



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION Howard N. Lee, *Chairman*

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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December 29, 2008

The Honorable Michael F. Easley
Governor, State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor
116 West Jones Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27603-8001

Dear Governor Easley:

The State Board of Education appreciates your leadership on behalf of pK-12 education. You are a steadfast supporter of public schools – a position you have maintained throughout your tenure as Governor and despite budgetary difficulties and challenges. As a result, families and students in North Carolina have benefited from expanded early childhood education, broader access to college level courses, strengthened schools, and a focus on teacher and educator professionalism and working conditions.

In 2008, our state and nation face difficult financial times. We understand this situation and know that it is critical for every education dollar to count toward reaching our goal of graduating every student from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education, and prepared for life in the 21st Century. In light of this, we have prepared our 2009-11 Biennial Budget Expansion Request to focus on the most essential work that is underway to benefit our students, educators and schools. The State Board focused on the most critical needs and capped their priorities at 1% of the current State Public School Fund. The attached 14 top priorities total \$78 million. The final attachment outlines the overall needs that could be funded if we were able to receive the 5% maximum allowed for expansion (\$337 million).

The attached request outlines the funding necessary to continue to address our high need schools, assures that our assessments and our accountability system moves us towards "global students" and global competitiveness, recognizes the importance of nutrition in our schools, and emphasizes the importance of the Learn and Earn and More at Four programs in North Carolina.

These items exemplify the wide array of needs in our schools, and represent the most urgent obligations for us to meet at this time. In submitting this list during a difficult budget cycle this year, we acknowledge that it does not include every item that is important and useful.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Philip W. Price, *Associate Superintendent* | pprice@dpi.state.nc.us

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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

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For example, it continues to be important that the ABCs Incentive Awards be funded in recognition of the academic growth led by our teachers, principals, and other public school employees. We also encourage that every effort be made to address the salary needs of our teachers and school employees.

On behalf of the State Board of Education members and the Department of Public Instruction, we respectfully request your consideration of these items for inclusion in your FY 2009-11 budget.

Sincerely,

Howard N. Lee, Chairman
State Board of Education

June St.Clair Atkinson, State Superintendent
Department of Public Instruction

HNL/JSA/vwj

Attachment