



REPORT ON THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION'S

# **Decision to Close a Residential School & Consolidate Programs**

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Presented to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee  
of the North Carolina General Assembly in accordance with  
Section 7.25 of Session Law 2011-145 - Appropriations Act of 2011

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**December 2011**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	3
Introduction/Overview .....	5
Background/Prior Information .....	6
Current Input Processes by Schools and Public.....	13
Legislatively-Mandated Considerations .....	14
School Closure Decision and Consolidation Plan .....	18
Direction for Improved Effectiveness .....	19
Conclusion .....	20
Appendices .....	21

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The North Carolina General Assembly transferred the administration of the North Carolina School for the Deaf, the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf, and the Governor Morehead School for the Blind (collectively, the 'residential schools') from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) effective June 1, 2011, with the passage of the Appropriations Act of 2010 (Session Law 2010-31). Shortly after the transfer, in the Appropriations Act of 2011 (Session Law 2011-145), the General Assembly found that the residential schools no longer meet the needs of the populations they serve in an efficient and effective manner and that current levels of utilization can be accommodated at two schools. This Act directs the NCDPI to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee the residential school it has decided to close and its plan for consolidating the programs with those at the two remaining residential schools. It also prescribes five areas of consideration in making the closure/consolidation decision. With the closure/consolidation, the General Assembly is imposing a \$5.5 million recurring reduction to the appropriation for the residential schools.

The residential schools are on the continuum of services for students who are deaf/hard of hearing or who have visual impairments, including blindness. Local educational agencies (LEAs) throughout North Carolina currently serve around 2,200 students identified as eligible for special education under the area of 'deafness' or 'hearing impairment' and over 700 students identified under 'visual impairment.' Many more students with these disabilities have additional impairments and are identified under other eligibility areas. The residential schools, in total, serve around 160 students who are deaf/hard of hearing and fewer than 50 students with visual impairments. The current appropriations level for the residential schools is approximately \$22.4 million, more than \$100,000 per child per year, as reflected in the table below.

School	# of Students	Total Budget 2011-12	Cost per Student
Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf	78	\$8,168,273.00	\$104,721.45
Governor Morehead School for the Blind	47	\$5,523,830.00	\$117,528.30
North Carolina School for the Deaf	78	\$8,684,716.00	\$111,342.51

The NCDPI engaged in several activities in preparation to receive the residential schools, including the development of a transition plan and the conducting of comprehensive needs assessments and facilities evaluations. These efforts helped in the data-gathering process for the closure/consolidation decision. Also, the NCDPI had several efforts to garner input in the decision-making process, including conducting an online survey (over 900 responses), having discussions with residential school administration and staff, holding three public hearings (over 1,500 total in attendance) and inviting additional written comments.

The NCDPI finds that each campus is significantly underutilized due to decreased enrollments and could absorb the consolidation with at least one other residential school with varying degrees of renovation costs. The most costly solution would be the transfer of one of the schools for the deaf to the Governor Morehead School campus. The greatest effect on travel would be the consolidation of the schools for the deaf. Each scenario for closure/consolidation presents a challenge to service

delivery and to family/socialization concerns. Each school has strong community and host city support. Therefore, the NCDPI will: close the Governor Morehead School as a separate school; consolidate its administration and programs with the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf, and; operate a satellite campus of the Eastern North Carolina School for students with visual impairments on the Governor Morehead campus. The NCDPI will determine how to comply with the recurring reduction to the appropriations for the residential schools. Consideration will be given to various budget reduction strategies, such as consolidating administrative positions, leasing property at one or more of the campuses as mentioned earlier, and reducing other operating expenses of the schools. Specific attention will be given to the leasing of a percentage of the Governor Morehead School campus. The NCDPI also will explore using underutilized space at the schools for the deaf for other educational needs.

Finally, the NCDPI is committed to improving not only the efficiency of these schools, but also their policy compliance and effectiveness. Examination of the comprehensive needs assessments, outcome data, visits to the schools and the public input has identified several areas for operational improvement. With the residential schools now under NCDPI administration, the State is poised to implement program planning, development, management and evaluation to affect needed operational changes.

## INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

With the Appropriations Act of 2011 – Session Law 2011-145, the General Assembly mandated the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) to (1) close one of the three residential schools serving children and youth with vision and hearing disabilities and (2) plan for the consolidation of the programs at the two remaining schools. The legislation directed NCDPI to report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the General Assembly by January 15, 2012. This report is the NCDPI's response to the mandate.

The General Assembly's sensitivity to and concern for the educational needs of children and youth who are deaf and blind is evident by its finding that the operation of the residential schools no longer meets the needs of the populations they serve in an effective and efficient manner. Further, the General Assembly's concern for the welfare of children and youth and the citizens of the State is recognized by its directive that the NCDPI base its decision on five considerations:

- minimization of the impact on services to deaf and blind students currently served by the residential schools,
- minimization of costs of modifications at the two remaining schools to accommodate students from the closed school,
- maximization of funds generated or net savings to the State from costs avoided due to the closure of one school and the sale or transfer to other State agencies of the school campus and other physical assets,
- minimization of required travel for students of the school that is closed, and
- historical and cultural significance of the school.

The Appropriations Act of 2011 included a money report to specifically note any adjustment to State-funded expenses. The appropriation for the residential schools already has been reduced approximately \$1.7 million for the Fiscal Year 2011. The budget for Fiscal Year 2012 lists another recurring reduction of \$5.5 million.

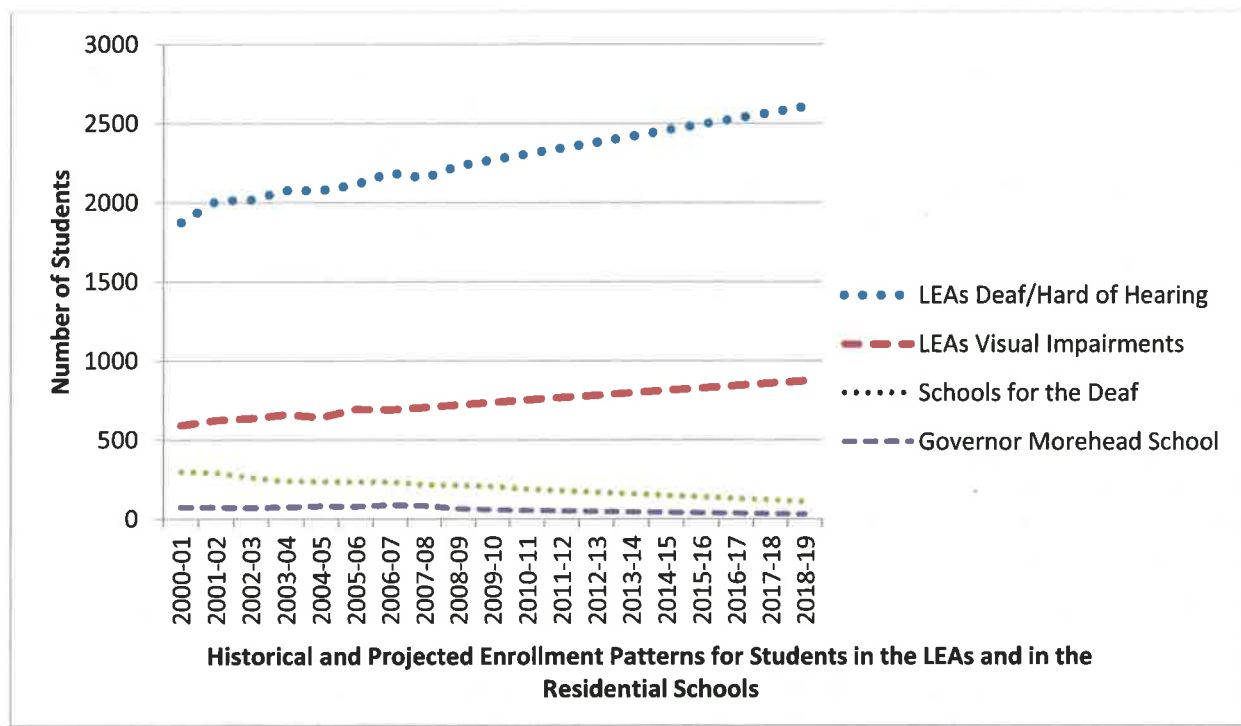
## BACKGROUND/PRIOR INFORMATION

### Brief History

North Carolina has been responsive to the educational needs of children and youth who are deaf and blind as evidenced by various legislative actions since opening the first residential school in Raleigh in 1845. Significant legislative actions are noted below.

- 1845 – North Carolina Institute for the Deaf and Dumb and Blind opened in Raleigh (ninth state residential school in the nation)
- 1869 – North Carolina School for Colored Deaf and Blind opened in Raleigh (first state school for African American children and youth in the nation)
- 1894 – North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morganton opened (children transferred from Raleigh to Morganton)
- 1923 – North Carolina School for the Blind opened on Ashe Avenue in Raleigh
- 1929 – Campus opened on Garner Road in Raleigh for African American children who were deaf and blind (last graduation class for African American children from Garner Road campus in 1970)
- 1964 – Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf in Wilson opened
- 1968 – Innovative legislation passed, allowing public school systems to serve children who were deaf beginning at one year of age
- 1974 – Comprehensive exceptional child legislation passed, mandating public school systems to serve all children with disabilities
- 1975 – Central North Carolina School for the Deaf in Greensboro opened
- 1977 – Legislation passed aligning NC legislation with Federal legislation (PL 94-142, Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975), mandating service to all children with disabilities (since updated)

The state and federal special education laws (beginning in the 1970s) requiring local educational agencies (LEAs) to provide a free, appropriate public education to children with disabilities had a significant impact on the residential schools. As LEAs gradually increased their capacity to serve students with visual impairments and those who are deaf/hard of hearing, placement and enrollment at the residential schools gradually declined. In 2000, the Central North Carolina School for the Deaf was closed by the General Assembly due to an overall reduction in enrollment at the three schools for the deaf. Currently around 2,200 children with a special education primary area of eligibility in 'deafness' or 'hearing impaired' and 715 children with an eligibility area of 'visually impaired' are being served by the LEAs. Many additional students who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have visual impairments are identified under other special education eligibility areas (e.g., other health impairment, multiple disabilities, intellectual disability, etc.). Enrollment now stands at fewer than 80 at each of the schools for the deaf and fewer than 50 at the Governor Morehead School. Studies (listed below) have been commissioned in recent years to examine the viability and effectiveness of the remaining schools and services throughout the state to students who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have visual impairments.



### Overarching Legislation/Policies

Federal and state laws and regulations apply to the education of children with disabilities, including those with visual impairments and those who are deaf/hard of hearing.

- The **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004** is the most current federal statute designed to assist States in the education of children with disabilities in order to improve results and to ensure equal protection of the law. Prefacing language in IDEA states that Congress finds that “disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in and contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.”
- The **IDEA Final Regulations** (*Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities*) give specific direction to State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), and other State agencies that educate children with disabilities and receive federal IDEA funds, including the residential schools.
- At the State level, public education services to children with disabilities are governed by **Article 9 of Chapter 115C** (entitled *Education of Children with Disabilities*) in the North Carolina General Statutes.

- The regulations giving specific direction on the fulfillment of Article 9 are in the Policy Manual of the North Carolina State Board of Education and are codified in ***Policies Governing Services for Children with Disabilities***. Also, the North Carolina General Assembly has laws (i.e., in Chapter 143B) regarding the establishment and operation of the Governor Morehead School for the Blind, the North Carolina School for the Deaf and the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf under the management of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS). Though the General Assembly transferred these three schools to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction on June 1, 2011, language in Article 143B has not yet been amended to reflect this change.

