status changed from School of Progress making expected growth to School of Distinction making expected growth.

Craven County
o Brinson Memorial Elementary, AYP status changed from Under Review to Yes, indicating that the school made AYP.
o Tucker Creek Middle, AYP Status changed from Under Review to Yes, indicating that the school made AYP.

Crossroads Charter - Remove from Unresolved Data list. School made expected growth. AYP status changed from Under Review to No, indicating the school did not make AYP.

Durham County
o George L. Carrington Middle - AYP status changed from Under Review to Yes, indicating that the school made AYP.

Edgecombe County
o Pattillo A+ School - AYP status changed from Not Met AYP to Met AYP.

Gray Stone Day - AYP status changed from No Met AYP to Met AYP.

Guilford County
o Phillip J. Weaver Education Center - ABCs status is School of Distinction making expected growth with performance composite of 86.2.

Johnston County
o Smithfield-Selma High - AYP status changed from Not Met AYP to Met AYP.

Lincoln Charter - ABCs status is School of Distinction making expected growth with performance composite of 85.6. Replace Under Review in AYP status column with Yes, indicating the School made AYP.

Mitchell County
o Gouge Elementary - ABCs status changed from School of Distinction making expected growth with performance composite of 88.3 to Honor School of Excellence with performance composite 92.6.

Robeson County
o Deep Branch Elementary - AYP status changed from Not Met AYP to Met AYP.

Sallie B. Howard School - ABCs status is School of No Recognition not making expected growth with performance composite of 68.3. AYP status changed from Under Review to No, indicating the school did not make AYP.

Stanly County
o Albemarle High - ABCs status is now School of Progress making expected growth.
o North Stanly High - ABCs status is now School of Distinction making high growth.
o South Stanly High - ABCs status is now School of Distinction making high growth. The AYP status changed from No Met AYP to Met AYP.

Sterling Montessori Academy - ABCs status is now Honor School of Excellence making high growth with performance composite of 90.6. AYP status changed from Under Review to Yes, indicating that the school made AYP.

Stokes County
o North Stokes High - ABCs status changed from School of Progress making expected growth to School of Progress making high growth.

Wake County
o Reedy Creek Middle - ABCs status has changed from School of Progress making high growth to School of Distinction making high growth. The performance composite changed from 75.9 to 87.5.
o Lincoln Heights Elementary - AYP status changed from Not Met AYP to Met AYP.
o Phillips High School - Removed this alternative school from Schools Not Included in the ABCs list. ABCs status is now school making high growth.
o West Millbrook Middle - ABCs status has changed from School of Progress making high growth to School of Distinction making high growth. Performance composite changed from 74.3 to 84.7.

Woods Charter - ABCs status is Honor School of Excellence making high growth with performance composite of 93.1. AYP status changed to replace Under Review to Yes, indicating that the school made AYP.

Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
o Dobbs School - ABCs status is now school making expected growth. AYP status has changed from Under Review to AYP with Special Evaluation.

- Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding (DSSF) Program for 2005-06 (HSP 3) — Plans were approved for the use of the DSSF for five of the 16 pilot local education agencies involved in this special program. The action and budget plans were approved for Edgecombe, Franklin, Halifax, Warren and Washington. They join the 11 plans already approved in August.

- Appeals for Extension of Time to Fulfill Licensure Coursework Requirements Due to Extenuating Circumstances (OP 1) — Thirty-four appeals were approved for individuals who asked for additional time to meet licensure coursework requirements that they had been unable to meet because of extenuating circumstances.

- IHE Performance Report (QP 2) — The annual performance report on undergraduate and graduate teacher education programs was approved. The State Board designated Chowan College as Low Performing for the 2004-05 school year. General findings showed that institutions reported an increase in the enrollment of full-time undergraduate students in teacher education programs and a decrease in both part-time enrollment and enrollment for licensure only purposes. Institutions reported a 26 percent increase in the number of students enrolled part-time in school administration programs. The mean grade point average of individuals admitted to teacher education programs (3.29) remains significantly above the 2.5 required by NCATE and State Program approval standards. Overall, the Praxis pass rate of individuals who have completed teacher education programs is 95 percent. Only one institution (Chowan College) had a pass rate below 70 percent. As reported by the institutions, the number of lateral entry teachers requesting programs of study decreased by 15 percent, and the number of lateral entry teachers enrolled in one or more classes leading to licensure decreased by 6 percent.

- 2005-06 Special Provisions (EEO 1) — Six special provisions in Senate Bill 622, which was recently passed by the 2005 Session of the General Assembly, were presented for approval by the Board this month. These provisions state that the State Board "may" proceed as indicated in the bill to redirect or use existing public school funds.

