



North Carolina State Board of Education

The State Board of Education is charged with supervising and administering "the free public school system and the educational funds provided for its support."

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sbe highlights

Notes on the state board of education...

Jan. 7-8, 2004

Special Note: To review background materials on each item, please go to [/sbe_meetings/0401_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 –

At its January Issues Session, the State Board of Education continued its December discussion of testing and accountability issues. Discussion centered around two main questions:

- Are schools administering the right assessments?
- Are standards sufficiently rigorous?

Future discussions will address changes needed in the processes associated with assessment development, test administration, and accountability model operation.

North Carolina will be adding assessments in science to comply with requirements of No Child Left Behind, but Board members did not have a consensus opinion regarding the addition of social studies assessments. With regard to the Exit Exam, which was originally slated for use as a high school Student Accountability Standards gateway, there was some interest in using a battery of end-of-course tests as an exit measure. Legislative clarification of the state's direction on the exit exam is needed, however.

There was consensus among Board members to eventually drop the Physics End-of-Course exam and to end the Comprehensive Test of Reading and Math when a better alternative is available. There were mixed reactions to the idea of ending the computer skills tests because of concerns that some children would not get much access to computers unless this test were required.

Board members discussed the issue of academic rigor, and the cut scores for proficiency on the end-of-grade and end-of-course tests. Because last year's strong performance may not be the indication of a trend, Board members said that they wanted to leave cut scores as they are for the present, postponing any action on raising standards until sufficient data can be collected and analyzed. As trends are more clearly evident, the Board could decide to raise standards. After examining data regarding the achievement levels of students in grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics, Board members expressed concerns that students already performing at Achievement Level IV were not as likely as their peers in other levels to attain their expected growth standard under the ABCs of Public Education, according to analyses provided by the Accountability Services Division. The Board's discussion of testing and accountability issues will continue in February.

Action Agenda

The following items received approval this month. In each case, these items were thoroughly discussed in December's meeting.

- *Operating Procedures Manual for Enrollment of High School and Intellectually Gifted and Mature Students in Community College Programs* (HSP 1)
- *Permission to Revise the North Carolina Second Language Standard Course of Study* (HSP 2)
- *Proposed Policy About Credentials for Automotive Service Technology Programs* (HSP 3)
- *Increasing the Weight of the ABCs Dropout Component* (HSP 4) — The ABCs model was changed to increase the weight of the ABCs dropout component to one-fourth the school membership in grades 9-12 beginning with the ABCs Report for the 2004-05 school year. The dropout rate will be monitored annually to look for any unintended consequences.
- *Options for Changes to North Carolina's Accountability Plan for Implementing NCLB* (HSP 5) — Among the changes approved this month are (1) employing a 95 percent confidence interval when calculating schools' Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status, (2) changing recognition categories for the 2003-04 school year to add a new top category to the ABCs Accountability Program which will be defined as a school of excellence that also makes AYP, (3) requiring Title I schools to not make AYP because of missing target(s) in the same content area for two consecutive years before going into Title I school improvement status, and (4) establishing a process to allow for medical exclusions from testing for students with serious medical conditions. All changes will now be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for its final approval.
- *Report and Recommendations from the Special Committee on Teacher Reciprocity* (QP 1) — Recommendations on Teacher Reciprocity were approved to help facilitate the licensing of teachers from other states, a key to new teacher recruitment since approximately two-thirds of new teachers hired in North Carolina each year are from out-of-state. Changes include new categories of licenses: Standard Professional License 1 (to replace the Initial License), Standard Professional License 2 (to replace the Continuing License), Alternative Professional License and International Faculty License. The Alternative License requirements will be determined by the SBE based on recommendations of its Select Committee on Lateral Entry. Teachers fully licensed and designated Highly Qualified under NCLB will be fully licensed and so designated in North Carolina.
- *Appointment of Individuals to the State Evaluation Committee on Teacher Education* (QP 3)
- *Renewal Recommendations for Charter Schools* (EEO 1)
- *Charter School Grade Changes and Enrollment Increase Requests above 10%* (EEO 2)
- *Allotment Policy Manual Changes for Charter School Federal Grants* (EEO 3)

Action on First Reading

- *Recommendation on the Appeal to Terminate the Charter of East Winston Primary School* (HSP 3) — The Board approved the recommendation of the SBE Appeals Committee regarding the Board's December vote to terminate the East Winston Primary School's charter. The Appeal Committee's decision was to allow the revocation to stand.
- *Recommendations for Final Approval of 2003 Charter School Applications* (EEO 5) — Four new charter schools were approved to open in the 2004-05 school year. They are Carolina International School, Cabarrus County; Children's Community School, Mecklenburg County; Kinston Charter Academy, Lenoir County; and PACE Academy, Orange County.

Discussion Agenda

- *Revision of North Carolina K-12 Computer/Technology Skills Standard Course of Study* (HSP 6) — The Computer/Technology Skills Standard Course of Study was last revised in 1998, and a scheduled revision was approved at the SBE meeting in September 2002. Core Revision Committee and Focus Group meetings centered on ethics, personal safety, privacy and commercialism in an electronic environment. Clarification strands and objectives and alignment with the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS*S) were address in the review process.
- *Weighted Quality Point Policy and Proposed Changes* (HSP 7) — Discussion continued on the issue of weighted quality points. A report regarding work underway on this issue will be presented to the legislature's Education Oversight Committee this month, and discussion will continue by the Board in February. Discussions also are ongoing with representatives of the University of North Carolina system and the Community College system on this issue.
- *Special Provision Budget Bill for School Nurse Services* (SS 1) — As directed by the General Assembly, the State Board reviewed the standards for the number of school nurses recommended in the Basic Education Program and compared this with standards recommended by other health organizations. The Board heard a report that noted there are now 667 nurses serving schools and that approximately 111 more nurses would be needed to reach the BEP ration of 1:3,000. The National Association of School Nurses currently recommends a ratio of 1:750. The cost of reaching the BEP ratio would be approximately \$5.5 million or \$7.5 million, depending on the qualifications required.
- *Pilot Program for Financial Literacy* (HSP 8) — Board members received a report on the financial literacy pilot program being developed as a result of HB 397, Section 7.35. Staff development and implementation of the financial literacy modules will be done over the next few months and evaluation will be done later this spring.

Good News Items

- *Status of the Civic Mission of Schools* — Board members received a status report on the Civic Mission of Schools with presentations by Debra Henzey, executive director, Civic Education Consortium; Rep. Linda Johnson, Cabarrus County; Sen. Joe Sam Queen, Haywood County; Tracey Greggs, DPI English Language Arts and Social Studies Section; and Board member Dr. Maria Palmer. These individuals represented North Carolina in September at the National Congressional Civic Education Conference. Recommendations of this group are as follows:
 - Adopt policies, beyond testing, to hold schools accountable for their civic mission.
 - Provide professional development for educators on how to use interactive best practices in social studies, such as service-learning.
 - Develop K-12 policies that promote school and student interaction with the community and state and local government.
 - Urge local school boards to adopt and employ mandatory service-learning, not service requirements.
 - Incorporate the six promising practices from The Civic Mission report in state standards.
 - Develop and promote funding for model programs that can be replicated.
 - Allow more time in standard course of study for "teachable moments" and current issues.

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