### **Recent Legislation/Studies**

The General Assembly has directed studies and reviews of the residential schools numerous times dating back to the 1980s. Several recent legislative directives that have addressed the education of students with visual impairments and students who are deaf/hard of hearing are noteworthy. They include:

- 2007      Evaluation of Educational Services to Students with Hearing and Visual Impairments (Appropriations Act of 2007, Session Law 2007-323, § 10.20)  
 The Appropriations Act of 2007 directed the NCDHHS to collaborate on an evaluation of the State’s entire service delivery model for deaf and blind students, determine whether the residential schools should remain under the purview of the NCDHHS or be transferred to the NCDPI, and develop a plan to reduce institutional capacity. The resulting evaluation indicated that the model at the time was legally compliant but also revealed concerns about availability of services throughout the state. A follow-up report indicated that transferring the schools to the NCDPI likely would not result in financial savings but recommended various strategies for increased collaboration between the agencies and increased collaboration among LEAs to promote a fuller continuum of services for these populations.
- 2009      Office of Education Services/Funds Transfer (Appropriations Act of 2009, Session Law 2009-451, § 10.51)  
 The Appropriations Act of 2009 directed the NCDHHS to collaborate with NCDPI and the State Board of Education to develop a report to achieve efficiencies of scale and ensure appropriate education of students with visual and hearing impairments. The report offered four possible designs for continuing the residential schools (including varying degrees of consolidated residential programs and regional day programs, the increased use of distance technology and outreach services, and direct reporting to the State Board of Education), all under the Office of Education Services within NCDHHS administration.



2010 Office of Education Services/Transfer of Residential and Preschool Services for the Deaf and Blind (Appropriations Act of 2010, Session Law 2010-31, § 10.21A.) The Appropriations Act of 2010 created significant changes to the operation of the residential schools. Effective October 1, 2010, it eliminated the NCDHHS Office of Education Services, which had provided administrative oversight of the residential schools, and transferred the Governor Morehead Outreach Program and the Resource Support Program for Students Who Are Deaf/Hard of Hearing to the NCDPI's Exceptional Children Division. It eliminated many school-level administrative positions and consolidated the functions of the School Director and School Principal positions at each school. The NCDHHS was directed to hire an interim superintendent and the State Board of Education was directed to hire a superintendent through a prescribed search committee. The State Board of Education was also charged with developing and implementing a transition plan that would transfer the residential schools, the Governor Morehead Preschool Program and the Early Intervention Program for Children Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to the NCDPI on June 1, 2011.

2011 Residential Schools (Appropriations Act of 2011, Session 2011-145, § 7.25) Shortly after receiving the transfer of the residential schools, the NCDPI was directed through the Appropriations Act of 2011 to report to the General Assembly a decision on which one of the residential school campuses would be closed and the plan for consolidating programs from the closed campus with those at the two remaining schools. The legislation listed the five specific consideration areas (i.e., on page 5 of this report) on which the school closure decision must be based. The report is due to the General Assembly by January 15, 2012 and the NCDPI must carry out the report's closure decision effective July 1, 2012.

**Budgets**

The current appropriation for each school, following the recent 4.4% cut for FY2011-2012, is as follows:

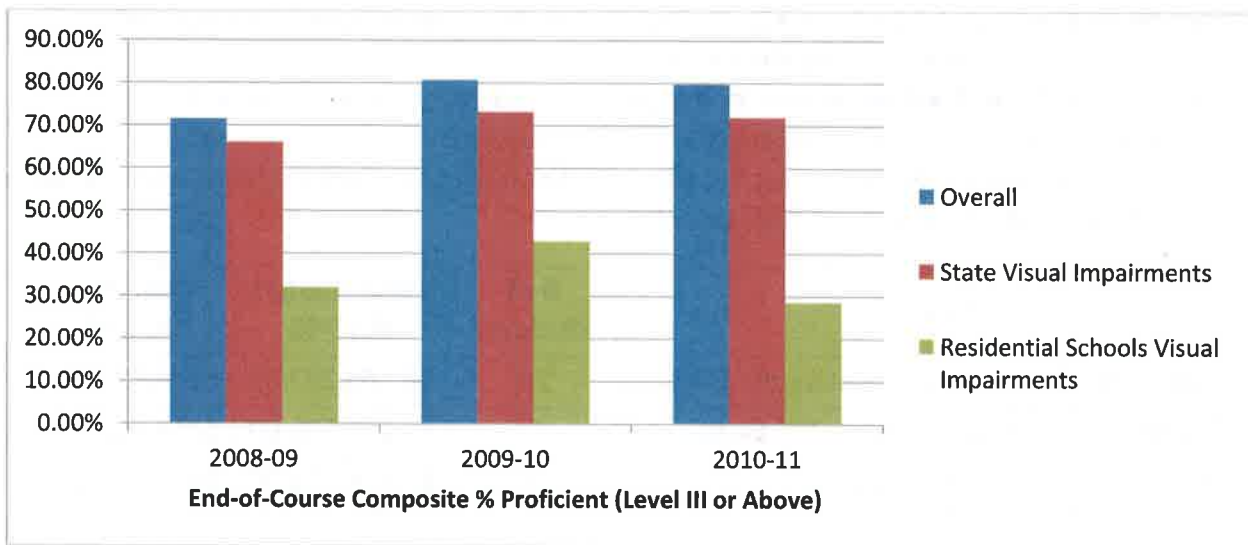
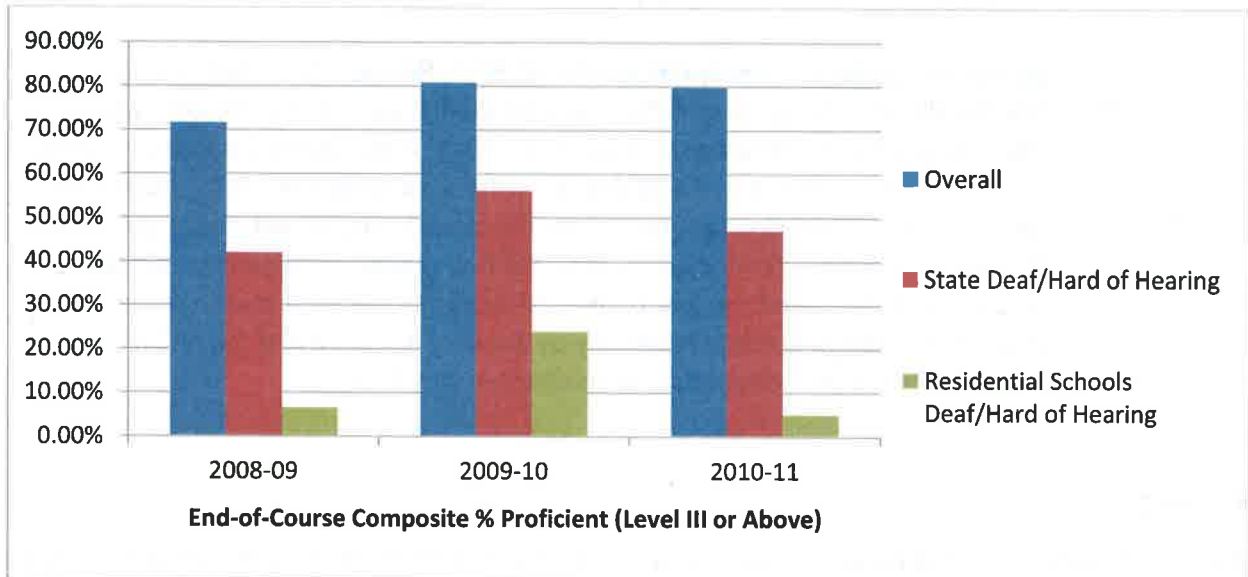
- North Carolina School for the Deaf: \$8,684,716 (78 current students; approximately 57 residential students, 21 day students)
- Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf: \$8,168,273 (78 current students; approximately 57 residential students, 21 day students)
- Governor Morehead School for the Blind: \$5,523,830 (47 current students; approximately 35 residential students, 12 day students)

School	# of Students	Total Budget 2011-12	Cost per Student
Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf	78	\$8,168,273.00	\$104,721.45
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Approximately 80% of the budget at each school has been devoted to personnel expenditures. The remainder is devoted to operational expenses, including food service, maintenance, health care, housekeeping, utilities and the like. Both schools for the deaf have their own maintenance staff while the Governor Morehead School contracts with NCDHHS Central Regional Maintenance for all utilities and maintenance. The contract for 2011-12 is \$1,395,547 and separate from the overall appropriation for GMS (\$5,523,830).

**Outcomes/Data**

Data indicate that students at the residential schools achieve significantly below their counterparts who have visual impairments or who are deaf/hard of hearing in regular public schools. For example, in 2008-09 only 14.5% End-of-Course (EOC) tests taken by residential school students generated proficient scores, while 48.5% of EOC tests taken by LEA students who are deaf/hard of hearing generated proficient scores. Gaps similar to and larger than these apply to similar comparisons in End-of-Grade (EOG) tests and across the past six years at all three schools.



Assertions have been made that it is not reasonable to expect students in the residential schools to achieve at the same levels as their counterparts in regular public schools, citing various reasons (e.g., additional disabilities, mental health diagnoses, etc.). However, many LEA students who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have visual impairments also have the additional disabilities described above. Also, it is important to note that the decisions about grade assignment, course enrollment and the appropriate assessments to administer are made at the individual student level by those who know the student best, including parents. For students at the residential school, this includes that school's staff and administration. With that, it is reasonable to compare outcomes between LEAs and residential programs to help guide decisions on the effectiveness of current educational programming and any necessary adjustments.

### **Transfer to NCDPI**

The NCDPI undertook several efforts and strategies in preparation to receive the residential schools in June 2011. In addition to numerous meetings and planning sessions with NCDHHS staff, seven significant activities (a Transition Plan, three Facilities Reports, and three Comprehensive Needs Assessments) were conducted and are summarized below.

#### **Transition Plan**

The legislative action directing the transfer of the residential schools and preschool programs from the NCDHHS to the NCDPI also required the State Board of Education to develop a transition plan to address structural adjustments within the NCDPI, proposed staffing for appropriate oversight, collaboration with the NCDHHS to continue particular student services, and other items. The Transition Plan completed by the NCDPI addressed these items and proposed several measures to ensure a smooth transition. Some recommendations, such as reestablishing the principal positions at each school, have been allowed by the General Assembly, provided they can be met with existing funds. Other recommendations, such as the establishment of a small administrative office within the NCDPI to support the superintendent to oversee the residential schools, were not approved. This most recent legislation initiates even further cuts, including the elimination of the superintendent position, and renders moot some of the Transition Plan's core recommendations. However, some recommendations did carry forward, such as the transfer of the early intervention/preschool programs to the Office of Early Learning, the conducting of Comprehensive Needs Assessments at each school, and the establishment of targets for improvement in academic achievement.

#### **Facilities Reports**

During the fall of 2010, the architectural and engineering staff from School Planning and Plant Operation visited each of the residential school campuses to roughly evaluate the condition and needs of the facilities. Generally, the findings were that all three campuses need significant improvements due to their age, low funding, deterioration and changes in life safety and ADA requirements. Also, each campus is significantly underutilized with entire buildings or groups of buildings not currently in use. The North Carolina School for the Deaf (Morganton) and the Eastern School for the Deaf (Wilson) are in much better condition for long term use. A detailed report on each campus is attached to the end of this report.

### Comprehensive Needs Assessments (CNA)

During the spring of 2011, Comprehensive Needs Assessment visits were conducted at each of the three residential schools. A CNA is a systematic assessment of practices, processes and systems within a school to assist leadership in determining needs, examining their nature and causes, and setting priorities for future action. The CNA provides a framework which:

- Provides districts and schools with a clear view of their strengths, areas for improvement, challenges, and successes;
- Enables a systematic review of practices, processes, and systems within a school district.
- Assists district and school leadership in determining needs, examining their nature and causes, and setting priorities for future action;
- Guides the development of a meaningful district or school plan and suggests benchmarks for evaluation; and
- Most importantly, provides a cornerstone for continuous improvement – ensuring the best possible education for all students.

Information on accessing each full CNA report is available in the Appendices. The CNA report from each school yielded the following recommendations.

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- Align instruction to the North Carolina Standard Course of Study;
- Use 21<sup>st</sup> Century technology;
- Develop a strong literacy program, and;
- Improve leadership capacity.