Discussion

- North Carolina Standard Course of Study - Minor Clarifications (HSP 4) — Minor revisions were discussed for three objectives in the Chemistry Standard Course of Study to clarify their intent for teachers and state level accountability purposes. These revisions, to be considered for approval in October, were suggested by a group of teachers and scientists convened to create support materials for the 2004 revision of the Standard Course of Study.

- New Proposed Policy on ABCs Awards, Recognition Categories and Sanctions (Includes Recommendation Regarding "Most Improved" ABCs Categories) (HSP 5) — Board members discussed a proposed policy that delineates the ABCs Awards, Recognition Categories and Sanctions. The primary change to the categories will be to discontinue the "25 Most Improved K-8 Schools in Academic Growth" and the "10 Most Improved High Schools in Academic Growth" recognition categories. This change was recommended by the Compliance Commission for Accountability and discussed by the local superintendents at their summer quarterly meeting and by the State Board of Education's Ad Hoc Rigor Committee.

- Recommendations Responding to Appeals to Participation in Field Testing (HSP 6) — The process for considering appeals to participate in field testing was reviewed this month. On Sept. 6, all requests for appeals are due to DPI's Division of Accountability Services. They will then be presented to the Compliance Commission for its review on Sept. 9. The appeals and recommendations concerning each one will be presented to the State Board at its Sept. 19 Executive Committee conference call meeting.

- Recommendations from the Special Committee on Graduate Pay Approval and Non-Teaching Work Experience Policies (QP 3) — In June, the State Board authorized the convening of an ad hoc committee to review current policies related to graduate pay approval and non-teaching work experience credit and to recommend revisions of the policies as appropriate. The committee, chaired by Board member Edgar Murphy, presented seven recommendations, which included the following:

o that the Board policy QP-A-006 be revised to allow individuals who complete graduate degree programs in education through regionally accredited institutions to receive graduate level pay;

o that individuals to receive non-teaching work experience credit for relevant work experience at a rate of one year of work experience credit for every two years of relevant non-teaching work experience completed before the bachelor's degree was earned and one year of experience credit for every year of relevant non-teaching work experience completed after the bachelor's degree was earned. For Class V Career-Technical Trade and Industry Education (which does not require a bachelor's degree), the committee recommends one year of experience credit for every year of full-time relevant non-teaching work experience after the individual completes the required training and work requirement to qualify for the provisional license;

o both graduate pay approval and non-teaching work experience be awarded on the recommendation of the employing LEA and that an audit process be in place to review these recommendations;

o that the Department of Public Instruction work with the Teacher Quality Committee to develop a rubric for assisting LEA Personnel Administrators in determining the relevance of non-licensure graduate degrees and non-teaching work experience;

o that the State Board recommend that the General Assembly adopt an incremental salary schedule that awards relevant master's degrees that do not lead to a license with a 10 percent differential. Candidates with master's degrees leading to licensure and candidates with National Board Certification would receive a 12 percent differential.

Board members requested additional clarification and input on what would be considered relevant master's degrees to ensure that this new policy would not reduce standards.

- Revision of Standards for Teacher Education Programs in Reading, Latin, Visually Impaired, Instructional Technology School Counseling, School Psychology and School Social Work (QP 4) — Every seven years, Teacher Education Programs are reviewed using standards for program approval adopted by the State Board of Education. Over the past several years, the Department has worked with stakeholders to revise the standards and indicators for most of the teacher education program areas. Revised standards for teacher education programs in Reading, Latin, Visually Impaired, Instructional Technology, School Counseling, School Psychology, and School Social Work were presented for discussion.

- Revision of the Add-On Licensure Testing Policy and the Policy for Clearing a Provisional License (OP 5) — The Board considered two revisions of licensure policies. The first aligns the testing requirements for add-on licenses in teaching areas with the revised requirements for the Standard Professional I license previously approved by the Board. The second allows individuals who hold a clear license in a teaching area, but who have been teaching out-of-field on a provisional license for three years to clear the license using the HOUSSE.

- Revisions to Procedures for Implementation of the Persistently Dangerous Schools Policy (SS 1) — Board members reviewed the policy and procedures of the persistently dangerous schools policy. In an effort to address concerns voiced by small schools, the School Safety and Climate Section is proposing procedural changes to make the school visits less time-consuming.

Information Agenda

- North Carolina in the World Update (HSP 9) — North Carolina in the World is an international education effort for K-12 students coordinated by the Center for International Understanding. Millie Ravenel, executive director of the Center, presented 13 objectives for the project to increase student knowledge and skills about the world. These include the following:

1. By 2012, all teachers will earn at least one renewal credit from activities with an international focus.

2. By 2010, at least 10 percent of teachers will have participated in a travel study program overseas.

3. By 2015, all teacher education students will take at least one course with international content before graduation.

4. By 2020, every school district will offer at least one language instruction program that starts at an early age and provides increasingly advanced study of the same language in subsequent years, all the way through high school graduation.

