

# Momentum... Every Child Ready

//////////////////////////////////// NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION //////////////////////////////////////

The path of success for today's students starts by staying ahead of change, and the challenge for North Carolina is anticipating what today's students will need as adults.

Sixty percent of all US jobs require education beyond high school, and North Carolina students must be ready for life after graduation, including citizenship, college and careers.

Public schools have shifted into high gear over the past two years to meet ever-changing student needs. North Carolina has overhauled its *Standard Course of Study* for all subjects and grades, implemented new digital learning tools, focused attention on low-achieving schools and refocused educator evaluation to include student growth as one of six key indicators of effective teacher performance.

This work began in 2008, with a complete transition to these changes in the 2012-13 school year. It has been a tough journey and one that no other state has undertaken in such a comprehensive fashion. There are still goals to meet and challenges to overcome, but the rewards of this work are life-changing for students.

Our goal? Students who are ready for anything they want to do.

**See an animated view of what NC public schools are doing to help every student be ready for the next step at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ready/multimedia>**





## Message from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Over the past two years, North Carolina public schools have implemented unprecedented and coordinated improvements in standards, assessments, accountability, educator evaluation and technology, all with significant one-time support from a competitive federal Race to the Top grant. Teachers, principals and other education leaders in traditional and charter public schools have demonstrated their willingness to adapt to change, to meet new challenges and to be held accountable for student success.

As our state moves farther away from the recession of 2008 and nears the 2015 conclusion of its Race to the Top grant, we continue to catch up on priorities that could not be met fully by the state during the recession. The Department of Public Instruction also is preparing for the loss of more than 120 employees when the Race to the Top grant ends in June 2015. While lawmakers enabled us to make a first step of progress with teacher salaries in 2014, pay levels and other classroom support for educators continue to be important. In addition to ensuring that every classroom has a well-prepared and qualified teacher, it also is important to make sure that every classroom and student is equipped with textbooks, supplies, technology and other support needed for learning.

This report highlights areas of growth and success, the ongoing needs of public school classrooms and how North Carolina's momentum can continue toward teaching and learning that is personalized for students and enriched with appropriate technology. Throughout the report, you will see web links to learn more about how public schools are addressing the needs of students.

The State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction's budget request meets the 2 percent target required by the Office of State Budget and Management and reflects a focus on basic classroom needs - ample textbooks, technology and support for students to strengthen their skills and receive sound instruction. The full expansion budget request is online at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/budget/boardexpansionrequest2015-17.pdf>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "June St. Clair Atkinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

June St. Clair Atkinson  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT



# Professional Development Supports Teachers for Better Student Outcomes

With so many significant improvements underway over the past four years, professional development for local educators has been essential. Race to the Top has reinvigorated North Carolina's state-sponsored and coordinated professional development effort. The Educator Effectiveness division has partnered with Regional Education Service Alliances, local school districts and vendors to provide multiple layers of professional development - train-the-trainer models, annual regional summer institutes, and virtual or digital professional development including the development of a Massive Online Course on effective digital strategies in the K-12 classroom.

This area also created the application, selection and pathway process for the Governor's Teacher Network, which launched June 30, 2014, with 450 teacher participants developing digital resources to support the state's *Standard Course of Study*.



## WHAT DO TEACHERS SAY?

According to the 2014 North Carolina Teachers Working Condition Survey Summary report, 86.2 percent of teachers (state average) feel that professional development enhances their ability to help improve student learning.

## Educators Want and Need Training Professional Development by the Numbers:

- Eighty-eight percent of participants in 2014's eight summer institutes agreed that the Summer Institutes will help their district develop a strategic plan for professional development;
- Deployed more than 138 virtual and face-to-face sessions on Home Base (Educator Effectiveness System, PowerSchool, SchoolNet), EVAAS, Data Literacy;
- Held 18 Principal READY statewide sessions for more than 1,100 principals; and
- Created and implemented a regional differentiated statewide professional development calendar based upon feedback from eight Summer Institutes.

# Accountability is Key for Parents and Taxpayers

Measuring performance is a key component of education. Students and their parents expect to receive grades that show progress in learning and demonstrate preparedness for colleges and careers. Taxpayers expect schools to serve as good stewards of the state's investment in education and to prepare young people to be productive members of society.

Standardized testing provides a low-cost and efficient way to measure student performance over time. Although test scores have limitations, both state and federal laws require certain assessments of reading, mathematics and science in grades 3-8 to gauge school-wide success. Key components of the state's school accountability measure include the ACT college admissions exam and WorkKeys for students who complete a Career and Technical Education sequence. State standardized end-of-

grade and end-of-course tests provide a framework of accountability at a cost of less than \$6 per student. Most students in middle and high school will take one final exam per class in the final days of the course or school year.