## CURRENT INPUT PROCESSES BY SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC

Recognizing the magnitude of the two-fold task the legislation placed upon the NCDPI (identify for closure one of the three residential schools and to develop a plan for consolidating the programs of the school to be closed at the two remaining schools), the Department's leadership prepared a strategic plan for implementing the task. One component of the plan was to obtain input from personnel at the three schools and the general public. Noting that obtaining input from school personnel and the citizens of North Carolina was not included in the legislation, the Department thought it wise to hear from others about the legislative mandate before attempting to make a decision as to which school to close.

Three opportunities were provided for people to express their concerns and recommendations to the NCDPI meeting face-to-face with the Core Committee, submitting statements in writing and completing an online survey. The face-to-face sessions were held in Morganton on September 20, in Wilson on September 22 and in Raleigh on September 28, 2011. During the morning and afternoon at each site, the Core Committee met with three groups of employees of the residential schools: administrative personnel, residential/student-life personnel and instructional/academic personnel. From 5:30 until 7:00 p.m. the Core Committee held well-advertised public hearings.

Approximately 200 school personnel attended the meetings with the Core Committee, with more than half of the number offering comments. At the public hearings, 130 people signed up to speak; time allowed 98 to do so (Morganton: 41/30; Wilson: 48/36; Raleigh: 41/32). Eighty-five written statements were received by the Core Committee (45 in Morganton, 18 in Wilson, 22 in Raleigh). More than 6,000 people signed a petition asking for the North Carolina School for the Deaf (Morganton) to remain open. Additional written statements were received since the hearing up to the time of the writing of this report.

The majority of those who spoke at the hearing pleaded for the schools in their locality to remain open. Among the reasons most cited were the historical significance of the schools, a seemingly lack of appropriate services in the LEAs, and the economic impact on the community. Continuation of deaf culture was often cited by persons speaking on behalf of the schools for the deaf. Proximity to cultural resources and availability of public transportation were among the concerns expressed by persons supporting Governor Morehead School.

The online survey was available for the public to provide their views and provide input from September 12 through September 30, 2011. Nine hundred sixty-nine (969) surveys were submitted.

## LEGISLATIVELY-MANDATED CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOL CLOSURE DECISION

The five areas the General Assembly mandated the NCDPI to consider when making its decision to close one of the schools are addressed below.

### 1. Minimization of impact on services to deaf and blind students currently served by the residential schools

The impact on students is recognized as the major concern with school closure. The Department of Public Instruction considered the input given by department staff and by people who shared their concerns at the public hearings or responded to the online survey. Academic achievement, family and socialization concerns, services provided by LEAs and transportation surfaced as issues common to all three schools. This section of the report deals with the first four concerns. Transportation is addressed later.

Academic achievement outcomes are low at all three schools. Closing one school will not raise academic achievement at the other two. The General Assembly's recent transfer of the governance of the residential schools to the Department of Public Instruction and the creation of a residential school section under the direction of the State Superintendent are viewed as a first step in ensuring academic improvement. The academic, instructional and technology resources of the Department of Public Instruction will be more readily available to the residential schools.

Family and socialization concerns will be heightened by the closure of a school. Parents whose children are deaf and use manual communication express doubts about the option of enrolling their children in local education agency schools, should travel times for their children be increased by the closing of a school for the deaf. Although parents and advocates realize that many LEAs serve students who are deaf, they state concerns about the ability of some LEAs to provide adequate numbers of teachers licensed in deaf education and interpreters who have sufficient sign language.

Peer acceptance, social competence and friendship relations for students who are currently enrolled at their residential schools may be negatively impacted should they be moved to another residential school or their parents enroll them in a local education agency school. Effective peer relationships and opportunities for developing a positive identity, which are crucial to healthy development, may be lacking in some local education agency schools due to the limited numbers of children enrolled who are deaf or blind.

Of particular concern for students who are blind would be locating the residential school in a rural area. A strong feature of the school for the blind being in Raleigh is the opportunity provided for students to learn their orientation and mobility skills in an urban environment. In Raleigh students who are blind have access to unlimited orientation and mobility experiences not afforded in more rural settings. Parents and advocates for children who are blind stress the importance and value of independence and safety being learned in a community with public transportation, stores with elevators and escalators, inside and outside malls, museums, etc.

Although more than 90% of students who are deaf/hard of hearing or who have visual impairments are educated in their LEAs, some LEAs, especially in rural areas of the State, experience difficulty recruiting teachers licensed in these specialized areas. With the closing of one of the residential schools, parents may consider their LEA to have limited resources. Too, with the closing of one of the residential schools, the school to which the students are relocated may find it difficult to access related services personnel (e.g., orientation & mobility specialists, audiologists) and other staff. No assurance can be given that personnel and staff at the closed school will be able to accept employment at a school away from their home community.

## **2. Minimization of costs of modifications at the two remaining residential schools to accommodate students from the closed school**

The agency determined the following, using the Facilities Reports and the analysis of fiscal data about the residential and academic facilities at each residential school:

- As the Facilities Reports note, all three schools are in need of significant renovations to continue operating. For example, all campuses would benefit from the installation of sprinkler systems.
- Using current enrollment numbers, both the academic and residential facilities at the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf and the North Carolina School for Deaf are adequate to absorb the residential population of either of the other two campuses without significant additional cost. Though Eagles Hall (i.e., a multi-purpose facility not currently in use) at the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf requires total renovation for possible use, it is not anticipated this facility would be required if this school was to accept the population from either of the other schools.
- The Governor Morehead School would require significant efforts to develop sufficient academic facilities for the student and professional population of either of the schools for the deaf. For example, renovation of Lineberry Hall (the hallmark building on campus) is estimated to cost approximately \$6.1 million. Renovation of classroom space in other buildings is estimated to cost close to \$1.7 million. To acquire this classroom space, several buildings currently in use by other agencies may need to be reclaimed. Costs for relocation of existing agencies are not available without extensive study.

## **3. Maximization of funds generated or net savings to the State from costs avoided due to the closure of one school and the sale or transfer to other State agencies of the school campus and other physical assets**

The maximum net operational savings to the State would occur by the closure of one of the schools for the deaf and the consolidation of those programs at the other school for the deaf. It is anticipated that the current staff at either of these schools could absorb the student population from the other with little or no adjustment to staffing levels. Closure and consolidation involving the Governor Morehead School and one of the schools for the deaf would save fewer funds, as these two programs would continue to require distinct instructional and residential life staff on the same campus. In this scenario, limited savings would be generated from some reduced administrative, personnel, food service, housekeeping and maintenance expenses.

However, the “sale or transfer to other State agencies of the school campus and other physical assets” presents a range of possibilities. Regardless of school closure, each campus and property has the possibility for additional usage and potential generation of funds. Expanding the purpose of each campus to a greater educational vision would allow for these sites to become multi-purpose and multi-agency in nature, achieving a more inclusive and integrated educational environment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Portions of each campus could be leased to one or more educational entity/entities to establish and operate the following:

- Magnet or charter schools
- Career and College Promise campuses for high school students
- Regional career/technical centers
- Regional specialized schools (e.g., STEM, arts, global language schools)
- Residential internship sites for high school seniors
- Teacher preparation and professional development centers

The leases could also take on some of the operational and personnel expenses (e.g., housekeeping, food service, security, maintenance) currently budgeted for the residential schools, thus reducing the overall and per pupil expenditures at each school.

#### **4. Minimization of required travel for students of the school that is closed**

The cost of additional travel to one of the remaining residential schools is relatively negligible, any options resulting in increased costs of less than \$100,000 per year. The most expensive option would involve consolidating the schools for the deaf, resulting in an estimated increase of \$94,000. Consolidation of the North Carolina School for the Deaf and Governor Morehead School programs would mean an estimated increase of \$76,140. Consolidating the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf and the Governor Morehead School programs would result in an estimated increase of \$19,740.

The time of additional travel would vary by consolidation choice, with the minimal impact being a consolidation of the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf and the Governor Morehead School. Consolidating the North Carolina School for the Deaf with either of the other two campuses would result in increased travel (up to four additional hours each way) for nearly all of the students of the closed campus. Only a very small number of these students would have the same or a reduced travel time. Conversely, with a Governor Morehead School/Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf consolidation, most students from the closed campus would have no increase or only a slight increase to travel time (less than one additional hour each way) and a significant number of students would have a reduced travel time.



## **5. Historical and cultural significance of the school**

The North Carolina School for the Deaf was established in 1894 as a day/residential facility for the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. It is located on a 160-acre campus in Morganton and is designated as a historical site by the State of North Carolina. The Governor Morehead School was established in 1845 in downtown Raleigh. It was the eighth school for the blind in the United States. The school moved to the current location on Ashe Avenue in Raleigh in 1923. It serves both day and residential students. The Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf was established in 1964 and is also a day/residential facility for the education of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. It is located on a 54-acre campus in Wilson. While the schools are of different historical significance, it is important to note that each of the three schools has a strong community that is passionate and supportive, creative a vibrant culture within each of the three schools.

## **SCHOOL CLOSURE DECISION AND CONSOLIDATION PLAN**

The NCDPI has endeavored to examine existing information, gather stakeholder input, and make decisions in compliance with the legislative directives. Concern for the educational well-being of students is central to the decision-making process. Within this is an attempt to bring the residential schools up to date with current educational systems and a vision for integrated multi-purpose campuses. Along with these efforts, there is an upcoming \$5.5 million recurring reduction to the residential schools' budget, according to the Appropriations Act of 2011.

The review of the consideration areas has led to the NCDPI's conclusion that consolidating the schools for the deaf is not optimal, as each school is a vital part of its host city and community. Therefore, the decision of the NCDPI is to close the Governor Morehead School as a separate school, consolidating its administration and programs with the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf. Additionally, the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf will operate a satellite program for students with visual impairments on the campus of the Governor Morehead School. Students currently attending the Governor Morehead School would continue to receive their education at that site, benefitting from that campus's transportation and cultural resource proximity.

The NCDPI will determine how to comply with the legislative mandate to further reduce the recurring budget for the operation of the residential schools. Consideration will be given to various budget reduction strategies, such as consolidating administrative positions, leasing property at one or more of the campuses as mentioned earlier, and reducing other operating expenses of the schools.

## **DIRECTION FOR IMPROVED EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL OPERATION AND THE CONTINUUM OF SERVICES**

The improvement of education services at the two remaining schools is of primary importance to parents, faculty and staff, the State Board of Education and the NCDPI. Continued economic pressures will place even greater emphasis on both effectiveness and efficiency. Future economic needs may dictate further consolidation of residential schools and programs. With the oversight of the schools under the NCDPI, the State is poised to implement program planning, development, management and evaluation to affect needed operational changes.

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment reports, an examination of student outcome data, the visits to the schools, the public hearings and the online survey identified the following areas where educational improvements are needed:

- Recognition and operation of these schools as bona fide points on the continuum of alternative placements, not as stand-alone institutions;
- Preparation of students to re-enter more inclusive schools and an inclusive world, with transferable academic, social and employment-related skills that allow them to find success in a variety of settings;
- Compliance with State and federal regulations that ensure decisions for student placement are made annually, on an individual student basis, in keeping with the educational needs of the student and the annual goals stated in the student's Individualized Educational Program, and with assurance that the sole decision for placement is made by the Individualized Educational Program Team, which includes the parents;
- In the case of a student with visual impairments, including blindness, provision for instruction both in the general curriculum (i.e., the North Carolina Standard Course of Study) and vision-specific areas such as Braille, independent living skills, assistive technology, and vocational preparedness.
- In the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, recognition of the communication needs of the student, providing strong language development instruction in the student's communication mode to promote communication and literacy in a variety of settings;
- Provision for parent counseling and training that assists them in understanding child development and the special needs of their child and acquisition of the necessary skills that allow them to support the implementation of their child's Individualized Education Program; and
- Development of stronger relationships with LEAs for a variety of purposes, including: effective and efficient transition of students between the LEAs and the residential schools; the building of capacity in the LEAs to serve students who are deaf/hard of hearing or who have visual impairments; and the building of capacity at the residential schools to deliver high quality grade-level instruction to students.

