



# NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## SBE HIGHLIGHTS

### JANUARY 28-March 1, 2007

Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/stateboard/meetings/2007/03>. Click on the appropriate agenda category: Globally Competitive Students (GCS); Twenty-First Century Professionals (TCP); Leadership for Innovation (LFI); Twenty-First Century Systems (TCS); or Healthy Responsible Students (HRS).

#### Action Agenda

*Praxis II Option for Birth-Kindergarten teachers to be Designated Highly Qualified (TCP 1)* - Board members approved the Praxis II Early Childhood Content Knowledge Exams as a means for birth-kindergarten teachers to be designated highly qualified to teach kindergarten. Prior to this approval, new teachers licensed in birth-kindergarten had to pass the Praxis II exams for elementary education to be designated highly qualified.

*Recommendations for Final Approval of 2006 Charter School Applications - (LFI 1)* - The following seven charter school applications to begin operation in the 2007-08 school year were approved: Charlotte Secondary School (Mecklenburg County), KIPP: Charlotte (Mecklenburg County), Columbus Charter School (Columbus County), Voyager Academy (Durham County), Pine Lake Preparatory (Iredell County), Neuse Charter School (Johnston County) and Wilmington Preparatory Academy (New Hanover County).

#### Action on First Reading

*Changes to the 2005-06 ABCs/AYP Report (GCS 1)* - Board members approved changes to the 2005-06 AYP report to reflect the following: Carpenter Elementary (Wake County Schools) changed from Special Evaluation to Not Applicable and East Cary Middle (Wake County Schools) changed from Special Evaluation to Not Applicable as both schools had no students in 2005-06.

*Recommendations from the Advisory Board on Requests for Exception from Teacher Licensing Requirements (TCP 2)* - Board members acted on requests for exception from teacher licensing requirements in closed session.

*Approval of Charter School Technology Plan (LFI 2)* - State Board members approved the technology plan for Vance Charter School. Approval qualifies Vance Charter for the School Technology Trust Fund, No Child Left Behind, and federal eRate monies, as well as a variety of private technology grants.

*Individual Class Size Exceptions Waivers (TCS 1)* - Class size exception waivers submitted by Alexander County Schools (Ellendale Elementary), Beaufort County Schools (Bath Elementary, Northeast Elementary), and Onslow County Schools (Hunters Creek Elementary) were approved.

#### Discussion Agenda

*Presentation of 2007 Invitation to Submit Textbooks for Evaluation and Adoption in North Carolina (GCS 2)* - N.C. Textbook Commission Chair and Moore County Schools' Superintendent Dr. Susan Purser outlined for Board members the textbook adoption schedule for 2007. The Invitation to Submit Textbooks for Evaluation and Adoption in North Carolina is submitted each year in April to the State Board for approval. The 2007 call for textbooks is for Business and Technology Education, 6-12; Marketing Education, 9-12; and Social Studies, K-12.

*Discussion of Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 Transition Plan (GCS 3)* - The Board met as the State Board of Career-Technical Education to receive a presentation on and discuss the state's one-year transition plan for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. NCDPI's Director of Career and Technical Education Rebecca Payne summarized the draft

plan and discussed a number of decisions the Board must make prior to final plan submission in April 2008. These include identification of high-skill, high-wage, or high demand occupations; implementation of credentialing for accountability; development of processes for rewards and sanctions; and a decision to use 10 or 16 pathways/clusters.

*Middle Grades Education and High School Graduation Requirements (GCS 4)* - Board members discussed adopting a policy revision that would allow middle school students to receive credit toward high school graduation requirements for high school courses they take as long as they achieve a level 3 or 4 on the end-of-course test, if available. High school courses taken in grades 6-8 that do not have an EOC test must use high school course codes, be aligned to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for Grades 9-12, and be subject to review. In addition, students would be required to complete at least one unit of mathematics in their senior year.

### **Issues Session**

Board members received a presentation from Leigh Manasevit with Brustein and Manasevit Attorneys at Law who provided an overview of reauthorization issues in No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Manasevit said that he did not anticipate a reauthorization bill for at least two years (until after the next Presidential election) but that there would be a lot of discussion and meetings leading up to the presidential election that would shape the debate and discussion of NCLB. Issues that need to be addressed include the measurement of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), consequences of failure to make AYP, the sequence of the requirement of offering Supplemental Education Services versus public school choice, Highly Qualified teachers and their equitable distribution, students with disabilities (modified standards of assessment), English language learners and resources.

