

From the Board Room

ACTIVITIES OF THE NC BOARD OF EDUCATION

MARCH 2014

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board's activities on behalf of the 1.5 million school children in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. View all State Board of Education member and advisor information online at <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/AboutUs/AboutUs.aspx?S=10399&TID=1>

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS EXPAND

The State Board of Education approved a change in March to the way that state test scores will be provided to students and their parents with a move from four achievement levels to five. This move will provide greater precision in reporting student performance. The new achievement level 3 will be considered to be "passing" although the student may not be demonstrating learning that is on track to be career- and college-ready. Some students, who under the previous model were at a high level 2, could move into level 3. Students at levels 1 and 2 would be considered below grade level and also off-track in terms of career- and college-readiness. Level 1 and 2 students would be identified as those most at need of intervention. Any third grader below level 4 in reading will be eligible to attend summer reading camp with parental approval. This change will be in place for the tests students take at the end of the 2013-14 school year.

Achievement Level 1: Limited Command

Achievement Level 2: Partial Command

Achievement Level 3: Sufficient Command

Achievement Level 4: Solid Command;
Career- and College-Ready

Achievement Level 5: Superior Command;
Career- and College-Ready

DIGITAL LEARNING PLANNING MOVE FORWARD

The NC General Assembly, via Session Law 2013-12, has stated its intention to transition K-12 education from traditional textbooks to digital learning approaches. A move of this magnitude requires a major transition from the traditional paper textbooks and similar materials to digital resources. Board members are engaged in a planning process that will be followed between now and the 2015 long session of the General Assembly to create the proper plan to support digital learning resources. Deliverables include a plan to

- transition from funding for textbooks to funding for digital materials;
- provide educational resources that remain current, that are aligned with curriculum, and effective for all learners by 2017;
- inventory of the infrastructure needed to support robust digital learning in public schools.

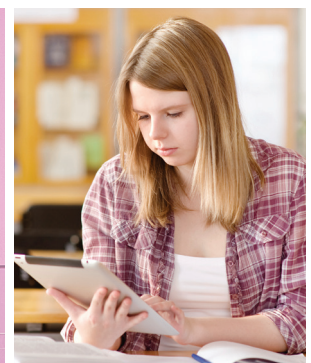
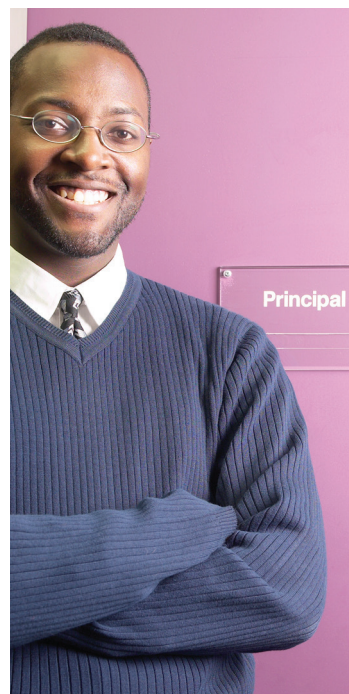
To do this well, a variety of issues will need to be addressed including professional development and changes in teacher practice. Lieutenant Governor Dan Forrest who chairs the Board's special committee on digital learning said that North Carolina is well positioned to make this move to digital learning.

VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL STUDY

Virtual learning in a variety of forms is becoming familiar to many of us, but as opportunities grow in this area, it is important to ensure students receive a quality education. While North Carolina has the second largest virtual public school in the United States, offering diverse courses for middle and high school students, the state has not sponsored a virtual public school or virtual public charter school that would grant high school diplomas or serve K-12 students as their sole source of formal education. The General Assembly has directed the State Board of Education to study the issue of a virtual charter schools that would serve as the primary school for K-12 students as there are several virtual learning companies interested in receiving a charter in North Carolina. In March, Board members reviewed a draft study document and asked that additional input from local educators, parents and community members be incorporated into a final version.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT COUNT

North Carolina public schools benefit greatly from a variety of external partners that serve to meet special needs of schools and students. This month, three partners presented their programs to the State Board of Education: Teacher for America, Communities in Schools and the new BB&T Leadership Institute. Of special interest was the BB&T Leadership Institute, which will be providing leadership training to principals in North Carolina. Presentations are online at <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=10399&MID=1185> by clicking on the specific agenda item.



SBE HIGHLIGHTS – A checklist of Board actions is posted every month immediately after the meeting's end. Access that at <http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/minutes-actions/sbe-actions/2014>. The State Board of Education's next meeting will be April 3 in Raleigh. Proceedings are audio streamed through the Board's meeting site. Go to ncpublicschools.org and click on the SBE Meetings in the top right corner of the page.