## CONCLUSION

The closure and consolidation process is presenting significant challenges to schools, families and students. Educating students with low-incidence disabilities is an expensive endeavor by the very nature of these areas' requirements of specialized skills, equipment and services. However, it is important to recognize that the economic conditions that have prompted these actions are not likely to subside quickly. Additional adjustments may be required in the future, as many states have only one residential school and those serve both the deaf and blind populations on the same campus. Some states do not have a residential school at all, instead establishing only regional day schools to complement local services. However, with this continued economic pressure, these challenges still must be viewed as opportunities for improvement. Outcome data shows that there is significant room for growth in every placement option, including both the residential schools and the LEAs. As indicated in the legislation's prefacing language, the services to students with visual impairments and those who are deaf or hard of hearing must be both efficient and effective. Moving forward, these schools now are under the administration of the Department of Public Instruction and should have full access to the instructional, accountability, and compliance resources necessary to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. With those resources, it is hoped there will be a fuller continuum of services throughout North Carolina and there will be increased evidence of these students' learning and achieving, like all other students, in order to become globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## APPENDICES

### Legislation

The following recent legislation has informed the writing of this report. Visit the website links and scroll to the specific section listed.

- Appropriations Act of 2007, Session Law 2007-323, § 10.20  
(<http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2007/Bills/House/PDF/H1473v10.pdf>)
- Appropriations Act of 2009, Session Law 2009-451, § 10.51  
(<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2009/Bills/Senate/PDF/S202v8.pdf>)
- Appropriations Act of 2010, Session Law 2010-31, § 10.21A  
(<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2009/Bills/Senate/PDF/S897v8.pdf>)
- Appropriations Act of 2011, Session 2011-145, § 7.25  
(<http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2011/Bills/House/PDF/H200v9.pdf>)

### Public Hearings Document

Public Hearings were conducted on September 20 (Morganton), September 22 (Wilson), and September 28 (Raleigh) to garner additional public input for the NCDPI to consider in making its closure/consolidation decision. A guidance document, found on the last two pages of this report, was given to all attendees.

### Additional Documents and Reports

The following documents and reports will serve as additional appendices to this report. They are available upon request from the NCDPI Communications and Information Division.

- Transition Plan
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) Reports
- Facilities Reports
- Public Survey Responses

**(Two-page handout given to attendees at Public Hearings in Morganton,  
Wilson and Raleigh – September 2011)**

**Legislation**

Appropriations Act of 2011 – Session Law 2011-145

SECTION 7.25.(a) The General Assembly finds that the operation of the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf, the Governor Morehead School for the Blind, and the North Carolina School for the Deaf (collectively, the "residential schools") no longer meets the needs of the populations they serve in an efficient and effective manner, and that current levels of utilization of the residential schools can be accommodated with two schools. No later than January 15, 2012, the Department shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the General Assembly the residential school it has decided to close and the Department's plan for consolidating the programs with those at the two remaining schools. The Department shall base its choice of the residential school to be closed on the following considerations:

- 1) Minimization of impact on services to deaf and blind students currently served by the residential schools.
- 2) Minimization of costs of modifications at the two remaining residential schools to accommodate students from the closed school.
- 3) Maximization of funds generated or net savings to the State from costs avoided due to the closure of one school and the sale or transfer to other State agencies of the school campus and other physical assets.
- 4) Minimization of required travel for students of the school that is closed.
- 5) Historical and cultural significance of the school.

Effective July 1, 2012, the Department of Public Instruction shall carry out the closure and consolidation described in its report.

**Rules for Public Hearings**

- Public hearings are for the purpose of allowing persons to state their opinions and, if they wish, to give suggestions and recommendations.
- Public hearings hold fast to a time schedule.
- Public hearings do not allow for discussion.
- Public hearings do not allow for questions and answers.
- The following procedure will govern this public hearing:
  - Begin at 5:30 p.m.
  - End at 7:00 p.m.
  - Allow all who signed up to speak to do so as time between 5:30 and 7:00 p.m. permits.
  - Each speaker has three minutes to speak.
  - Each speaker will be signaled when he/she has 30 seconds remaining.
  - Time will be called at the end of three minutes.
  - Any person may submit written comments at the hearing or submit the online survey (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org>).

## Timelines

### September 2011

- Launch online survey on 9/12
- Conduct three public hearings
  - 9/20 in Morganton
  - 9/22 in Wilson
  - 9/28 in Raleigh
- Close online survey on 9/30

### October-November 2011

- Core Committee reviews input
- Core Committee writes report
- The Department of Public Instruction submits the report to the State Board of Education

### December 2011

- State Board of Education takes action on the report

### January 2012

- The Department of Public Instruction submits the report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the General Assembly on 1/15

### January – June 2012

- The Department of Public Instruction works with residential schools, local education agencies and others to prepare for school closure

### July 2012

- The Department of Public Instruction carries out the school closure and consolidation described in the report

## Department of Public Instruction Core Committee

Mary Watson, Director, Exceptional Children Division

Tom Winton, Section Chief, Exceptional Children Division

Barbria Bacon, Superintendent of Schools for the Deaf and Blind/Director, Governor Morehead School for the Blind

Debbie Jackson, Assistant to the Superintendent of the Schools for the Deaf and Blind

Rachael Ragin, Consultant for Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Exceptional Children Division

Julie Kagy, Consultant for Visually Impaired/Assistive Technology, Exceptional Children Division

Ben Matthews, Director, School Support Division

Steve Taynton, Section Chief, School Planning, School Support Division

Becky McConkey/Sarah Harris, Director/Assistant Director, Financial Services Division

Vanessa Jeter, Director, Division of Communication and Information Services

Katie Cornetto, Attorney, State Board of Education

David Mills, Facilitator (retired from the Department of Public Instruction)





## **KEEPING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS OPEN AND VIABLE**

### **RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS**

SECTION 7.25(a) The General Assembly finds that the operation of the... "residential schools" ...no longer meets the needs of the population they serve...and that current levels of utilization...can be accommodated with two schools. No later than January 15, 2012, the Department shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the General Assembly the residential school it has decided to close...

Session Law 2011-145

### **SCHOOL CLOSURE DECISION...**

...the decision of the NCDPI is to close the Governor Morehead School as a separate school, consolidating its administration and programs with the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf. Additionally, the Eastern North Carolina School for the Deaf will operate a satellite program for students with visual impairments on the campus of the Governor Morehead School. Students currently attending the Governor Morehead School would continue to receive their education at that site...

Residential Schools Closure Report  
November 30, 2011

## **KEEPING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS OPEN AND VIABLE**

### **OUR PERSPECTIVE:**

DPI WAS ASKED TO UNDERTAKE A DIFFICULT TASK ON A DEMANDING SCHEDULE AND COME UP WITH A PLAN TO MAKE THE BEST OF A BAD SITUATION. THEIR WORK IS ACKNOWLEDGED AND PLANS TO IMPROVE THE SITUATION AT ALL SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND AND DEAF SHOULD BE SUPPORTED.

### **OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

#### **UNDERSTAND WHAT IT TAKES TO EDUCATE THE BLIND AND DEAF**

Specially trained teachers  
Technology  
Books  
Guides  
Transportation  
Etc.

O&M Specialists  
PT/OT Specialists  
Interpreters  
Environment  
Accommodation  
Etc.

#### **DEVELOP A PLAN AND STRATEGY TO MEET THOSE REQUIREMENTS**

Prepare for additional ~160 blind/deaf students, statewide, by 2015 (per DPI)  
Recognize traditional schools are not appropriate for all students  
Involve teachers, parents, alumni, business leaders, etc. in planning process  
Streamline residential school admissions process – greater parental choice  
Prioritize administrative stability  
Emphasize outcome-based objectives  
Identify models and employ “best practices”  
Explore cost-recovery possibilities

#### **CONSOLIDATE APPROPRIATE ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS**

#### **LEASE EXCESS CAPACITY**

#### **FUND & COMPLETE NECESSARY REPAIRS & IMPROVEMENTS**

#### **RECOGNIZE THAT POLITICAL INTERESTS SUPPORT THREE SCHOOLS**

#### **REPEAL SECTION 7.25(a) OF SESSION LAW 2011-145**

“Satellite” and “closure” terminology unnecessary  
As appropriate, expand HB 625 (Deaf Bill of Rights) to include blind, others

## **KEEPING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS OPEN AND VIABLE**

### **COMMENTS:**

#### **Operate a Satellite -- Some ask "why not?" We ask "what for?"**

- Diverts efforts from primary focus on planning & strategy
- Projected savings don't hinge on "satellite"
- Deaf/Blind illogical partners – if "satellite" more palatable, why not Deaf/Deaf?
- Implies remote operation with planning/direction elsewhere
- Creates confusion, what's next?
- Impacts admissions
- Discourages innovation
- Potential budget conflicts
- Chips away at GMS
- Unintended consequences?
  - . Added bureaucracy
  - . GMS Foundation; NCCU Affiliation
  - . Pre-School, Outreach, Transitional Programs for Newly-Blind

#### **"Intent" Doesn't Convey -- Language Is Important**

- DPI decision driven by legislative language
- "Intent" to preserve three schools, GMS "not really closing"

#### **Process/Context**

- Little public visibility to budget process
- Public input "allowed, not required" at forums
- No opportunity for discussion
- Hard to navigate through process, committees, etc.
- Timelines confusing: SBE Review (FYI), Legislative Education Oversight (?)

## KEEPING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS OPEN AND VIABLE

### Numbers

- Residential schools currently serving ~210 students ~50 at GMS
  - . IDEA Impact – 300 students at GMS in 1976 (GMS Alumnus)
  - . Admissions purposely suppressed at GMS
  - . Onerous admission process - IEP
  - . Doesn't count Pre-School, Outreach, Newly-Blind
  
- DPI estimates ~160 additional blind and deaf students by 2015, with declining residential school numbers – is public school system ready?
  - . Where are the teachers?
  - . 69 NC counties have 0-5 school-age blind (Blind Register, 09/11)
  - . 31 NC counties account for ~ 76% school-age blind population
  
- Annual Cost/Student
  - . Comparing residential costs to public schools illogical/unfair
  - . Add 10 students to GMS cuts cost/student from \$117, 528 to \$96,909
  - . NC spends ~ \$13,488/blind student (47 x \$117,528 + 653 x \$6000) /700
  
- Perkins School for the Blind (2011 Annual Report)
  - . Budget \$34,676,020 for on-campus programs
  - . On-campus population 217
  - . Using DPI methodology, cost/student is ~\$160,000
  - . Provides products and services for blind around the world
    - Perkins Braille
    - Braille & Talking Book Library
    - Perkins Training Center
    - Low Vision Services
    - Outreach Services
    - Infant/Toddler Services
    - Off-Campus School-Age Services
    - Diagnostic Evaluations (fee-based)
    - Community Living Services
    - Publications
    - ...