North Carolina also participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Since 1992, when the state initially volunteered to administer this test, NAEP has given North Carolina a fair comparison of its students' performance alongside the students in other states. NAEP test items are given to a sample of fourth, eighth and twelfth grade students chosen to reflect the state's overall population in terms of race, gender, affluence and urban or rural setting.

The latest NAEP results, including North Carolina's Snapshot is at <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/policies/naep/2>.



## QUICK FACTS ABOUT NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- 115 school districts
- 2,526 traditional public schools
- 148 public charter schools (open for students)
- 11 new charter schools scheduled to open fall 2015
- 1.52 million public school students
- \$12.3 billion public school budget
  - \$7.8 billion in state funds (62.2%)
  - \$1.5 billion in federal funds (12%)
  - \$3 billion in local funds (25.8%)
- Projected student enrollment growth in 2014-15: 9,000 students (at a cost of \$69.9 million)
- Textbook funding in 2013-14: approximately \$15 per student (in 2008 it was \$67.15 per student.)
- Average cost of a typical textbook: \$35-\$86
- More than 500 courses are taught in NC public schools
- 22 credits are required for high school graduation (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/curriculum/home/graduationrequirements.pdf>)
- 32 credits possible under block schedule
- 142 courses offered in NC Virtual Public School
- 35,205 of students taking at least one NCVPS course in 2013-14

# Momentum: North Carolina Public Schools Move from 20th Century to Digital-Age Models

## Traditional Instructional Model **Digital-Age Learning Model\***

### Advancement based on time

- Credit by Demonstrated Mastery is now available to middle school students at local school district discretion and is required for all interested/qualified high school students. Students demonstrate mastery through standard examination and an artifact which requires the student to apply knowledge and skills relevant to the content standards that ensure deep understanding of the course.

### Competency Mastery

- Students are able to earn industry-accepted credentials through examinations that test knowledge and skills and can include performance demonstration.
- Teachers are able to earn badges to demonstrate expertise in a specific topic.

### Fixed places and times for learning

- The NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS) is a public program available to supplement middle and high school course offerings. It provides “24/7” learning for students with licensed teachers who facilitate learning through pre-assessment, notes, video/animation, practice and mastery opportunities. NCVPS is the 2nd largest virtual public school in the country, manages 50,000 full-credit enrollments annually and continues to grow. NCVPS is available to non-public school students also.

### Anywhere and anytime learning

- NC public school teachers may benefit from 51 online learning modules that address professional teaching standards as well as content standards. Some courses are independent studies while others are facilitated by instructors.

### One-size instruction

- Early college high schools offer first-generation college students an opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and significant college credit/credentials/associate’s degree during a five-year program located on a higher education campus. There are approximately 80 schools across the state, with the number growing each year. About one-half of early college high schools post 100 percent graduation rates and about one-third of the students graduate with an associate’s degree or 30 hours of transferable college credit.

### Personalized learning

- The Career and College Promise offers qualified traditional high school students an opportunity to take college courses on college campuses or online. The courses are designed in pathways that lead students to CTE credentials or programs of study resulting in an associate’s or bachelor’s degree.
- SchoolNet (within the Home Base technology) allows teachers to use formative assessment tools to diagnose a student’s mastery of the content and identify instructional resources to meet student learning needs.

\* Adapted from Digital Learning Plan, Friday Institute, 2014

## Teacher-Centered Instruction

## Student-Centered Instruction

- MClass Reading 3D (R3D) is a diagnostic reading assessment system that allows teachers to benchmark and monitor student learning to ensure that they are making progress on reading standards. R3D provides instant reports and reading strategies to meet individual learning needs. The system also provides reports to parents so that they can monitor their child's progress and provide assistance at home.
  - The True North Logic system for teacher evaluation allows teachers to access modules for professional development based on the teacher's strengths and areas for improvement.
- By using EVAAS data, teachers can determine which students are not making sufficient growth in reading and mathematics. Teachers also can access instructional strategies in the system.
  - Using the same EVAAS system, principals can determine which teachers are not impacting student growth positively. With these data, the principal can provide the teacher with assistance and professional development matched to his or her need.
  - Flipped Classrooms - In the flipped classroom, students listen or view the lecture/classroom explanation at home. During class time, students practice using the concepts they have learned through viewing the lectures at home.

## Printed, static text

## Digital Content

- Home Base offers teachers digital content in reading, mathematics, science and social studies, and Career and Technical Education.
- Schools use Discovery, PBS, NC Wise Owl and other sources for up-to-date instructional resources.

