



State Board of Education

Response to Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Based on Letter to Chairman Eric Davis on October 13, 2020 and Presentation on October 6, 2020

As response to the letter from the leadership of the Joint Education Oversight Committee and the COVID Education Committee, the State Board of Education submits the following information to support your understanding of the complexities schools are facing during COVID-19 pandemic and how they are addressing the needs of NC's students.

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM OCTOBER 13, 2020 LETTER

NCDPI worked with the NC School Superintendents Association's (NCSSA) Board of Directors to gather a sampling of district responses to provide insight into the questions posed. This NCSSA representative sampling is from across all eight regions of the state, with data reflecting as of mid-November.

Note:

- Respondents have reported averages at the district level, but acknowledge that ranges differ from grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 because of the various models offered.
- Respondents report that due to the dynamic nature of instruction at this time, it is difficult to determine accurate numbers since students are changing from face-to-face to remote learning (or vice versa) on a daily basis.

What percentage of districts and students are learning all virtually?

School districts have remained flexible to the health and community needs. Districts are changing their Plan status to support as many students coming back into buildings as safely as possible; however, this remains changing.

- On average, 36% of students are learning all virtual.

Based on the NC School Board Association posted list updated on November 18, 2020, 82% of Local Education Agencies (94 of 115 LEAs) are on some combination of Plan A and/or B with a combination of students learning face-to-face and some remote. Twenty-one (18%) of LEAs are still on Plan C with all students learning remotely. All of these remaining 21 LEAs have plans to return some students learning face-to-face beginning in January 2021.

How much synchronous learning time is being offered to students in virtual learning environments?

- On average, 4 hours of synchronous learning time is being offered to students.
- The range is 2 - 6.5 hours/day.

In virtual learning environments, what percentage of students are regularly attending learning?

- On average, 81% of students are regularly attending learning.
- The range is 64% - 93%.

What percentage of districts and students are learning in person?

- On average, 59% of students are learning in person.
- Based on the NC School Board Association posted list updated on November 18, 2020, 82% of Local Education Agencies (94 of 115 LEAs) are on some combination of Plan A and/or B with some combination of students learning face-to-face and some remote.
- Based on the NC School Board Association posted list updated on November 18, 2020, 21 (18%) LEAs are still on Plan C with all students learning remotely. All of these remaining 21 LEAs have plans to return some students learning face-to-face beginning in January 2021.
- As of November 30, 2020, there are 429,744 students (29%) learning fully offsite in LEAs that are on Plan C fully or partially, based on student enrollment.

How much learning time is being offered to students?

- On average, face-to-face learning is being offered to students 6 hours/day; ranging from 5.5 - 6 hours/day.
- On average, synchronous remote learning is being offered to students 5 hours/day; ranging from 3.5 - 6 hours/day.

- On average, asynchronous remote learning is being offered to students 4 hours/day; ranging from 3 - 4.5 hours/day.

In in-person learning environments, what percentage of students are regularly attending learning?

- On average, 89% of students are regularly attending learning in-person, with a range from 80% - 96%.

How many incidents of COVID outbreaks are reported from in-person schools?

Contact NC Department of Health and Human Services for information regarding COVID-19 clusters and cases in schools.

What percentage and actual number of students are unaccounted for in our schools?

- Less than 1% of students are unaccounted for in NC's public schools, with a range reporting from .7% to less than 1%.

How many students who typically qualify for free and/or reduced lunch regularly receive meals?

- On average, 53% of students who typically qualify for free and/or reduced lunch regularly receive meals.

Additional Information:

Since March, the State's School Nutrition Program has operated under a series of federal waivers approved by the US Department of Agriculture which allow maximum flexibility in these programs to address the emergency public health nutrition needs of food insecure children in North Carolina. These waivers have transitioned the traditional school-based nutrition programs into community-based nutrition programs. The waivers authorize PSUs to:

- provide breakfast, lunch and a snack to children age 18 and under at no cost to the child/family;
- provide meals to students who are enrolled in PSUs as well as other children who are not enrolled, including younger siblings, children who are homeschooled, children who are enrolled in non-public schools and in other educational settings; and
- provide meals to students and other children without recording the child's identity through a personal identifier.