## Cash Subsidies/Reimbursements in the Child Nutrition Programs

### National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Cash Reimbursement Rates for July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Reimbursement based on Student Eligibility	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need
Free Lunch	\$2.77	\$2.79
Reduced-Price Lunch	\$2.37	\$2.39
Paid Lunch	\$ .26	\$ .28

### School Breakfast Program (SBP) Cash Reimbursement Rates for July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Reimbursement based on Student Eligibility	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need
Free Breakfast	\$1.51	\$1.81
Reduced-Price Breakfast	\$1.21	\$1.50
Paid Breakfast	\$ .27	\$ .27

### After School Snack Program (ASSP) Cash Reimbursement Rates for July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Reimbursement based on Student Eligibility	Non-Area Eligible	Area Eligible
Free Snack	\$ .76	\$ .76
Reduced-Price Snack	\$ .38	\$ .76
Paid Snack	\$ .07	\$ .76

**INCOME ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE MEALS  
EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2011 – JUNE 30, 2012**

Household Size	ANNUAL		MONTHLY		TWICE PER MONTH		EVERY TWO WEEKS		WEEKLY	
	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced
1	14,157	20,147	1,180	1,679	590	840	545	775	273	388
2	19,123	27,214	1,594	2,268	797	1,134	736	1,047	368	524
3	24,089	34,281	2,008	2,857	1,004	1,429	927	1,319	464	660
4	29,055	41,348	2,422	3,446	1,211	1,723	1,118	1,591	559	796
5	34,021	48,415	2,836	4,035	1,418	2,018	1,309	1,863	655	932
6	38,987	55,482	3,249	4,624	1,625	2,312	1,500	2,134	750	1,067
7	43,953	62,549	3,663	5,213	1,832	2,607	1,691	2,406	846	1,203
8	48,919	69,616	4,077	5,802	2,039	2,901	1,882	2,678	941	1,339
<b>For each additional household member</b>										
<b>Add:</b>	4,966	7,067	414	589	207	295	191	272	96	136



Public Schools of North Carolina  
State Board of Education  
Department of Public Instruction

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# Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

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Eliminate Cost/Reduce-Price Meals  
*SL 2011-342(SB 415), sec.2*

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**Date Due: November 15, 2011**  
Report # 28  
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2010-2011

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June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., State Superintendent  
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## **Overview of Federally-funded Child Nutrition Programs administered by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction**

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), under the direction of the State Board of Education, administers six Federally-funded Child Nutrition Programs. These programs include the:

- National School Lunch Program (NSLP);
- School Breakfast Program (SBP);
- After School Snack Program (ASSP);
- Seamless Summer Option for Summer Meals (SSO);
- Special Milk Program (SMP); and the
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

The Federal-State Agreement between the NCDPI and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) stipulates the department will administer these programs in all public and private schools, public and private residential child care institutions, non-residential institutions, service institutions and non-profit summer camps. The agreement also stipulates the NCDPI will comply with the all statutes, program regulations, FNS Instructions, policy memoranda, guidance and other written directives interpreting the program statutes and regulations applicable to the programs listed above. Funds for administrative oversight of these programs are provided to the department by the USDA through State Administrative Expense (SAE) funds.

### **National School Lunch Program**

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally assisted meal program for students attending public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, free lunches and subsidized meals to students of high school grade or under during the school day. School districts, charter schools, non-public schools, residential child care facilities and other approved institutions operating these programs are called School Food Authorities (SFA) since these entities have authority over and responsibility for the operation of the program within the schools, sites, and/or institutions under its jurisdiction. SFAs that choose to take part in the NSLP receive cash subsidies and USDA foods (formerly known as commodities) for each meal they serve. In return, the SFA must serve lunches that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced-price lunches to eligible children.

School lunches must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an

individual's calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Regulations also establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories. School lunches must meet Federal nutrition requirements, but decisions about what specific foods to serve and how they are prepared are made by the local SFAs.

The NSLP is available to any child enrolled in a participating SFA. Any child may purchase a meal through the NSLP. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals, for which students can be charged no more than 40 cents.

The federal income eligibility guidelines for July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012 are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines – July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012**

Household Size	ANNUAL		MONTHLY		TWICE PER MONTH		EVERY TWO WEEKS		WEEKLY	
	Free	Reduced Price	Free	Reduced Price	Free	Reduced Price	Free	Reduced Price	Free	Reduced Price
1	14,157	20,147	1,180	1,679	590	840	545	775	273	388
2	19,123	27,214	1,594	2,268	797	1,134	736	1,047	368	524
3	24,089	34,281	2,008	2,857	1,004	1,429	927	1,319	464	660
4	29,055	41,348	2,422	3,446	1,211	1,723	1,118	1,591	559	796
5	34,021	48,415	2,836	4,035	1,418	2,018	1,309	1,863	655	932
6	38,987	55,482	3,249	4,624	1,625	2,312	1,500	2,134	750	1,067
7	43,953	62,549	3,663	5,213	1,832	2,607	1,691	2,406	846	1,203
8	48,919	69,616	4,077	5,802	2,039	2,901	1,882	2,678	941	1,339
For each additional household member										
	4,966	7,067	414	589	207	295	191	272	96	136

Children from families with incomes over 185 percent of poverty pay a full price, though their meals are still subsidized to some extent by Federal funds. The cost of meals to paying students is established annually by the local Board of Education. While local Boards of Education set their own prices for full-price (paid) meals, the Boards must operate the SFA's Child Nutrition Programs on a non-profit basis.

Most of the support USDA provides to SFAs that operate the NSLP comes in the form of a cash reimbursement for each meal served. If a SFA served less than sixty percent free and reduced-price lunches during the second preceding school year, schools are reimbursed on a regular or non-severe need reimbursement rate. SFAs that served more than sixty percent free and reduced-price lunches during the second preceding school year are eligible for a slightly higher "severe need" rate. The current (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012) cash reimbursement rates are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: NSLP Cash Reimbursement Rates for July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012**

Reimbursement based on Student Eligibility	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need
Free Lunch	\$2.77	\$2.79
Reduced-Price Lunch	\$2.37	\$2.39
Paid Lunch	\$ .26	\$ .28

In addition to cash reimbursements, schools are entitled by law to receive USDA foods, called "entitlement" foods, at a value of 22.25 cents for each meal served in Fiscal Year 2011-2012.

### **School Breakfast Program**

The School Breakfast Program (SBP) is a federally assisted meal program operating in the same schools and institutions as the NSLP and in the same manner as the NSLP. In the SBP, SFAs receive cash subsidies from the USDA for each meal they serve. In return, the SFA must serve breakfasts that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced-price breakfasts to eligible children.

Like school lunches, school breakfasts must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In addition, breakfasts must provide one-fourth of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for protein, calcium, iron, Vitamin A, Vitamin C and calories. The decisions about what specific food to serve, how they are prepared and the type of meal service are made by local SFAs.

The eligibility criteria for the NSLP are the same for the SBP. All children enrolled in a school that is approved to provide the SBP school may participate in the program. Students may purchase breakfast at the paid rate, at the reduced-

price rate or they may receive free breakfast based on income eligibility. Income eligibility is based on household size and income as shown in the Table 1. Students eligible for reduced-price meals can be charged no more than 30 cents for breakfast. The local Board of Education determines the price of the breakfast meal for the paying student.

Most of the support USDA provides to schools in the School Breakfast Program comes in the form of a cash reimbursement for each breakfast served. Schools may qualify for higher severe need reimbursements if 40% or more of their lunches are served free or at a reduced-price in the second preceding year. The current (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012) cash reimbursement rates for the SBP are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: SBP Cash Reimbursement Rates for July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012**

Reimbursement based on Student Eligibility	Non-Severe Need	Severe Need
Free Breakfast	\$1.51	\$1.81
Reduced-Price Breakfast	\$1.21	\$1.50
Paid Breakfast	\$ .27	\$ .27

**After School Snack Program**

The After School Snack Program (ASSP) is a federally assisted snack program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions for students 18 years of age and under. The ASSP operates in a manner similar to the NSLP and SBP; schools and/or institutions that choose to take part in the snack program receive cash subsidies from the USDA for each snack they serve. In return, they must serve snacks that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced-price snacks to eligible children. All snacks must include required meal components in minimum specified amounts.

In order for a school, site or institution to participate, the SFA must be approved to operate the NSLP. All ASSP schools, sites or institutions must provide an after school care program which includes regularly scheduled educational or enrichment activities in a supervised environment.

After school snacks are provided to children on the same income eligibility basis as school meals (free, reduced-price or paid). However, a school, site or institution is considered to be area eligible if it is located at a school (or in the attendance area of a school) where at least 50 percent of the enrolled children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals may serve all their snacks to students free of charge. Schools, sites or institutions participating in the ASSP are eligible for cash reimbursements for snacks served to students. The ASSP reimbursement rates are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: ASSP cash reimbursement rates for July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

Reimbursement based on Student Eligibility	Non-Area Eligible	Area Eligible
Free Snack	\$ .76	\$ .76
Reduced-Price Snack	\$ .38	\$ .76
Paid Snack	\$ .07	\$ .76

### Seamless Summer Option for Summer Meals

School districts participating in the NSLP or SBP are eligible to participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) which enables them to serve summer meals free of charge to children, 18 years and under, from low-income areas. The SSO is a formalized extension of the NSLP and SBP, but unlike the NSLP and SBP, the SSO may be operated in schools as well as various community sites that are convenient to limited-resource communities. The types of school and community sites are:

**Open sites:** all children receive meals at no charge in communities where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free/reduced-price school meals;

**Restricted open sites:** sites that meet the open site criteria, explained above, but are later restricted for safety, control, or security reasons;

**Closed enrolled sites:** may be in any community for an enrolled group of low-income children and meets the 50 percent criteria explained above; this excludes academic summer schools;

**Migrant sites:** sites that serve serving children of migrant families; and

**Camps:** residential or non-residential camps.

The same NSLP and SBP regulations apply for meal components, nutrition standards and meal service in the SSO. Meals served in the SSO are reimbursed at the free rate for all eligible schools and sites.

### Special Milk Program

The Special Milk Program (SMP) provides milk to children in schools, residential child care institutions and eligible camps that do not participate in other Federally-funded Child Nutrition programs. The program reimburses schools and institutions for the milk they serve. Schools that participate in the NSLP and SBP may also participate in the SMP to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs.

Participating schools and institutions receive reimbursement from the USDA for each half pint of milk served. Schools and institutions must operate the SMP on a non-profit basis and must agree to use the Federal reimbursement to reduce the selling price of milk to all children.

Any child at a participating school or half-day pre-kindergarten program can get milk through the SMP. Children may buy milk or receive it free, depending upon the school's choice of program options.

Schools or institutions must offer only pasteurized fluid types of unflavored or flavored fat free or low-fat (1%) fluid milk. These milks must meet all State and local standards and must contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration.

When local school officials offer free milk under the program to low-income children, any child from a family that meets income guidelines for free meals is eligible. Each child's family must apply annually for free milk eligibility.

The Federal reimbursement for each half-pint of milk sold to children in School Year 2011-2012 is 20.50 cents. For students who receive their milk free, the USDA reimburses schools the net purchase price of the milk.

### **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program**

In 2004, the NCDPI was one of four state education agencies selected to pilot a new USDA program that was intended to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption among students during the school day. At that time, the department was awarded approximately 1 million dollars annually, to be distributed among 25 schools for the purpose of offering fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to students in NC's public schools. The pilot program was quite successful and the program demonstrated an effective, affordable and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables, many of which are locally-grown, to students as healthy snack options. As a result, the FFVP was subsequently authorized as a permanent program in 2008. Since 2008, funding for the FFVP and the number of participating schools has increased significantly as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: FFVP Expansion since 2008**

Year	Number of Schools	Total FFVP Funds	Number of Students
2008 – 2009	32	\$1,149,963	14,335
2009 - 2010	65	\$1,772,871	27,679
2010 - 2011	106	\$2,707,078	47,600
2011 - 2012	169	\$3,940,380	74,032

Currently, SFAs that operate the NSLP are eligible to participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). Individual schools apply to participate in the FFVP by completing an application and brief proposal describing allowable activities. The authorizing legislation for the FF&VP requires that elementary schools with the highest percentages of students eligible for free and reduced-priced meals be given priority for participation in the FFVP. In accordance with USDA guidance, this is the key selection criterion, which ensures the FFVP benefits low-income children that generally have fewer opportunities to consume fresh fruits and vegetables on a regular basis. These criteria may not be waived to give all schools in all grade levels an equal chance to participate in the FFVP or to provide geographic dispersion.

Funds must be distributed on a per pupil basis; the allocation per student must range between \$50.00 - \$75.00 in accordance with USDA guidance. The fresh fruits and vegetables provided through the FFVP must be served separately from the school breakfast or lunch meal, in one or more areas of the school during the instructional day. FFVP snacks are most frequently served in the classroom while appropriate instruction is being provided for students. The FFVP also encourages schools to develop partnerships at the State and local level for support in implementing, operating and sustaining the program.

### **Procedures for Participating in the Child Nutrition Programs**

All public and private schools, public and private residential child care institutions, non-residential institutions, service institutions and non-profit summer camps that serve students of high school grade or lower are eligible to apply to become a School Food Authority (SFA) to operate the Federally-funded Child Nutrition Programs administered by the NCDPI. The term "residential child care institution" includes, but is not limited to homes for the mentally, emotionally or physically impaired, and unmarried mothers and their infants; group homes; halfway houses; orphanages; temporary shelters for abused children and for runaway children; long-term care facilities for chronically ill children; and juvenile detention centers. A long-term care facility is a hospital, skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, or distinct part thereof, which is intended for the care of children confined for 30 days or more.

