NORTH CAROLINA CONNECTIONS ACADEMY

NC Education Oversight Committee Meeting

November 7, 2017

Nathan Currie, Superintendent

Bridget Phifer, NCCA Board Chair

Agenda

- School Demographics
- Achievements & Improvements
- Critical Needs
- Q&A

Mission

The mission of North Carolina Connections Academy (NCCA) is to empower children with knowledge, skills, and character traits to be successful in their education through an engaging, personalized learning experience in a full-time virtual school.

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Governance

- Mrs. Bridget Phifer, Chair
- Dr. Donna Sullivan, Secretary
- Dr. Eric Strother, Treasurer
- Dr. Kristin Cuilla
- Dr. Catherine Edmonds

*Will be adding 2 additional board members

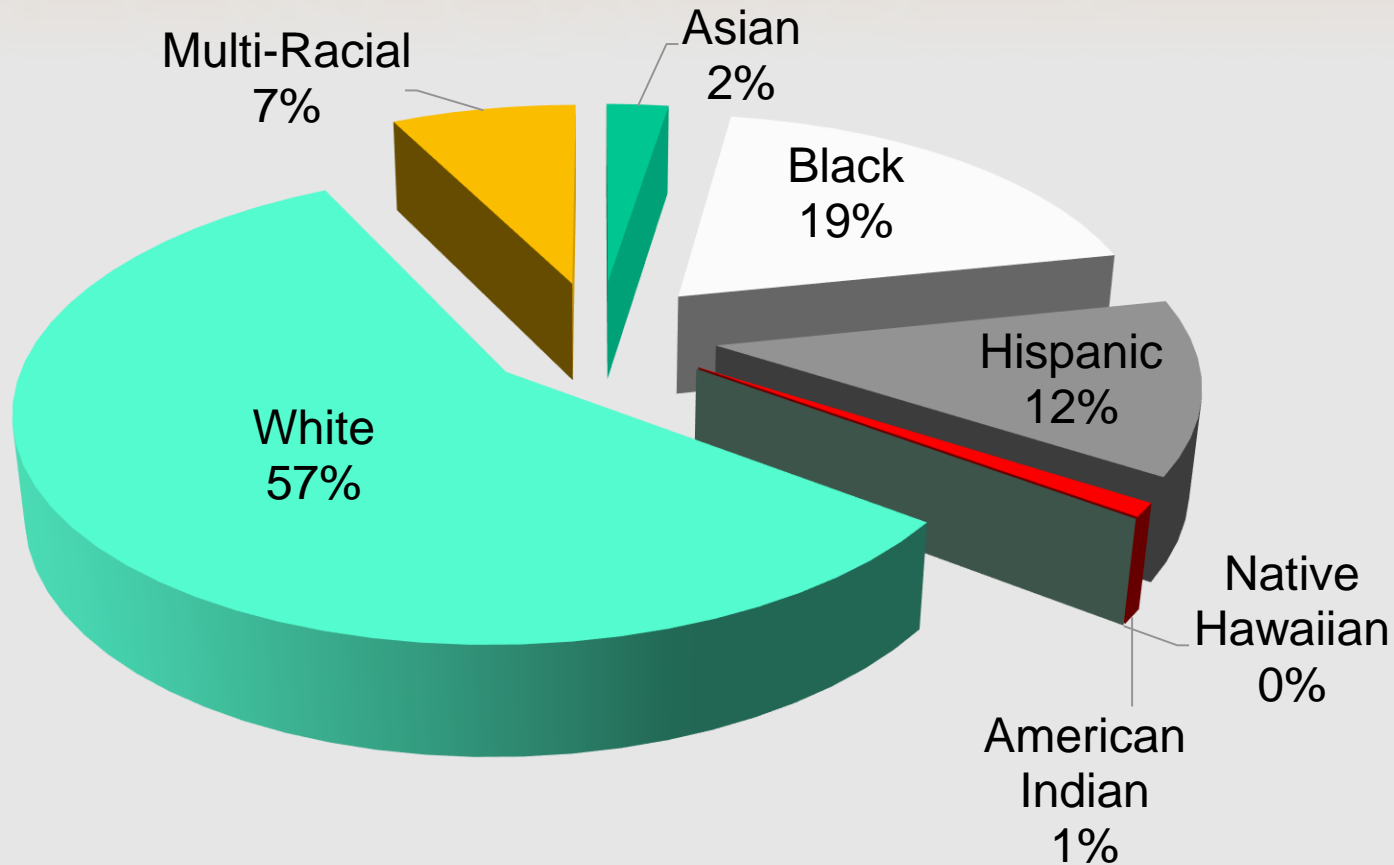NORTH CAROLINA
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NCCA Student Demographics