These flexibilities are intended to reduce the administrative burden on PSUs and parents while increasing access to meals for all children in need.

Under these circumstances, it is not possible to distinguish the number of meals provided to students enrolled in PSUs from the number of children in various community settings who are also receiving meals. PSUs are required to document the number of meals served and establish standard operating procedures to ensure meals are provided only for children. On average, the NC's School Nutrition Programs are providing 250,000 meals daily for students/children across the state.

Since the closure of schools in March, PSUs and community organizations have provided meals to children/students through (1) curbside pick-up at designated schools and community sites, (2) distribution by yellow school buses or other service vehicles, and (3) meal box distribution, including food for multiple days. Students who attend school under Plans A and B receive meals at school during the school day; virtual learners have access to meals based on the three scenarios described above. Parents of virtual learners may pre-order meals for their children and pick those meals up at a designated school or site; meals are available for a single day or for multiple days.

Budget Updates: Please provide updates to money allocated from the COVID Relief Bills, specifically what remains from those funds and plans to spend before the end of the calendar year.

COVID Expenditures and Encumbrances

Note: Public School Units are still in the process of expending allocations. New guidance from NCPRO allows flexibility in CRF allocation with PRC's (SBE policy approval pending.) Current data only reflects October expenditures and the November expenditures will not be readily available by December JLEOC. Encumbered funds and back order on purchases does not accurately reflect current expenditures. Final deadline for expenditures is December 30th, 2020.

All Public School Units As of October 31, 2020

PRC Name	Allotment	YTD Expenditure	Remaining	% Remaining
CRF-School Nutrition	75,000,000	43,313,501	31,686,499	42%

CRF-Summer Learning	70,000,000	53,609,705	16,390,295	23%
CRF-Instructional Support	10,000,000	3,657,829	6,342,171	63%
CRF-Service for Exceptional Children	36,777,909	8,401,548	28,376,361	77%
CRF-Low wealth Supplemental Funds	22,000,000	9,434,434	12,565,566	57%
CRF-Nondigital Resources	2,997,917	1,142,075	1,855,842	62%
CRF-Student Computers and Devices	29,996,314	24,815,136	5,181,178	17%
CRF-Personnel Computers and Devices	4,999,946	4,200,767	799,179	16%
CRF-Mobile Wi-Fi for School Buses	1,000,000	266,253	733,747	73%

CRF-Mobile Wi-Fi for Homes and Communities	15,306,407	7,425,667	7,880,740	51%
CRF-Learning Management Platform	1,444,649	1,164,207	280,442	19%
CRF-Cybersecurity	3,452,400	1,508,246	1,944,154	56%
CRF-Covid Direct Appropriations	1,615,000	851,845	763,155	47%
CRF-Personal Protective Equipment	27,000,000	-	27,000,000	100%
CRF-Gaggle Safety Management	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	100%
	\$ 302,590,542	\$ 159,791,214	\$ 142,799,328	47%

Changes in Student Average Daily Membership and Average Daily Attendance Data

NCDPI compared the 2019-20 and 2020-21 academic years Month 2 Average Daily Membership (ADM) and Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to determine the change in student enrollment and attendance. Month 2 is the second 20 days of instruction for each PSU and is the latest data available to NCDPI.

The 2020-2021 Month 2 comparisons reflect a 51,565 decrease in student enrollment and a 0.39% decrease in average daily attendance.

19-20 Month 2 ADM	20-21 Month 2 ADM	From 19-20 to 20-21 % Change in ADM	Enrollment Change
1,535,871	1,484,306	3.36% decrease	51,565 decrease

20-21 Month 2 ADA	19-20 Month 2 ADA	From 19-20 to 20-21 % Change in ADA
95.12%	95.51%	0.39% decrease

ADM and ADA include students learning onsite and offsite for the 2020-21 academic year.

For specific data by each Public School Unit, including grade-level spans, [LEA and Charter ADM/ADA Changes](#)

*Average Daily Membership: The total number of school days within a given term - usually a school month or school year - that a student's name is on the current roll of a class, regardless of his/her being present or absent, is the "number of days in membership" for that student. ADM for each school month is based on the sum of the number of days in membership for all non-violating (NVIO) students in individual LEAs/Charters, divided by the number of days in the school month (ADM = Member Days (NVIO) / # of days in the school month rounded to the nearest whole number).