The governing body of the SFA, which has the authority to enter the SFA into a legally-binding agreement, is ultimately responsible for the operation of program(s). The NCDPI/SBE and the SFA enter into an annual agreement which stipulates the terms and conditions under which the SFA must operate the program(s).

Students must be enrolled in an approved SFA in order to participate in the Federally-funded Child Nutrition Programs. In order to be eligible for free or reduced-price meals and/or snacks (or free milk in the SMP), a child must be (1)

categorically eligible for free meals or (2) the household must submit a complete application and be approved as either categorically eligible or income eligible. The SFA must have an approved application or a list of directly certified students on file for each child served a meal, snack or milk, which meets program requirements, and is subsequently claimed for Federal reimbursement at the free or reduced-price rate.

#### Categorical Eligibility for Free Meal Benefits

Categorical eligibility is defined by the USDA as the automatic eligibility for free meal benefits because of the student's status as one of the following:

- A member of a household, as determined by the administering agency, receiving assistance under the Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) (formerly Food Stamp Program), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), or the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program (TANF);
- Enrollment in a Head Start Program on the basis of meeting that program's low-income criteria;
- A homeless child as determined by the SFA's homeless liaison or by the director of a homeless shelter;
- A migrant child as determined by the State of local Migrant Education Program (MEP) coordinator;
- A runaway child who is receiving assistance from a program under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and is identified by the local educational liaison; or
- A foster child whose care and placement is the responsibility of the State or who is placed by a court with a caretaker household.

Since the income required to participate in the Federally-funded Child Nutrition Programs is equivalent to the income requirements in other means-tested nutrition programs such as the FNS Program (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), students who qualify for other Federal foods assistance programs are automatically eligible for free meals, snacks and milk in the Child Nutrition Programs. Students who are automatically eligible for free meals are considered to be "categorically eligible" for free meals. Students who are categorically eligible for free meals based on their enrollment in FNS and/or TANF may be directly certified for meal benefits. When students are directly certified, no household application is required. The NCDPI in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) has developed a nationally-recognized automated system of direct certifying students for meal benefits. This automated system directly matches the names (and other critical identifiers) of students enrolled in the NC WISE student information data base with the names (and other critical identifiers) of children enrolled in the FNS and TANF programs.



Once the students are confirmed as being enrolled in both the NC WISE data base and the FNS/TANF data bases, the student is confirmed for free meal benefits and the confirmation is provided to the SFA. The system of direct certification has eliminated the need for the majority of household applications as a means of issuing school meal benefits in North Carolina. Using data from another means-tested nutrition program, such as FNS or TANF, eliminates the administrative burden of a paper application by the household and the SFA and ensures students who are eligible for free meals have access to them. Elimination of the household application also reduces the human errors often associated with household applications.

#### Household applications for free or reduced-price meals – based on categorical eligibility

Each SFA must designate a determining official who is responsible to oversee the processing of household applications to determine whether the student is eligible for free or reduced-price meal benefits. The determining official is also responsible for notifying households to confirm whether the application was approved or denied; if the application was approved, the determining official must notify the household of the level of benefits (free meal benefits or reduced-price meal benefits). If a household application includes a valid FNS or TANF number, or indicates the child's status as a foster child, the application must be approved for free meal benefits.

Currently, SFAs in North Carolina receive approximately 320,000 household applications for school meals benefits. An application must be complete and must include all required information in order to be considered. If the basis for the application is categorical eligibility, the application must include the verifiable sources of categorical eligibility for programs that provide distinct case numbers. For example, a complete application must include the FNS case number or the TANF case number. The application must also, at a minimum, include the names of the children for whom the application is made and the signature of an adult household member.

Unlike FNS, TANF, and foster children, students may be categorically eligible due to their migrant, homeless or runaway status or due to enrollment in Head Start. However, these students may not be determined as eligible for free meal benefits based on self-declaration of such status on an application. An SFA-designated official, such as Migrant Education Coordinator, a Homeless/Runaway Student Liaison, and Early Childhood Education Coordinator must document the student's eligibility for free meal benefits. Such documentation must be maintained on file in the SFA for a period of at least four years.

### Household applications for free or reduced-price meals – based on household income

Households may apply for school meals benefits based on household income. An application based on household income must include, at a minimum, the following items:

- the names of all household members;
- the amount and source of current income by each member and the source of the income;
- the signature of an adult household member; and
- the last four digits of the social security number of the adult household member who signs the application or an indication that the household member does not have a social security number.

Household applications based on income are reviewed and approved by (or under the direction of) the determining official. If the application is complete, the official must then determine whether the household is categorically eligible or income eligible for benefits based on the information provided on the application. Income eligibility is determined based on the income eligibility guidance provided by the USDA as shown in Table 1. The NCDPI encourages all SFAs to conduct confirmation reviews of all applications to help ensure minimize human errors in processing the applications. Many SFAs in North Carolina use scanning software that enables the SFA to scan and simultaneously approve the household application, thus minimizing the risk of human error in the benefits issuance process.

Children residing in an RCCI are considered households of one. An application must be completed for each child or the RCCI may use other eligibility documentation for all children residing in the RCCI. For example, a Juvenile Justice Official, who is designated as the SFA's determining official, may document that all youth who are incarcerated have no means of earning income that is sufficient to prevent them from qualifying for free meals. This documentation must provide information indicating the child's name and personal income, if any, received by the child. The documentation must be signed by the SFA official, the determining official, and include their respective titles and information.

Children attending but not residing in an RCCI are considered members of their household and their eligibility is determined using a household application or through categorical eligibility as described above.

In accordance with Federal policy, United States citizenship or immigration status is not a condition of eligibility for free and reduced-price meal benefits. SFAs must apply the same eligibility criteria for citizens and non-citizens.

## Student Participation in the Child Nutrition Programs

Current data provided by North Carolina's approved SFAs in October, 2011 indicates the following:

- 1,497,525 students are enrolled in SFAs participating in the Child Nutrition Programs;
- 777,612 (51.9%) students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals;
- 321,402 household applications for school meal benefits were received by all SFAs;
- 283,654 (36.4%) students were approved for free or reduced-price meal benefits based on the submission of a household application;
- 189,183 (58.9%) household applications were approved for free meal benefits based on current income eligibility guidelines;
- 94,471 (29.4%) household applications were approved for reduced-price meal benefits based on current income eligibility guidelines;
- 37,748 (11.7%) of household applications were denied meal benefits based on current income eligibility guidelines;
- 493,958 (63.5%) students were determined to be categorically eligible for free meals based on their participation in another Federal food assistance program or other education program;
- 466,635 (60%) students were directly certified for free meal benefits using the NCDPI's automated system of Direct Certification, thus eliminating the need for household applications and reducing the risk of error on the application; and
- 27,323 (3.5%) students were determined to be categorically eligible for free meals based on an education program (Head Start, Migrant, Homeless/Runaway, Migrant, Foster Child, RCCI status).

This report was prepared by the Child Nutrition Services Section of the Division of School Support of the NCDPI. For questions, please contact Dr. Lynn Harvey, Section Chief, Child Nutrition Services at (919) 807-3506 or via e-mail at [lynn.harvey@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:lynn.harvey@dpi.nc.gov) or Janet Johnson, Financial Management Analyst, Child Nutrition Services at (919) 807-4043 or via e-mail at [janet.williamsjohnson@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:janet.williamsjohnson@dpi.nc.gov).

Note: The agreement between the USDA and the NCDPI indicates the department will abide with all provisions of the (1) the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1751-1760) and regulations governing the National School Lunch Program (7 CFR 210 and 245) and (2) the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1771 – 1985), and regulations governing the School Breakfast Program (7 CFR 220 and 245) and (3) the Special Milk Program for Children (7 CFR 215); (4) Public Law 105 – 336 authorizing reimbursement for snacks, (5) Public Law 85-478, as amended authorizing the Seamless Summer Option (formerly known as the Seamless Summer Food Service Program); (6) Public Law 108-265 to amend the National School Lunch Act and Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to provide children with increased

access to food and nutrition assistance, to simplify program operations and improve program management; (7) Public Law 111-296 the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010; (8) Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87 which stipulates allowable and unallowable expenses in the non-profit Child Nutrition Program; (9) North Carolina General Statutes 115C-264 governing the operation of the Child Nutrition Programs within the state of North Carolina and (10) policies adopted by the State Board of Education that govern the operation of the Child Nutrition Programs in the public schools of North Carolina. Specifically, the State Agency and all sub-recipient SFAs must comply with the following USDA Regulations:

7 CFR Part 3015, Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations

7 CFR Part 3016, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements

7 CFR part 3017, Government-wide Debarment and Suspension

7 CFR Part 3019, Uniform Administrative Requirements for grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations and Institutions

7 CFR Part 3051, Audits of Institutions of Higher Education and Other Non-profit Organizations

7 CFR Part 3052, Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-profit Organizations

7 CFR Part 210 National School Lunch Program

7 CFR Part 215 Special Milk Program for Children

7 CFR Part 220 School Breakfast Program

7 CFR Part 225 Summer Food Service Program

7 CFR Part 228 Child and Adult Care Food Program

7 CFR Part 227 Nutrition Education and Training Program

7 CFR Part 235 State Administrative Expense funds

7 CFR Part 240 Cash In Lieu of donated foods

7 CFR Part 245 Determining eligibility for free and reduced-price meals and free milk in schools

7 CFR Part 247 Commodity Supplemental Food Program

7 CFR Part 250 Donation of foods for use in the United States, its territories and possessions and areas under its jurisdiction

7 CFR Part 251 The Emergency Food Assistance Program

7 CFR Part 253 Administration of the Food Distribution Program for households on Indian reservations

7 CFR Part 254 Administration of the Food Distribution Program for Indian households in Oklahoma

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SFA #	SFA Name	Application Information				Number of students automatically eligible for free meal benefits	Date of Implementation of SB 415
		Average Daily Membership	Number approved for Free Meals	Number approved for Reduced-Price Meals	Number Denied		
010	Alamance-Burlington Schools	23291	3051	1337	340	7002	7/25/2011
020	Alexander County Schools	5539	555	404	173	1887	8/25/2011
030	Alleghany County Schools	1544	244	182	67	562	8/4/2011
040	Anson County Schools	3995	378	257	92	2132	8/25/2011
050	Ashe County Schools	3236	400	367	354	1138	8/8/2011
060	Avery County Schools	2252	299	281	116	725	8/10/2011
070	Beaufort County Schools	7084	722	377	117	3161	8/25/2011
080	Bertie County Schools	2918	242	158	66	1656	8/4/2011
090	Bladen County Schools	5369	837	345	270	2600	8/25/2011
100	Brunswick County Schools	12295	1969	1146	447	4622	8/25/2011
110	Buncombe County Schools	26768	2856	1950	822	9054	8/18/2011
111	Asheville City Schools	4167	283	167	73	1456	8/16/2011
120	Burke County Schools	13625	1627	1233	486	4785	8/20/2011
130	Cabarrus County Schools	29738	1740	1544	444	7933	8/25/2011
132	Kannapolis City Schools	5545	568	304	81	2683	8/25/2011
140	Caldwell County Schools	12682	1254	984	519	4901	8/25/2011
150	Camden County Schools	1916	156	160	82	297	8/25/2011
160	Carteret County Public Schools	8589	935	510	127	2018	8/25/2011
170	Caswell County Schools	2956	279	220	39	1342	8/25/2011
180	Catawba County Schools	17523	1704	1291	654	5407	8/25/2011
181	Hickory City Schools	4514	507	228	86	1914	8/25/2011
182	Newton Conover City Schools	3027	346	235	100	1211	8/25/2011
190	Chatham County Schools	8468	1380	457	132	2068	8/25/2011
200	Cherokee County Schools	3660	551	407	112	1276	8/25/2011
210	Edenton/Chowan Schools	2344	158	179	41	1130	8/25/2011
220	Clay County Schools	1417	145	114	631	527	8/15/2011
230	Cleveland County Schools	16277	1650	849	289	6948	8/25/2011
240	Columbus County Schools	6717	757	396	131	3374	8/25/2011
241	Whiteville City Schools	2263	316	132	41	1078	8/29/2011
250	Craven County Schools	15172	1614	1325	646	4948	7/14/2011
260	Cumberland County Schools	53758	5797	4197	2932	19496	10/3/2011
270	Currituck County Schools	3907	352	245	82	751	10/3/2011
280	Dare County Schools	4992	410	177	38	1050	8/25/2011
290	Davidson County Schools	20662	1855	1091	183	5163	8/25/2011
291	Lexington City Schools	3266	454	131	53	1955	8/25/2011
292	Thomasville City Schools	2534	564	160	67	1434	8/25/2011
298	Deaf and Blind Schools	234	199	13	22	0	7/1/2011
300	Davie County Schools	6680	541	299	107	1853	8/4/2011
310	Duplin County Schools	9819	2248	670	238	3441	8/25/2011