- NCCA charter allows for 20% increase in student enrollment
  - Current enrollment cap is 2,160
- Currently 2,101 students enrolled*
  - fluctuates as students' academic situations and needs change
- 96 counties represented

*As of 9/15/17

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School Demographics

Asian 2%

Black 19%

Hispanic 12%

Native Hawaiian 0%

American Indian 1%

White 57%

Multi-Racial 7%

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School Demographics, cont.

Previous Enrollment of Students(9/15/17)	% of Total Enrollment
Public School (Traditional, Charter & Online)	69
Homeschool	21
Private School	4
Other	6

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School Demographics, cont.

Gender
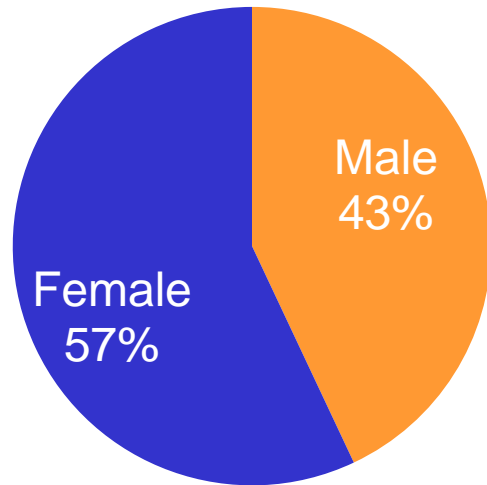
Free And Reduced Meal (FARM) Eligibility
44% of student population

Male 43%
Female 57%

Reduced 11%
Free 31%
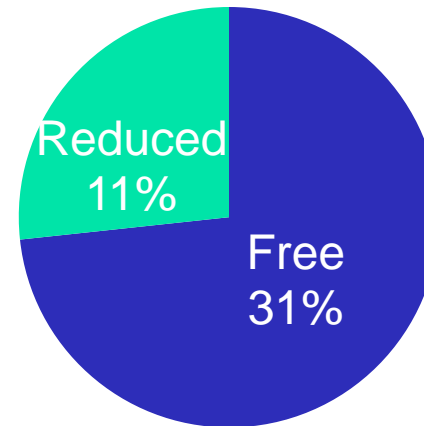
Special Populations

16% with IEPs / 504 Plans

Gifted 6%
IEP 11%
504 5%

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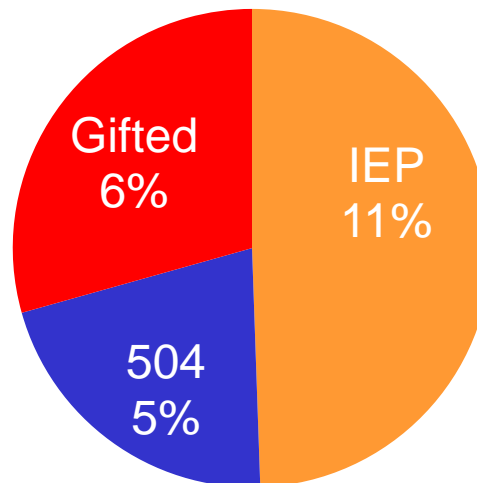
School Demographics, cont.