*Average Daily Attendance: Attendance is the presence of a student on days when school is in session. The total number of days of attendance for all students divided by the total number of school days in a school month gives the average daily attendance.

OTHER TOPICS FROM THE JLEOC COMMITTEE MEETING ON OCTOBER 6, 2020

Student Focused Supports:

Public School Units are focusing on the social and emotional well-being of students and providing support for student success at home. PSUs are providing:

- focused mental health support and counseling for students in whole-group, small-group and individual sessions;
- intentional activities and lessons focused on social emotional learning, such as [Three Signature Practices](#).
- family learning sessions at various times and in various languages on strategies to support at-home learning and student success.

NC Department of Public Instruction has also developed and created multiple resources focused on Social Emotional Learning, in particular to note a new [NCDPI SEL/Crisis Response Website](#).. The agency is also providing multiple opportunities for professional development for teachers and district leaders on social emotional learning.

Devices:

Annually, each LEA and Charter submits the NC Digital Learning Media Inventory (NCDLMI). One data point collected is the number of student devices. Due to the pandemic, the report is due this year on December 30, 2020 instead of June 30, 2020. The report is public and can be viewed at <http://apps.schools.nc.gov/ords/f?p=237:200>

The 2019-2020 data will be certified and a public report available March 2021.

Devices - Prior to House Bill 1043, PSUs reported needing 534,011 devices to provide a school-owned device to each student. Approximately, 66% had a school issued device for remote learning. Based on HB1043 funding, approximately 100,000 devices could be purchased by PSUs at an average of \$300 per computer. For the 30 million allocations available, DPI received 110 million in requests.

Devices were reported as both a strength and a weakness. PSUs reported a strength in having the ability to provide additional computers with the funding for student and staff devices. They were so very grateful. The weakness was reported due to the need for additional devices, supply delays, and sustaining the devices. PSUs reported that they need personnel to maintain and support the equipment.

Broadband:

All of the providers have been helpful—they've all contributed something: free hotspots, public wifi access points, reduced pricing, pledges not to terminate service for non-payment, etc.

Every county is still struggling with some aspect of connectivity. For example in Wake and Chatham counties there are areas without sufficient broadband access. In Mecklenburg there is an affordability problem. And in almost every other county there is a combination of the two. The Northeast and far West have heightened connectivity needs. North Carolina presents an interesting dilemma in solving the connectivity issue. We have portions of the state that are not densely enough populated for internet service providers to provide connections because they would lose money. Additionally, we have portions of our state where the landscape itself (mountains) presents such a large cost to ISPs they are not willing to provide coverage via fiber. Cellular coverage does not solve the issue in these situations either. Therefore, in many PSUs, even when they get funding to provide individual hotspots to students or bus wifi, there isn't coverage and these are not solutions. Although not ideal, In these cases, schools have utilized "*Park and Learns*" to provide coverage for students at centralized locations.

Professional Development:

NCDPI has provided significant professional development to support teachers, schools and districts as they work to adapt to the new schooling environment due to COVID-19. NCDPI has provided professional development mostly through virtual options. NCDPI will continue to provide technical assistance and professional development to NC's public schools.

Please see the table below to see an overview of professional development provided by each academic area of the NCDPI.

Advanced Learning and Gifted Education	On-going program support and technical assistance including AIG, AP/IB/CIE, CCP, CIHS, CCRG; Monthly Meet-Ups for each program area; Virtual sessions on instructional resources and programming for remote learning for each program area; Support for new coordinators and those with experience; Resource development to support changing environment
Educator Recruitment and Support	EVAAS, using data to inform instruction and NC Educator Evaluation System
Career and Technical Education	On-going program support and technical assistance. Monthly Collaboration Stations for each Career Pathway. Onboarding support for new teachers, CTE Administrators (two levels), CDCs, SPCs, and CIMCs.
SC&I	Content-area professional development on remote instruction topics across the content areas: Social Studies, Arts Education, Mathematics, Science, STEM, English Language Arts, English Language (EL) support, Physical Education, Social and Emotional Learning, Mental Health, End of the Year support, Beginning of the Year support, etc. Ongoing technical assistance, webinars, office hours, guidance documents/resources for remote instruction, etc.
OEL/DTL/SC&I Regional Collaborative PD	PD on Literacy/Vocabulary, Principal/AP Support, Personalized Learning
OEL	Support sessions for Smooth Transitions to Kindergarten, ReOpening PK Practices, ongoing TA support for NCELI implementation and documentation, Preschool Pyramid Model (SEL), PK-G2 Effective Remote Learning Practices, Family Engagement, Unpacking NC Foundations LDC Goals, Follow up Office Hours for each session
K-3	Hot Summer Topics (Supporting SOR), Comprehensive Plan for Reading Achievement Overview, Foundational Reading Skills Resource Overview