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320	Durham Public Schools	33125	3931	1355	528	13183	7/25/2011
330	Edgecombe County Schools	7485	962	530	147	3918	8/25/2011
340	Forsyth County Schools	53546	6832	2516	733	17567	8/25/2011
350	Franklin County Schools	8564	1009	677	225	3409	8/17/2011
360	Gaston County Schools	31800	3899	2276	557	12949	8/25/2011
370	Gates County Schools	1876	134	132	986	624	8/25/2011
380	Graham County Schools	1230	175	126	145	466	8/11/2011
390	Granville County Schools	9186	1253	557	361	2552	8/25/2011
400	Greene County Schools	3405	567	191	65	1720	8/25/2011
410	Guilford County Schools	73853	8135	3498	1126	23374	7/21/2011
420	Halifax County Schools	3882	279	119	99	2541	10/3/2011
421	Roanoke Rapids City Schools	3149	284	200	96	1231	8/25/2011
422	Weldon City Schools	1047	75	39	22	703	8/11/2011
430	Harnett County Schools	19795	2141	1568	659	7080	8/25/2011
440	Haywood County Schools	7641	987	637	240	2565	7/14/2011
450	Henderson County Schools	13505	1796	1019	285	4317	8/25/2011
460	Hertford County Schools	3433	381	166	45	1936	8/8/2011
470	Hoke County Schools	8561	2199	710	596	1963	8/25/2011
480	Hyde County Schools	476	110	52	7	203	9/6/2011
490	Iredell-Statesville Schools	22141	2530	1367	321	4872	8/25/2011
491	Mooresville Graded School District	5649	525	351	137	1182	8/25/2011
500	Jackson County Schools	3746	787	354	305	1000	8/11/2011
510	Johnston County Schools	32989	3190	1567	512	9135	8/10/2011
520	Jones County Schools	1207	178	110	79	614	8/25/2011
530	Lee County Schools	9983	1867	700	207	3672	7/18/2011
540	Lenoir County Public Schools	9469	1051	685	268	4483	8/25/2011
550	Lincoln County Schools	12005	842	780	213	3888	8/25/2011
560	Macon County Schools	4426	495	445	155	1836	8/4/2011
570	Madison County Schools	2570	196	220	81	1103	8/15/2011
580	Martin County Schools	3976	431	241	64	1754	8/25/2011
590	McDowell County Schools	7005	720	618	266	2980	7/8/2011
600	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	141714	25116	8342	1487	47236	8/25/2011
610	Mitchell County Schools	2059	294	255	129	680	8/9/2011
620	Montgomery County Schools	4349	861	378	115	1950	8/25/2011
630	Moore County Schools	12463	1287	589	160	3375	7/18/2011
640	Nash-Rocky Mount Schools	16893	2931	1227	482	6572	8/25/2011
650	New Hanover County Schools	29997	1808	1274	480	8159	8/25/2011
660	Northampton County Schools	2393	312	157	72	1575	8/25/2011
670	Onslow County Schools	25163	2009	2047	1183	5802	8/25/2011

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680	Orange County Schools	7594	796	313	133	1737	8/25/2011
681	Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools	12174	582	298	73	1864	8/25/2011
690	Pamlico County Schools	1466	59	74	34	650	8/25/2011
700	Pasquotank County Schools	6038	1902	474	94	1239	8/26/2011
710	Pender County Schools	8766	683	706	778	3305	10/3/2011
720	Perquimans County Schools	1766	103	123	54	782	8/25/2011
730	Person County Schools	5088	567	306	91	2086	8/25/2011
740	Pitt County Schools	23759	2458	949	251	9526	8/25/2011
750	Polk County Schools	2535	205	198	76	943	8/25/2011
760	Randolph County Schools	18796	2162	1294	302	6138	8/25/2011
761	Asheboro City Schools	5001	656	277	54	2376	8/25/2011
770	Richmond County Schools	7886	1365	471	226	3813	8/26/2011
780	Robeson County Schools	24524	3458	1517	1157	14173	11/1/2011
790	Rockingham County Schools	13975	1878	1007	443	4989	8/15/2011
800	Rowan-Salisbury Schools	20161	2202	1481	375	8191	8/25/2011
810	Rutherford County Schools	9190	1001	663	256	4364	8/25/2011
820	Sampson County Schools	8738	1369	673	377	3897	8/25/2011
821	Clinton City Schools	3205	564	238	78	1410	8/25/2011
830	Scotland County Schools	6316	644	393	190	3579	8/25/2011
840	Stanly County Schools	9057	878	757	256	3235	8/25/2011
850	Stokes County Schools	7096	987	604	236	1775	8/10/2011
860	Surry County Schools	8936	1304	737	425	3369	8/16/2011
861	Elkin City Schools	1217	128	55	25	312	8/15/2011
862	Mount Airy City Schools	1905	232	79	28	611	8/10/2011
870	Swain County Schools	1983	229	260	252	779	8/10/2011
880	Transylvania County Schools	3544	292	289	160	1499	8/15/2011
890	Tyrrell County Schools	605	9	47	23	340	8/25/2011
900	Union County Public Schools	40305	2534	1911	535	8604	8/21/2011
910	Vance County Schools	7243	922	464	1129	4723	8/25/2011
920	Wake County Schools	145121	21347	7608	1343	25769	7/11/2011
930	Warren County Schools	2612	366	208	122	1540	8/8/2011
940	Washington County Schools	1869	205	96	37	1139	8/25/2011
950	Watauga County Schools	4617	319	344	177	1097	8/10/2011
960	Wayne County Public Schools	19813	2220	1362	634	8017	8/23/2011
970	Wilkes County Schools	10525	3502	812	658	2076	8/16/2011
980	Wilson County Schools	12332	2294	898	459	4972	8/25/2011
990	Yadkin County Schools	6005	1256	525	160	1508	8/8/2011
995	Yancey County Schools	2361	232	242	72	928	8/8/2011
1002	Camp Lejeune Schools	3249	493	704	100	15	8/25/2011



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1007	Fort Bragg	5260	1394	1087	205	0	8/25/2011
1009	Cherokee Central Schools	1064	284	154	278	348	8/8/2011
01B	River Mill Academy	594	26	49	53	72	8/26/2011
01C	Clover Garden	483	24	55	12	87	9/6/2011
06B	Crossnore Academy	91	44	6	5	36	8/15/2011
20A	The Learning Center	187	31	25	10	68	8/22/2011
32A	Maureen Joy Charter	360	124	27	24	185	8/25/2011
32B	Healthy Start Academy	338	90	21	9	209	8/25/2011
34B	Quality Education Academy	458	34	20	4	242	8/15/2011
36A	Highland Charter	114	16	2	1	95	8/25/2011
49D	Success Institute Charter	99	35	0	6	58	No students
54A	Children's Village Academy	186	23	6	5	152	9/6/2011
54B	Kinston Charter Academy	317	70	8	5	214	8/25/2011
60B	Sugar Creek Charter	712	170	60	23	289	9/9/2011
60C	Kennedy Charter	308	98	14	12	184	8/25/2011
60L	KIPP Charlotte	358	78	48	10	136	9/12/2011
64A	Rocky Mount Preparatory	1111	167	128	34	389	8/25/2011
66A	Gaston College Preparatory	711	118	113	34	258	8/25/2011
69A	Arapahoe Charter School	379	72	36	25	123	9/12/2011
73A	Bethel Hill Charter	386	21	26	5	75	8/30/2011
78A	CIS Academy	113	12	15	7	67	9/30/2011
91B	Henderson Collegiate	202	0	23	11	153	8/10/2011
93A	Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School	149	25	14	6	76	9/6/2011
96C	Dillard Academy	176	20	1	0	152	8/18/2011
97D	Bridges Charter School	146	26	8	2	90	8/25/2011
98A	Sallie B Howard School	877	147	30	7	580	8/1/2011
1008	Mount Zion Christian Academy	184	69	18	6	0	9/12/2011
1026	NC Tarheel Challenge Academy	127	61	22	44	0	8/20/2011
1129	The Children's Home, Inc	51	48	1	0	0	8/25/2011
1152	Eliada Homes, Inc	55	35	9	8	16	7/1/2011
<b>Totals for SFA Receiving State Funding</b>		<b>1,489,468</b>	<b>188,287</b>	<b>94,080</b>	<b>37,662</b>	<b>490,871</b>	
1005	Concordia Christian Day School	249	2	2	3	0	na
1006	Wesleyan Education Center	1009	5	5	0	0	na
1008	Mount Zion Christian Academy	184	69	18	6	0	na
1015	St. Michael's School	196	6	5	0	0	na
1016	St. Stephens Lutheran Church & School	230	3	3	0	8	na
1057	Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office	77	0	0	0	77	na
1095	Trinity Christian School	93	41	8	26	0	na

SFA #	SFA Name	Application Information				Number of students automatically eligible for free meal benefits	Date of Implementation of SB 415
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1110	Murdoch Developmental Center	34	0	0	0	34	na
1111	Horizons Residential Care Center	24	0	0	0	24	na
1120	Holy Angels	20	0	0	0	20	na
1125	Falcon Children's Home	66	0	0	0	66	na
1128	Boys and Girls Home of NC, Inc	48	0	0	0	48	na
1131	American Children's Home	30	0	0	0	30	na
1132	Crossnore School, Inc	74	0	0	0	60	na
1139	NC Department of Correction	600	0	0	0	600	na
1142	Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc	44	0	0	0	44	na
1148	Alexander Youth Network	15	0	0	0	15	na
1154	NC Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention	551	0	0	0	551	na
1156	Durham County Youth Home	14	0	0	0	14	na
1157	ALPS Day Center	13	7	2	4	0	na
1162	With Friends, Inc.	9	0	0	0	9	na
1167	Guilford County Juvenile Detention Center	23	0	0	0	23	na
32C	Carter Community Charter	270	25	11	1	182	na
32H	Research Triangle Charter	690	94	50	1	193	na
34C	Downtown Middle	114	12	10	0	77	na
34D	C G Woodson Sch of Challenge	459	84	11	6	277	na
34F	Forsyth Academy	704	154	98	3	250	na
41C	Guilford Preparatory	310	146	16	6	119	na
41F	Triad Math & Science Academy	505	85	20	15	101	na
60G	Queen's Grant Community	754	21	63	0	55	na
92M	PreEminent Charter	541	114	59	6	150	na
92Q	Hope Elementary	107	28	10	9	60	na
<b>Totals for SFA Not Receiving State Funds</b>		<b>8057</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>3087</b>	
<b>Statewide Data for All Sponsors</b>		<b>1,497,525</b>	<b>189,183</b>	<b>94,471</b>	<b>37,748</b>	<b>493,958</b>	



## Questions



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### Does DPI Report on the Verification Process?



- DPI is performing all reporting procedures as required by state and federal policies
- LEAs are required to complete the verification process annually
- DPI reviews the Verification Summary Reports from each LEA
- USDA requires DPI to submit a statewide Verification Summary Report annually that consolidates the LEA reports

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### Recommendation



- DPI does not maintain a history of findings
- *Recommendation:* The Department should implement a tool to track and organize coordinated review findings. This will help identify finding trends across the state or persistent issues at a particular LEA
- DPI agreed to track the findings

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### USDA Oversight



- All areas of the Child Nutrition Programs are highly regulated by the federal government
- Federal reviewers participate in the Department's annual review process and also conduct various audits every 2-3 years
- In September 2011, USDA Management Evaluation team reviewed DPI's. USDA reviewers had no findings

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### What are the Eligibility Determination Procedures?