- **Teachers**
  - Certified teachers: 61
  - Teacher retention rate: 97%
  - NC TWC Survey Results: 99% of responses above state average
  - Advance Degrees: 60%
  - North Carolina certified teachers: 100%
  - Average years of experience: 10

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Achievements & Improvements

- **Continued Academic progress**
  - Overall Reading grade improved from a C to a B
  - Overall Math grade improved from a F to a D
  - Above state average in reading

	2015-2016	2016-2017
Reading EOG	64 (C)	70 (B)
Math EOG	36 (F)	42 (D)

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Achievements & Improvements, cont.

- **Charter Goals**
  - <u>7 out of 8</u> goals met (2016-2017)
- **Parent Satisfaction**
  - <u>91%</u> recommend NCCA to parents whose children are not enrolled in the program
  - <u>92%</u> say their child/children are satisfied with NCCA's program
- **Socialization and Connectedness**
  - Prom (April 2018)
  - 47 School-wide field trips
  - National Honor Society & 12 Student Clubs
  - Required High School Service Learning

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Achievements & Improvements, cont.

- Expansion of NCCA Traveling Academy;
- Expose students to more hands-on instructional resources;
- Conduct internal curriculum and instructional audit;
- Negotiate with EMO to promote savings that will enhance student experiences;
- Reorganization of school operations;
- Increase frequency of formative assessments;
- Establish an Alternative Pathway Academy; and
- Provide Live Tutor® for additional intervention.

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Achievements & Improvements, conti.

- Demand remains high! 749 children on the waitlist at time of April lottery.

- Lots of NCCA pride with our staff and families. NCCA even has a new mascot!

Student's art design earns accolades

FROM STAFF REPORTS

DURHAM — North Carolina Connections Academy, the state's full-time, tuition-free, online public charter school for grades K-10, has a new mascot, thanks to a design by one of its students.

Khrista Petry's barn owl design was selected as the school's mascot after 14 students in grades 6-10 submitted their artwork. Petry's image represents education and independence.

"Not only are owls symbols of wisdom in the common world, they are solitary creatures," Khrista Petry said. "As students working from home at North Carolina Connections Academy, we must also work by ourselves in order to do well. However, when they are young, their parents show the owls the ways of the forest. This is just like how we sometimes need help from our teachers and learning coaches. The purpose for specifi-

improve this school year.

"I've seen her grow more in a half year while enrolled at North Carolina Connections Academy than I ever did in a traditional school," said Mark Petry. "The curriculum is fantastic. It challenges Khrista and she's better prepared and more decisive."

"My favorite thing about North Carolina Connections Academy is honestly the ability to work from anywhere I want," Khrista Petry said. "Once, I went on a trip to Florida and took a test while we drove down the highway. The teachers are also an amazing part, since they're so helpful and supportive of the students. I get a good feeling when I speak with any of them. They really want me to succeed."

North Carolina Connections Academy will use Petry's barn owl as a mascot on merchandise, t-shirts, and other marketing and promotional materials.

cally choosing the barn owl is because they look so friendly."

Petry, who lives in Sanford, is in her first year at North Carolina Connections Academy. She said she drew her owl in a confident pose to inspire her fellow students to be confident in doing their school work. Her father said he's seen his daughter's own confidence

Submitted Photo
Khrista Petry's barn owl design was selected as the school's mascot after 14 students in grades 6-10 submitted their artwork. Petry's image represents education and independence.