Digital Teaching & Learning	<p>Digital Teaching and Learning has developed and maintained resources for Remote Instruction in North Carolina. The DTL Team has provided Technical Assistance Webinars for Remote Instruction Plans to public-school unit leaders. Additionally, they have partnered with The Friday Institute to provide a blended online course for Coaching during Remote Instruction. DTL also hosted a 2-day virtual conference, NCBOLD for educators to support hybrid and blended learning. The Innovative Learning Catalysts, or otherwise known as DTL's Educators on Loan, have been providing on-going professional learning through Moments of Inspiration Podcasts, Podcast PD NC, Innovative Learning Catalysts PD sessions. The Home Base team has been hosting quarterly Home Base MeetUps with Home Base leaders from across the state for the latest updates. For educators the Home Base team has also been providing webinars to support remote instruction and the use of Home Base Applications to include #GoOpenNC, Canvas, Learning.com, NCEES, PowerTeacher Pro, and Schoolnet. To support the implementation of the Digital Learning Standards for Students, DTL has shared a Canvas course with public-school units to facilitate. DTL facilitates monthly School Library Media Coordinator collaboratives. NCEES Courses offer INTEL Teach Elements courses to support blended learning. Regional Consultants and other DTL members have partnered with RESAs to provide sessions at various RESA conferences.</p>
NC Virtual	<p>NC Virtual staff and teachers continue to provide free professional development to NC educators related to building quality content online and engaging and teaching students online. These are focused on a variety of topics such as how to use the Canvas LMS, accessibility strategies, quality feedback in the virtual class, and more. All webinars are recording and available for view here. In addition, NC Virtual is partnering with NC PAPA to provide training targeted at education leaders in the remote setting. We also provide a six week step-by-step course on how to teach online. For any urgent questions or problems, educators may also attend the NC Virtual lunch hour daily from 12-1PM. This an organic session based on participant needs.</p>

Accountability Services	Accountability Services provides training and professional development on the testing and accountability components. These are delivered to local testing and accountability coordinators who then train local staff.
Computer Science and Tech Ed	K-3 Computer Science integration in Science and Math; Standards development and alignment with core content areas; coding and mobile app resources for K-12 teacher leaders; open design professional development for K-12 educators
District & Regional Support (DRS)	<p>NC Star School Improvement Planning/User Training (Fall/Spring Regional training/District Request Trainings); Comprehensive Needs Assessment Results Virtual Bridge Training Sessions; RESTART School Support: Annual Report Prep; Planning with Flexibilities; PLN sessions; Multi-Tiered System of Support Training/Support; Beginning Teacher (BT) Support; BT Mentor Training; National Board Certification Candidate Support; Regional Support Structure: New Principal (Year 1-3) Professional Development and Networking in regions P-Tech, North Central, NE and NW; School Improvement Planning PD/Leader Coaching; Coaching Training; NCStar School Improvement Training; RESA Remote Learning discussions; Statewide Communications Leaders' Webinars-Biweekly March, 2020-Present; District Principal & School Improvement Coaching (Individual Schools 1:1); RESA partnered training on literacy, EC, and personalized learning</p>