Board members asked that a progress report on these objectives be presented annually.

- Accountability Assessment for Agricultural Education (HSP 7) — The legislature requested the State Board of Education during 2005-06 to submit an amended State Career-Technical Education Plan to the United States Department of Education to permit the North Carolina Agricultural Education Program located at North Carolina State University to field test Program Standards for two years instead of the approved Student Accountability Standards. The Board considered a request this month to authorize the use of the data to satisfy the technical attainment requirement for Carl D. Perkins funding. A progress report on this will be provided to the General Assembly in fall 2006. If approved by the U.S. Department of Education, the alternative agricultural education program accountability model will be field-tested by agricultural education programs in North Carolina in lieu of the VoCATS accountability model in 2006-07 and 2007-08 with recommendations to be presented to the Board based on the field-testing results.

- High School Workforce Development (HSP 8) — Fourteen early college high schools will have students in the 2005-06 school year under the Learn and Earn Early College High School Initiative launched one year ago by Gov. Mike Easley. Board members received an update on progress with this program at its September meeting. The Learn and Earn program is designed to improve high schools, to better prepare students for college and career and to create a seamless curriculum between high school and college. Each year of the project, a report will be made to the General Assembly by Sept. 15 providing an update on progress. Next year, this report will be able to provide attendance data and ABCs data. Graduation rates and higher education persistence rates likely will be available in six years.

- Personal Financial Literacy (HSP 9) — The 2004 General Assembly of North Carolina passed House Bill 397 mandating a pilot program on financial literacy. Eight high schools in seven school districts participated in the pilot. Teachers who participated stated that while personal financial literacy is found in all K-12 economic stands of the social studies curriculum, a course on personal financial literacy was most needed at the secondary level, preferably in grades 11 and 12. An SBE ad hoc committee on financial literacy was appointed to study and make recommendations on how financial literacy might be incorporated into the existing K-12 curriculum. Treasurer Richard Moore will chair that committee.

Good News

Project DESTINY? The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Travel Science Learning Program, DESTINY, was highlighted this month. These 20 40-foot buses are fully equipped as traveling science laboratories with satellite Internet connected computers to accommodate 24 students and bring cutting-edge science directly to students who might not otherwise have this opportunity. Since 2000, DESTINY has served through school visits or teacher workshops 97 counties, 104 school systems, 341 schools, more than 1,000 educators and more than 16,000 students. The impetus for this project was the need to provide better access to the tools needed for a quality science education. DESTINY's staff members have worked closely with the science curriculum specialists at the Department of Public Instruction so that its modules link directly to the state's Standard Course of Study.

New Board Members

The State Board's two newest members, Melissa E. Bartlett, at large member, and Shirley E. Harris, District 4 member, were formally sworn in as Board members this month. Secretary of State Elaine Marshall officiated at the swearing in ceremony.

Special Recognitions

- North Carolina had two national winners in the LEA Transportation Personnel National Competition. Rick Jennings of Wilkes County won first place and is the national Best School Bus Inspector. Tim Speer of Yadkin County Schools won second place in the Best School Bus Technician competition. North Carolina has one of the nation's most aggressive school bus inspection programs.

- The Board recognized four teachers as Teachers Emeritus based on their more than 50 years of teaching experience in the public schools. The teachers recognized were Mary Rose Sutton Stocks, who taught in Greenville/Pitt County; Jacqueline W. Blanton, who taught in Kings Mountain/Cleveland County; Frances Selena Johnson, who taught in Charlotte/Mecklenburg County; and Cecilia Barkley Moss Feemster, who taught in Gaston County.

Superintendent's Report

- LEAPP Update — Associate Superintendent Elsie Leak presented an update on the work underway by DPI to provide assistance to schools and districts. When ABCs assistance, Title I School Improvement and Title I District Improvement requirements are considered, DPI is serving 54 school districts and approximately 260 schools.

New Business

- Charitable Donation — Board members approved making a \$5,000 grant from their Education Foundation funds to DonorsChoose NC, an on-line charity that matches teachers' special funding requests with donors interested in supporting them.

- Hurricane Katrina Relief — Superintendent Atkinson was the Board coordinator of a public schools hurricane relief fund. The Board requested that she work with the local school districts, other education organizations and the Governor's office to raise money for the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The SBE also voted to make a donation to that fund.

- Administrator Training Committee — Board member John Tate was asked to chair an ad hoc committee to study administrator training indicators.

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