HISTORY

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

with community stakeholders, I'll be talking with them about how United Way of Lee County can best support them as we work together to solve the most

Jeff Moss, on April 9, 2013, at the regular meeting of the Lee County Board of Education, Bryan had been the associate superintendent of curriculum

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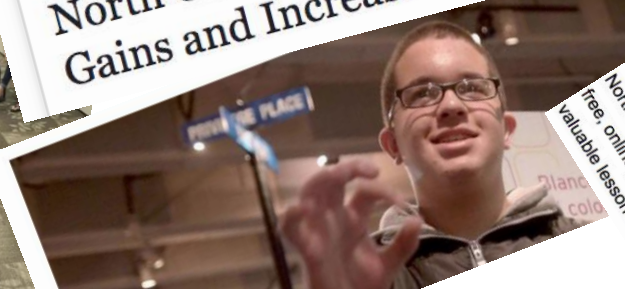56, of 419 Wests

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Virtual school offers alternatives

Erin Weeks eweeks@independenttribune.com 704-789-9131   May 11, 2017   💬 (1)

North Carolina Connections Academy Makes Academic Gains and Increases Parent Satisfaction

Rocky Mount TEL...

News   Sports   Life   Business   Schools   Opinion   Tarbor...

Online charter school aids Boys & Girls Clubs

From Contributed Reports
Sunday, February 19, 2017

North Carolina Connections Academy, the state's full-time, tuition-free, online public charter school for grades K-10, has learned a valuable lesson in helping others who are less fortunate.

NC Connections Academy student Dominick Michael takes part in a field trip to view the exhibit "Race: Are We So Different?" — a look at race through the lens of science, history and personal experiences at the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences. **Bernard Thomas** - bthomas@heraldsun.com

EDUCATION

Virtual charter an option when one-size school doesn't fit all – Nathan Currie

f   **BY NATHAN CURRIE**
JULY 15, 2017 6:00 AM

Why would students choose to go to school online?

As a superintendent of a tuition-free virtual public charter school, this question comes up a

NORTH CAROLINA CONNECTIONS ACADEMY HOLDS INFORMATION SESSION

By: Kirsten Gutierrez

Submitted: 05/09/2017 - 10:18pm

Tags: Information, Learning, North Carolina Connection Academy, North Carolina Virtual Public School, Students, Virtual Public School

NOVEMBER 7
RE-ELECT

WILMING...

Withdraw Rate

- NC Legislature revised the withdraw rate calculation to better reflect NCCA's student population.

- Withdraw does not mean the student dropped out or was expelled.