Exceptional Children	<p>Math Recovery PD, SIM Word Mapping, All Leaders, NC State University Administrators Seminar Series, Foundations of Math Instructor Webinar, Language! Letterland, SPIRE, Evidence-Based Practices, Reading Research to Classroom Practice, Number Worlds, TransMath Collaboration, VI Accessibility, Accessibility in Google Platform, VI AT Assessments in the FV/LMA, See-The-Sound Visual Phonics, Post-Secondary Transition, Spoken Language Facilitation, Back to School: OT Practitioner Session, Check & Connect, DeafBlind Capacity Building, Ethics for the SLP, School Based Practice, CTE Collaboration Station, Secondary Transition Overview, CTE, EC, & VR Collaboration Teams, CTE Assessments, OCS Graduation Requirements, OCS Work Hours, Special Grants Training in CCIP, Remote Learning, Predictive Analytics to Improve Student Outcomes, Invitation to IEP, Referral Process, Targeted Monitoring Timely Placement, Disciplinary Change In Placement, Prior Written Notice, Reevaluation, Least Restrictive Environment/Extended School Year, Annual Goals, Transition, SLD What's Changed?, Autism Model Program Site Webinar, Speech Pathologist Panel Discussions, OTs & PTs serving Pre-School network, OT & PT Practice Pals, Audiology Medicaid Roundtable, Train the Trainer: Dyslexia Capacity Building, Framework for Literacy for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities (SCD) , Deep Dive Into Dyslexia</p>
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Virtual School Experiences:

NCDPI has focused on learning from the NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS) to support the transition to more remote and virtual learning for our teachers, school and districts. NCVPS has been delivering on-going professional development to assist teachers in instructional design and delivery as has the Digital Teaching and Learning area, the Friday Institute and NCBCR. NCVPS has shared best practices in remote learning, tips for engaging students online, teaching techniques for specific content areas, accessibility strategies as well as an [open lunch hour](#) session every day. Educators can click the

link and get answers to any question and support with any challenge. NCVPS continues to be a valuable resource for the state. All sessions are free and recordings are on our website [at this link](#).

Low-Performing Schools:

The state agency provides a regional support structure to support districts in the execution of their strategic plans aligned to the broader mission and vision of the NC State Board of Education. This regional team is led by a Regional Case Manager who works directly with district superintendents and senior level staff to support student advancement in all schools but also a more focused level of support on low performing districts and low performing schools. Though this approach, Regional Case Managers provide feedback on School Improvement Plans to school leaders and district staff. Based on these plans and a district's broader strategic focus, the Regional Case Manager aligns support in various areas from the Regional Support Team. These supports include Federal Programs, Exceptional Children, K-3 Literacy, Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports, Teacher Development, CTE, Digital Learning, and Accountability. As well, the Regional Case Manager also serves to expedite services from the broader team at DPI where appropriate. Support from each of these areas varies from coaching, technical development, and professional development. In all cases, these supports are tied closely to improving the capacity of district and school leaders in each region to advance student learning.

Monitoring of Teachers:

NCDPI monitors the state's teachers with respect to their licensure and effectiveness (evaluation and student growth, where applicable). Additionally, the state monitors how teachers move from one public school unit to another and if teachers are leaving employment with NC public schools. This information is reported annually to the General Assembly in the State of the Teaching Profession Report. As far as the monitoring of teachers' performance in the classroom, that is the purview of the local districts and charter schools that employ the teachers; the State does not monitor instructional practices in classrooms except as part of overall support for our low-performing schools and districts.

Remote Instruction and Resources:

NCDPI has developed and maintained a [Remote Instruction](#) website with resources for parents, students, educators and administrators. Many professional learning and technical assistance sessions have been conducted to support PSUs in the development of [Remote Instruction Plans](#), access to resources, digital-age learning pedagogy and resources available through the Home Base portal. Through a partnership with The Friday Institute, a cohort of 160 coaches have received in depth training supporting their teaching staff through the "Coaching during Remote Instruction" series. State-wide virtual conferences, such as [NCBOLD](#), were also conducted to support hybrid and blended learning. Regionally based [Innovative Learning Catalysts](#) provides on-going professional learning through Moments of Inspiration Podcasts, Podcast

PD NC, Innovative Learning Catalysts PD sessions. NCDPI has partnered with RESAs to provide targeted professional learning sessions.

Specific professional learning has been targeted to support PSUs in the access and usage of the NCDPI Open Education Resource Repository, called #GoOpenNC, to ensure all students have equitable access to online resources. Additionally, training has been provided on the statewide LMS and other resources available within the HomeBase Portal.