## End-of-course standardized assessments

## Assessments integrated into learning

- Home Base provides digital formative assessment systems to assist teachers in determining student achievement during the learning process so the teacher can adjust the instructional program for the student.

## Limited parent information

## Parent Portals

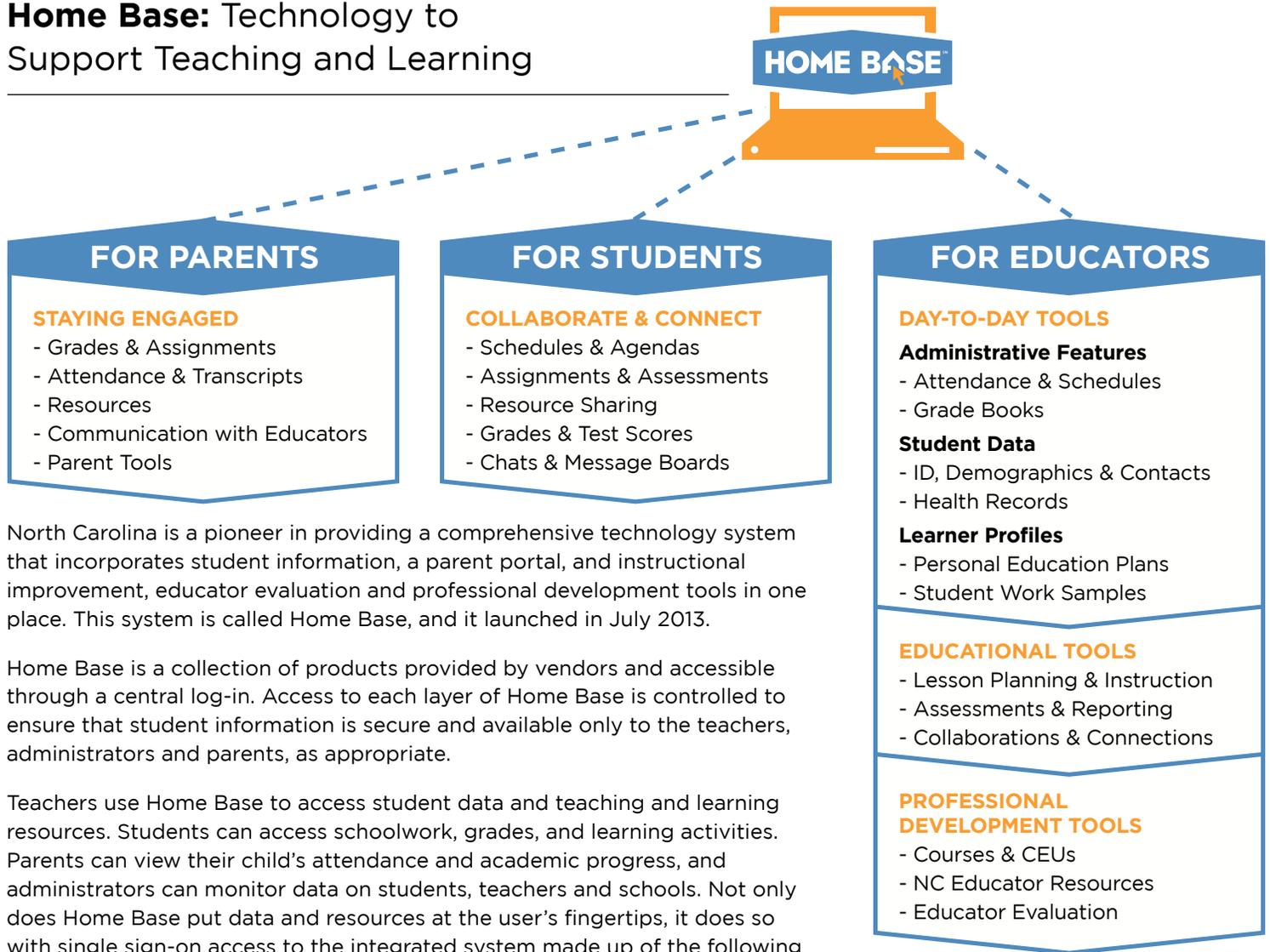
- Home Base offers parents a portal into their children's school records. Parents may view attendance, assignments, grades, discipline reports, etc.

## Academics in isolation

## Project-Based

- Project-based learning is taking hold across NC. NC New Schools has been a leader in the effort in partnership with the NCDPI.
  - STEM schools are focusing on the grand engineering challenges as one design model.
- STEM schools are being recognized for progress and achievement.
  - Global education initiatives are expanding across the state in partnership with VIF, Center for International Understanding, and World View.