- NCCA is proud of our small withdraw rate. Overall, withdraw rate for 2016-17 was only 12%.
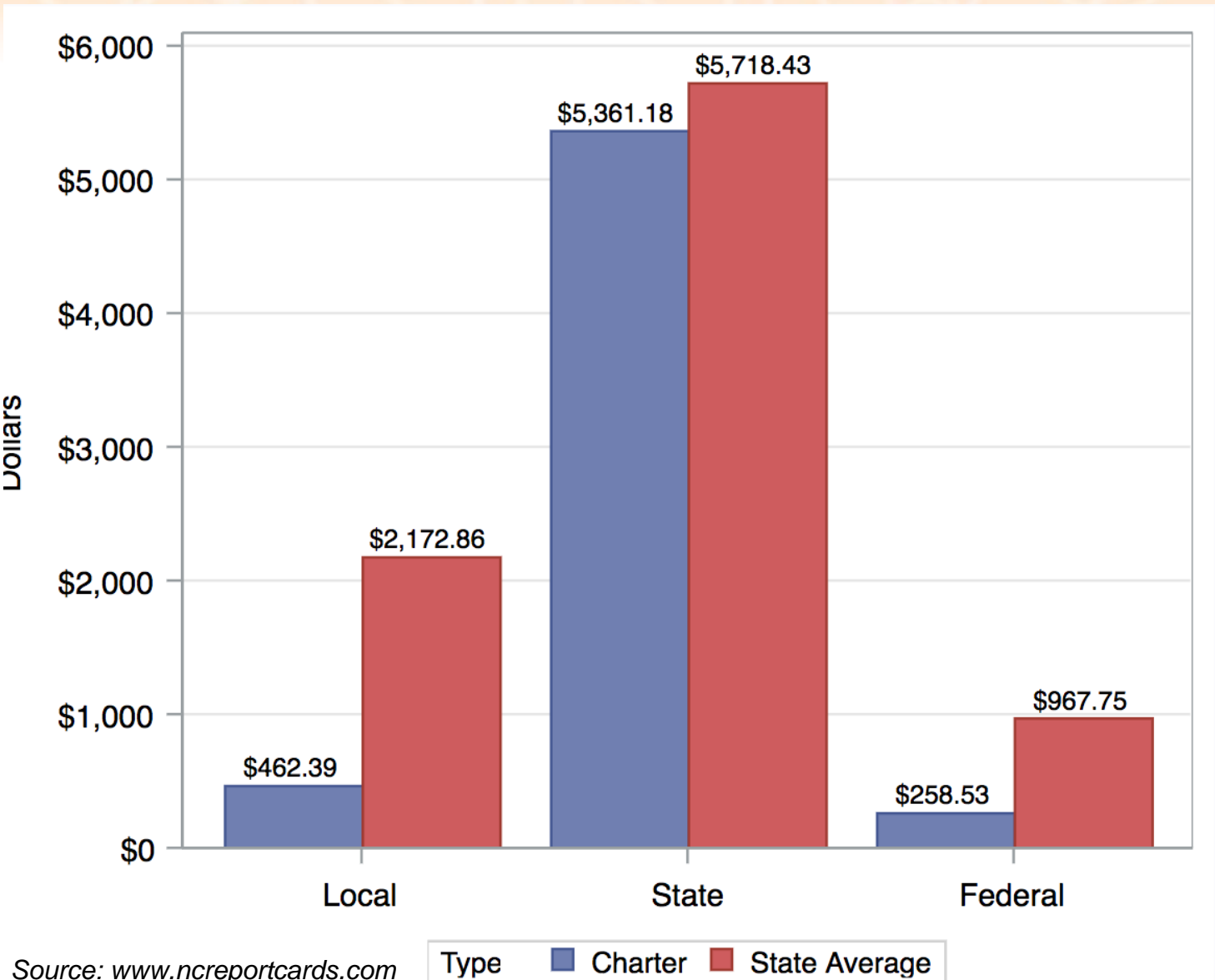
Critical Need: Virtual School Funding

- **Current funding levels** are not sustainable to support high-quality virtual schools that serve families fully, invest in teachers, tutoring and technology, and allow strategic investments in long-term initiatives (curriculum alignment and revision, support services, et al).

  - Virtual schools receive ~$0.60 for every $1 a traditional public school receives, and only $0.74 for every $1 a (bricks and mortar) charter receives. [1]

  - Virtual school costs are not lower than those of traditional schools, just different.

  - NCCA provides computers and internet subsidy for all families with demonstrated financial need creating a large budget item.

Legislative Imperative: Increase virtual charter school funding to that of traditional charter schools >> **$7,905.**

[1] University of Arkansas, *Charter Funding: Inequity Expands*, 2014, http://www.uaedreform.org/charter-funding-inequity-expands/ extracted August 26, 2016.

Achievements & Improvements, cont.

Source: www.ncreportcards.com

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Critical Need: Remove Pilot Status

- NCCA has demonstrated through strong parent and student satisfaction, academic achievement, and enrollment demand that virtual public charters are a necessary, positive school option for NC students.

- **Legislative request:** To maintain high quality option, continue to serve students who need virtual schools, and to retain talented teachers and administrators, NCCA requests virtual charters be a permanent option in NC.

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Critical Need: Policy Needs

- Clarify charter school law regarding virtual charter schools as a school model.
- Treat virtual charter school students the same as brick-and-mortar charter school students by equalizing local funding.
- Allow flexibility in state testing for virtual schools by allowing online testing or expanding the time window for testing.

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Questions

NCCA Overview

https://youtu.be/bDjMUgDba2Y

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Bridget Phifer, NCCA Board chair

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