### **Information Agenda**

*Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rate (GCS 5)* - As a part of No Child Left Behind, each state is required to report a high school graduation rate. Since the fall of 2002, North Carolina public school officials have been keeping a careful accounting of each ninth grader as he or she moves through high school. The goal of this record keeping - a four-year cohort graduation rate - provides the state with its first actual count of how many students graduate with a diploma in four years. The report found that 68 percent of first-time high school ninth graders in 2002-03 graduated in four years or less. A fifth-year cohort graduation rate will be reported for this group this summer at the same time that the four-year cohort for the 2003-04 ninth grade group is reported. While 68 percent is the current four-year cohort graduation rate, that does not mean that 32 percent of the students have dropped out of school. A total of 5,413 students were known to still be enrolled in high school at the end of the year and did not receive a diploma. Given that approximately 15 percent of ninth graders are retained each year, some of those students likely will graduate in five years or more. North Carolina education policy also provides a conservative definition of high school graduates. Students who leave public high school for a community college GED or adult high school program are counted as dropouts under state policy. Also, the cohort graduation rate does not capture students with disabilities who complete the 12th grade but do not qualify for a standard diploma and instead earn a Certificate of Achievement or Graduation Certificate. The cohort graduation rate will replace the "four-year on-time graduation rate" that North Carolina has reported for the past four years to satisfy NCLB requirements.

*NC Virtual Public School - Director's Report (LFI 3)* - NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS) Interim Director John Boling briefed Board members on the school's projects and timeline, including course audits. Boling noted that of the 55 initial courses audited, only five courses met minimal guidelines, 22 courses needed some modification and 30 needed major modifications. An additional 34 courses are currently being audited. He is confident all courses can be modified to meet requirements for fall registration. He said of the 98 courses NCVPS plans to offer this fall, 23 are Advanced Placement, 19 Honors, seven math, four science, five English, seven social studies, 17 foreign language, 10 Continuing Technical Education, two life skills, two arts, and two test preparation. There are 25 courses at the high school level that can be taken by middle school students. Fifteen courses will be offered this summer.

In March, NCVPS plans to conduct its first pre-registration window for summer school and fall. Free online test preparation courses are currently being offered statewide. In addition, NCVPS is currently piloting a personal financial literacy course to 52 students. This will be one of the 98 courses offered this fall. Boling noted two areas of concern: can NCVPS serve long-term suspended students before they are allowed back in school and who owns students' EOC test scores for classes taken online.

*Update on Financial and Business Services Research Projects (TCS 2)* - NCDPI Financial and Business Services Research Assistant Intern Jackson Miller provided Board members with an update on Financial and Business Services' research projects. Financial and Business Services is creating a team of research interns from area universities and colleges to help structure and conduct research to supplement and supply data for discussions related to procedural, process and policy changes. The research projects focused on incorporating and implementing research into Financial and Business Services' operations and targeting research on initiatives necessary to accomplish the State Board's 21st Century goals. The first research project focused on surveying teachers to determine their reaction to a variety of possible policy changes. A future project will examine teacher absences. Also being

explored is the possibility of establishing a research intern team, which would incorporate the use of both full and part-time interns.

## **Committees' New Business**

### **Globally Competitive Students Committee**

Accountability Model for High Schools - NCDPI Accountability Services Director Lou Fabrizio discussed with committee members changes that will be occurring in the high school accountability model in the near future. Because of a number of changes underway at the high school level, the high school accountability model is ripe for re-evaluation. Changes on the horizon include the elimination of the high school competency test beginning in 2007-08. Also, because of the new future-ready core framework approved for implementation with ninth graders in 2008-09, a change is needed to the measure that considers the number of students completing the college prep/college tech prep course of study. Under NCLB, there is the possibility of increased required testing in high school in the areas of math and reading. And, the NC Virtual Public School adds new situations for consideration. Fabrizio discussed issues with the Board regarding the use of incentives, which schools should receive them and under what circumstances. Committee members also were asked to think about other items that may need to be on the table for consideration.