# Home Base: Technology to Support Teaching and Learning



North Carolina is a pioneer in providing a comprehensive technology system that incorporates student information, a parent portal, and instructional improvement, educator evaluation and professional development tools in one place. This system is called Home Base, and it launched in July 2013.

Home Base is a collection of products provided by vendors and accessible through a central log-in. Access to each layer of Home Base is controlled to ensure that student information is secure and available only to the teachers, administrators and parents, as appropriate.

Teachers use Home Base to access student data and teaching and learning resources. Students can access schoolwork, grades, and learning activities. Parents can view their child's attendance and academic progress, and administrators can monitor data on students, teachers and schools. Not only does Home Base put data and resources at the user's fingertips, it does so with single sign-on access to the integrated system made up of the following components: Learner Profile and Student Information; Standards & Curriculum; Instructional Design, Practice & Resources; Assessment; Data Analysis and Reporting; and Professional Development & Educator Evaluation.

Beginning in 2014-15, all components of Home Base were made available to all districts and charter schools at no additional cost. The required portions, such as PowerSchool and Educator Evaluation, will always be free of charge to local school districts. Depending on state funding availability, the NCDPI may have to charge local school districts a nominal fee per student to access the instructional resources in future years. The cost so far for this instructional content is approximately \$4 per student.

Learn more about Home Base at  
[www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/homebase)

# All Subjects, All Grades

## New Standards Increase Rigor, Expectations

North Carolina has had a *Standard Course of Study* for at least 75 years, but 2012 marked the first time in our state's history that all standards in all subjects and grades were revised at the same time. This comprehensive overhaul began in 2008 with the Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE) initiated by a Blue Ribbon Commission that included lawmakers, parents, business representatives and educators. The process started with extensive input from local teachers and other educators and continued with assistance from experts in each subject, including industry and business representatives. The recommendations of this group were fully implemented in the state's classrooms in 2012-13.

In November 2014, the early stages of content standards review began again with English language arts and mathematics. All of the state's teachers and other educators were invited to participate in an online survey that asked for input standard-by-standard and grade-by-grade. This survey, which closes on Dec. 31, 2014, kicked off the initial reviews that will drive the next revisions in these two core subjects. From there, parents and other members of the public also will have an opportunity to provide input and guidance before revisions are presented to the State Board of Education. Historically, North Carolina has considered revisions in each subject's standards on a five-to-seven year cycle.

In addition, an Academic Standards Review Commission, created by the General Assembly and coordinated by the NC Department of Administration, began its work in September 2014 and is anticipated to make recommendations to the State Board of Education about changes to the English language arts and mathematics standards by December 2015.

View all current standards at [www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/curriculum/)



### KEY INDICATORS

- NC's high school graduation rate is **83.9 percent**, the highest in state history.
- The 2014 average SAT score for North Carolina was 1,483 (499 critical reading, 507 mathematics, 477 writing) versus a 1,497 national average.
- The 2014 ACT average composite score was 18.6, compared to the 21.0 national average. North Carolina is one of 12 states nationwide to test 100 percent of graduates.
- North Carolina public schools are among the top 11 participating education systems in the world for fourth and eighth grade math scores on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study.
- North Carolina is 14th in the nation in the percentage of seniors scoring a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement exams in high school.
- NC students earned 115,000 business and industry credentials in 2013-14.

### MORE DATA ON SCHOOLS

- [www.ncschoolreportcard.org](http://www.ncschoolreportcard.org)
- [www.ncpublicschools.org](http://www.ncpublicschools.org)
- <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/resources/data/highlights/2014highlights.pdf>

## Budget Expansion Request – 2015-17 Biennium

ITEM NAME AND DESCRIPTION	FY 2015-16 REQUESTED INCREASE	FY 2016-17 REQUESTED INCREASE
<p><b>Textbooks (Digital Materials, Devices, and Hard Cover)</b> - Elimination of the non-recurring reduction to textbooks will reinstate the per student funding level to \$77.16 (up from \$15.28 for FY 2012-13). Funding at the FY 2008-09 level of \$67.15 per ADM (rather than \$14.86), would cost an additional \$79.5 million.</p>	\$ 76,850,000	\$ 76,850,000
<p><b>Classroom Technology*</b> - Funding to accommodate technology needs in our public schools during implementation of the Instructional Improvement System. Technology needs include, handheld devices, digital content, network infrastructure, or technology facilitators in the school building (\$18m to come from fines and forfeitures and \$6m from Indian Gaming Commission).</p>	25,000,000	25,000,000
<p><b>Instructional Supplies</b> - Elimination of the non-recurring reduction to instructional supplies will reinstate the per student funding level to \$59.33 (up from \$33.60 for FY 2012-13). Funding at the FY 2008-09 level of \$58.77 per ADM (rather than \$28.38), would cost an additional \$46.2 million.</p>	20,000,000	20,000,000
<p><b>Home Base</b> - Funding to manage delivery of instructional tools &amp; resources, and engagement with districts and schools regarding daily operation of the system.</p>	6,000,000	6,000,000
<p><b>Turning Around Lowest Achieving Schools*</b> - Funding to provide intensive support (planning/coaching) for principals and teachers in lowest-achieving 5% of schools (118 schools, across 36 districts) and to provide intensive support (planning/coaching) for superintendents, central office staff, principals, and teachers in lowest 10% of districts (12). (Amount is funding to be provided to DPI for this purpose.)</p>	8,600,000	8,600,000
<p><b>Professional Development*</b> - Funding to provide year-round calendar of regionally based professional development (including summer institutes) and to support district and charter professional development leadership teams.</p>	4,400,000	4,400,000
<p><b>NC Procurement Alliance</b> - Funding to support the NC Procurement Alliance after GA report indicated that for every \$1 invested with the Alliance, LEAs saved \$6. This converts to an estimated district savings of \$480,000.</p>	80,000	80,000

ITEM NAME AND DESCRIPTION	FY 2015-16 REQUESTED INCREASE	FY 2016-17 REQUESTED INCREASE
<p><b>Connectivity</b> - The initial Connectivity Project was designed to establish and sustain internet access to the school buildings. Funding for this project is \$19.9 million. We need to expand school connectivity support to include internal school network infrastructure. In order to transition to digital learning statewide, school internal networks must support scalable and reliable wireless and wired connectivity. The Federal Communication Commission's E-Rate modernization order issued in July of 2014 establishes a baseline of \$150 per ADM as the 5-year budget for school network infrastructure.</p>	12,000,000	12,000,000
<p><b>Distinguished Leadership in Practice*</b> - Funding to provide leadership programs to strengthen skills and practices of current principals and assistant principals.</p>	600,000	600,000
<p><b>Regional Leadership Academies</b> - Funding to provide regionally based Leadership Academies (Northeast, Sandhills, Piedmont) to prepare aspiring principals to transform lowest-achieving schools.</p>	4,000,000	4,000,000
<p><b>K-2 EVAAS</b> - Funding to expand our current contract to include students in grades K-2 in all North Carolina public schools and to provide reports using the Educational Value Added Assessment System (EVAAS) that will show analyses of student achievement data for potential summative and formative use for districts. (Grades 3-12 EVAAS: \$2,795,000)</p>	870,000	870,000
<p><b>NCEES</b> - Funding to operate NC Educator Evaluation System (an online tool, including Professional Development System). Activities will include managing contract with SAS for the Educator Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS); providing NC Final Exams, Analysis of Student Work (ASW), and related processes (amount includes \$964,560, which is the DPI state funding for accountability).</p>	3,600,000	3,600,000
<p>The State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction will request continued improvements to educators' pay. This request is in addition to the expansion items.</p>	<b>\$ 162,000,000</b>	<b>\$ 162,000,000</b>

\*Denotes funding can be used for professional development.

# How is **my school** doing?

Since 2001-02, North Carolina's School Report Cards have been issued annually to give parents and others a "one-stop shop" of information about each public and public charter school. Although test scores are a backbone of this report, other key information is provided including teacher quality details, school climate and safety, student demographics and more. In February 2015, for the first time, the School Report Cards will include a letter grade for each school, as required by the North Carolina General Assembly. These A-F performance grades, based 80 percent on student performance and 20 percent on student academic growth, will be accompanied by specific data for each measure that is used to determine these grades.

This year, the School Report Cards have been re-designed to make it easier for users to do school-to-school comparisons.



See the School Report Cards at  
[www.ncschoolreportcards.org](http://www.ncschoolreportcards.org)



In compliance with federal law, the NC Department of Public Instruction administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.

Inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination issues should be directed to: Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent  
6368 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-6368 :: Telephone: (919) 807-3200 :: Fax: (919) 807-3388

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G.S.115C-21. Administrative duties of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction...

(3) To report biennially to the Governor 30 days prior to each regular session of the General Assembly, such report to include information and statistics of the public schools, with recommendations for their improvement and for changes in the school law.

*2,500 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$4,425.00 or \$1.77 per copy.*