Reading Literacy Plan - Committee members reviewed plan changes as a result of the Board's February meeting and discussed additional changes. The Reading Literacy Plan is scheduled to come back to the Board in April for action.

Setting Committee "New Business" Topics Priorities - Members discussed the need for committee topics to be innovative and to focus on the Board's mission to provide students with a 21st century education.

### **Twenty-First Century Professionals**

Setting Committee "New Business" Topics Priorities - Members of the newly formed committee went over a list of future priorities for the group. These include a response to the Professional Development Report from the Center for School Leadership Development, American Sign Language Licensure, National Board Certification issues, the recognition of other national certifications, a teacher recruitment marketing plan, policies for ensuring 100 percent Highly Qualified teachers and their equitable distribution as required by NCLB, how licensure areas support 21st goals, teacher retention and support for new teachers, teacher evaluation, Regional Alternative Licensure Centers, and the need for the committee to have meetings with personnel administrators and the deans of teacher education programs.

### **Leadership for Innovation**

Charter School Merger and Student Lottery Issues - Committee members discussed a request by Iredell County's American Renaissance Charter and American Renaissance Middle to merge. It was decided that the State Board does not have legal authority to approve this merger but that it would have to be legislatively approved.

Setting Committee "New Business" Topics Priorities - Committee members discussed the types of issues they would address including virtual schools, instructional technology, high school reinvention and charter schools. State Board member Kathy Taft suggested the committee may want to reconsider the mission of charter schools to see if it needs to be redefined. Members also discussed the need to document those things that may be inhibiting innovation and develop ideas to remove these barriers.

### **Twenty-First Century Systems' Business/Finance and Advocacy Committee**

Setting Committee "New Business" Topics Priorities - This committee identified two broad areas of concern to guide its future agendas: budget and finance (including research and planning oversight) and advocacy (including work with the legislature and Congress). Other items that will be addressed in future meetings include a response to the Indian Education Commission, the development of an NCLB white paper on the State Board's positions, and educational presentations concerning the budget process and how public school funding works, and communication plans for the State Board to support its goals.

### **Special Presentation**

Milken Award - State Board members presented the 2006 Milken Family Foundation National Educator Award to Tanglewood Elementary School (Public Schools of Robeson County) third grade teacher Kristen Stone and recognized her for her work.

Transportation Award - Derek Graham, section chief for School Transportation, was recognized for his recent honor as the 2006 School Bus Fleet magazine's Administrator of the Year and also for his election as the National Association for Pupil Transportation's president.

## **Chairman's Remarks**

Paul Brooks, chairman of the North Carolina Indian Education Commission, spoke to the State Board during its full Board meeting and requested that they consider having an office of Indian education within the NC Department of Public Instruction to better address the Indian education needs in North Carolina. Brooks presented a formal resolution for Board consideration, and Chairman Howard Lee directed this request to the Twenty-First Century Systems Committee for discussion. On other topics, SBE Executive Director Rebecca Garland gave a legislative update. The Chairman noted that the Board would receive information next month on the pandemic flu planning underway at NCDPI and in conjunction with other state agencies.

## **State Superintendent's Report**

### **State Superintendent June Atkinson highlighted a number of items in her monthly report including:**

Asheboro's Zoo School - Asheboro City Schools and the NC Zoological Park have partnered to create a special "zoo school" on the Zoo's campus. The program will open this fall to serve 80-100 Asheboro High School students in a special program that integrates a variety of disciplines and uses the vast resources of the world-class NC Zoological Park to provide real-life applications of academic content in the sciences in particular. Dr. David Jones, director of the Zoological Park, said that he sees the Zoo School as a model for other similar programs that could be developed by local schools and special facilities such as zoos.

High School Turnaround Efforts - Pat Ashley, director of High School Turnaround, gave members an update on priority schools' choices for reform or redesign plans and a list of schools receiving assessment team visits in 2007.

NCWISE - Dr. John Wetsch, project manager, provided an update on the project's progress. He showed that all major project health indicators were positive at this time with the exception of production support, which was characterized as yellow. This yellow code indicates that expectations for production support are increasing, and NCDPI is adjusting to meet that increased demand. By March 16, Wave 2 conversions should be completed, bringing the state to slightly more than 50 percent converted.

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