- LEA's use written eligibility criteria procedures established by the USDA to determine eligibility
  - Direct certification
    - Matching student records to other agency's benefit data
    - Automated system not federal requirements
    - Efficient: eliminates errors for approx. 470,000 applications
    - NC recognized in USDA Congress Report for effectiveness
  - Manual Application
    - Approx 260,000 applications received by LEAs
    - LEA process applications to make determination
    - Determination based on federal criteria

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### Are Eligibility Procedures Followed Consistently Throughout the State?



- DPI verifies that eligibility criteria are being followed consistently throughout the state
- Follow federal guidelines to verify eligibility
  - Required review areas to ensure uniformity:
    - Eligibility certification
    - Claiming procedures
    - Benefit award
    - Onsite observation
    - Meal components

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### Are Eligibility Procedures Followed Consistently Throughout the State?



- Although not required by USDA, guidance encourages additional review. DPI completes review of:
  - procurement
  - food service management
  - sanitation
  - financial management
- DPI stated, and we agree, that the added value outweighs the time spent on the additional review areas.

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## Methodology



In order to answer these questions, we:

- Interviewed personnel
- Observed operations
- Reviewed policies
- Conducted statewide survey
- Analyzed records
- Examined supporting documentation

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## Do DPI and LEAs Provide Notification About Child Nutrition Programs?



- DPI and LEAs provide notification (effectiveness unknown)
- As required by federal regulations, LEAs send a letter to each household notifying them of the programs
- LEAs are also using additional methods of notification:
  - District website (70%)
  - New enrollment packets (67%)
  - Announcements at PTA meeting, open houses, etc. (62%)
  - Local newspaper ads (43%)
  - Automated call to parents (34%)
  - Fliers to non-English speaking communities (where applicable)
- DPI does a media release and posts on it's website
- Also, DPI coordinates with the State's Migrant Education Program coordinator to promote notification to migrant student's families

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## Is School Breakfast Available in All Schools?



- Out of 2,377 schools surveyed – 99% offered breakfast
  - Reasons noted for not offering breakfast
    - Historically low participation
    - Transportation or bus schedules
- All schools that offer the SBP use SB 415 funding to eliminate the cost of breakfast for children that qualify for reduced priced meals

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Office of the  
State Auditor



Presentation to the Joint Legislative  
Education Oversight Committee

Audit Report  
Department of Public Instruction  
Child Nutrition Services  
February 7, 2012

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Senate Bill 415



The State Auditor shall determine whether local school administrative units' participation in federally supported food service programs effectively serve the intent of the General Assembly and comply with federal and State laws and regulations.

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Legislative Intent



To determine the legislative intent, we contacted Senators, received responses and defined our objectives to ask:

- Do DPI and LEAs provide notification about Child Nutrition Programs?
- Is School Breakfast available in all schools?
- What are the eligibility procedures?
- What is DPI's process to verify procedures?
- Does DPI report on the verification process?

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# STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
DIVISION OF SCHOOL SUPPORT, CHILD NUTRITION SERVICES  
FINANCIAL RELATED AUDIT

DECEMBER 2011

OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR

BETH A. WOOD, CPA

STATE AUDITOR

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
**DIVISION OF SCHOOL SUPPORT, CHILD NUTRITION**  
**SERVICES**  
**FINANCIAL RELATED AUDIT**  
**DECEMBER 2011**



Beth A. Wood, CPA  
State Auditor

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

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### AUDITOR'S TRANSMITTAL

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December 9, 2011

The Honorable Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor  
The General Assembly of North Carolina  
State Board of Education  
The Honorable Dr. June St. Clair Atkinson, State Superintendent,  
Department of Public Instruction

This report presents the results of our financial related audit at the Division of School Support, Child Nutrition Services of the Department of Public Instruction. Our work was performed by authority of Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the *North Carolina General Statutes* and was conducted in accordance with the performance audit standards contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.

The audit was initiated by the North Carolina General Assembly. Session Law 2011-342, section 3 states:

The State Auditor shall audit the Division of School Support, Child Nutrition Services of the Department of Public Instruction. The audit shall determine whether the local school administrative units' participation in the federally supported food service programs effectively serve the intent of the General Assembly and comply with federal and State law and regulations.

The results of our audit disclosed no internal control deficiencies or instances of noncompliance or other matters that are considered reportable under *Government Auditing Standards*. Although there were no reportable findings, our report answers questions posed by members of the General Assembly regarding the Child Nutrition Services' nutrition programs.

*North Carolina General Statutes* require the State Auditor to make audit reports available to the public. Copies of audit reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor may be obtained through one of the options listed in the back of this report.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Beth A. Wood".

Beth A. Wood, CPA  
State Auditor

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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	PAGE
INTRODUCTION .....	2
OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND RESULTS .....	2
AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES .....	4
ORDERING INFORMATION .....	12

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## **OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND RESULTS**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Public Instruction participates in the National School Lunch Program (School Lunch Program) and the School Breakfast Program. These food service programs are administered by the Division of School Support, Child Nutrition Services Section in accordance with federal guidelines as established by the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in public schools, nonprofit private schools, and residential child care institutions. The Program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The School Breakfast Program provides cash assistance to states to operate nonprofit breakfast programs in schools and residential childcare institutions. State education agencies administer the School Breakfast Program at the state level, and local education agencies operate the program in schools.

In North Carolina, approximately 800,000 children benefit from the School Lunch Program per school day and approximately 260,000 participate in the School Breakfast Program per school day.

### **OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY**

As authorized by Article 5A of Chapter 147 of the *North Carolina General Statutes*, we have conducted a financial related audit at the Division of School Support, Child Nutrition Services. This audit was initiated at the request of the North Carolina General Assembly.

The objectives of a financial related audit may include determining whether (1) the organization has complied with finance-related laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements; (2) assets have been safeguarded; (3) financial resources have been prudently managed; and/or (4) improvements are needed in internal control over any of these fiscal matters or in internal control over accounting and financial reporting functions. The specific objectives for this engagement included: determining if the notification of federally-funded child nutrition programs is adequate; determining if the School Breakfast Program is available in all schools; providing a description of eligibility and verification procedures; and determining if the Department reports on whether verification processes over eligibility determinations are followed consistently throughout the State. These objectives were defined after consulting with the sponsor of the Senate Education Subcommittee and Senate President Pro Tempore.

Management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control. Internal control is a process designed to provide reasonable assurance that relevant objectives are achieved. Because of inherent limitations in internal control, errors or fraud may nevertheless occur and not be detected. Also, projections of any evaluation of internal control to future periods are subject to the risk that conditions may change or compliance with policies and procedures may deteriorate. Our audit does not provide a basis for rendering an opinion on internal control, and consequently, we have not issued such an opinion.

## **OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND RESULTS (CONCLUDED)**

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To accomplish our audit objectives, we gained an understanding of internal control over matters related to our audit objectives and evaluated the design of the internal control. We then performed further audit procedures consisting of tests of control effectiveness and/or substantive procedures that may reveal significant deficiencies in internal control. Specifically, we performed procedures such as interviewing personnel, observing operations, reviewing policies, analyzing records, conducting a statewide survey of local child nutrition administrators, and examining documentation supporting controls. Whenever sampling was used, we applied a nonstatistical approach but chose sample sizes comparable to those that would have been determined statistically.

As a basis for evaluating internal control, we applied the internal control guidance contained in *Internal Control Integrated Framework*, published by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO). As discussed in the framework, internal control consists of five interrelated components, which are (1) control environment, (2) risk assessment, (3) control activities, (4) information and communication, and (5) monitoring.

We conducted this audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards applicable to performance audits. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Our audit scope included a review of Department and School Breakfast Program policies, procedures, and activities during the period July 1, 2010, to October 31, 2011.

### **RESULTS**

The results of our audit disclosed no internal control deficiencies or instances of noncompliance or other matters that are considered reportable under generally accepted government auditing standards. Items described in the Audit Findings Section of this report answer questions posed by members of the General Assembly.

## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES

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### 1. DO THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES PROVIDE ADEQUATE NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC ABOUT FEDERALLY-FUNDED CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

The Department of Public Instruction (the Department) and local education agencies (LEAs) provide adequate notification to the public about federally-funded child nutrition programs.

The LEA is responsible for publicly announcing the availability of the federally-funded child nutrition programs and its associated criteria. Regulations require that LEAs distribute letters to all student households at the beginning of every school year. Among other requirements, this letter notifies families about which school nutrition programs are available and that meals may be available free or at a reduced price. Each LEA is responsible for determining other strategies for communicating with households.

In addition to any local efforts, the Department also distributes a media release to media outlets. Once distributed, the media release is posted to the Department's general website and to the Child Nutrition Services Section's website.

We surveyed child nutrition administrators statewide to determine common means LEAs and schools used to notify parents of the federally-funded child nutrition programs' availability. We found on average each LEA/school used an average of four ways to communicate the programs' availability:

- Letter to household (100%)
- District Website (70%)
- New enrollment packets (67%)
- Announcements at meetings, e.g., PTA meeting or open houses (62%)
- Local newspaper (43%)
- Automated call to parents (34%)

In addition, the Department coordinates with the State's Migrant Education Program Coordinator to promote notification of availability and eligibility to Migrant students to ensure these families are aware of the Child Nutrition Programs and the eligibility guidelines.

**Recommendation:** None.



## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)

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### 2. IS THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM AVAILABLE IN ALL SCHOOLS? ARE ALL OF THE SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN THE REQUIREMENTS OF SENATE BILL 415 TO ELIMINATE THE COST OF REDUCED PRICE BREAKFAST MEALS?

The School Breakfast Program is available in almost all schools. All schools that offer the School Breakfast Program use Senate Bill 415 (SB 415) funding to eliminate the cost of breakfast for children that qualify for reduced priced meals.

Senate Bill 415 appropriated funds to provide school breakfasts at no cost to students qualifying for reduced-price meals in all schools participating in the National School Breakfast Program as of July 1, 2011. The Department created a plan to implement the requirements of SB 415 in August 2011.

To assess participation in the School Breakfast Program and the changes brought about by Senate Bill 415, we surveyed all 185 local education authorities (LEAs) and schools authorized to administer federally-funded Child Nutrition Programs. A total of 143 LEAs and schools responded to our survey.

Of the 2,377 schools represented in the survey, only 24 (1%) do not participate in the School Breakfast Program.<sup>1</sup> Reasons schools cited for not offering breakfast included historically low participation and transportation or bus schedule issues. According to our survey results, all schools who offer breakfast meals offer free breakfast meals to students receiving reduced-price lunch meals as per SB 415.

The Department allocated funds to all eligible LEAs and schools based on the number of students eligible for reduced-price meals as of September 30, 2010. This allocation formula was designed to ensure that all LEAs receive an equitable allocation of the available funds. The current year allocation is adequate to reimburse LEAs the cost of reduced-price breakfast meals at a 33.17% student participation rate.

If student participation rates increase, current year SB 415 funding will be inadequate to cover the additional cost of reduced-price breakfast meals at the LEA. The decision to continue the program, once the initial allocation is fully dispersed to the LEA, is the responsibility of the local board of education. LEAs and schools will have to identify other funding to continue the program or charge students the reduced breakfast rate.

**Recommendation:** None.

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<sup>1</sup> Seventeen early college schools were eliminated from this analysis because students do not report to the school until after breakfast meals would be served.

## **AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)**

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### **3. WHAT ARE THE ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURES NORTH CAROLINA USES TO QUALIFY CHILDREN FOR FREE AND REDUCED PRICE MEALS? DOES NORTH CAROLINA USE PROCEDURES THAT ARE DIFFERENT FROM, OR IN ADDITION TO, THE REQUIRED FEDERAL PROCEDURES?**

The Department of Public Instruction (the Department) uses written eligibility guidance procedures established and published by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to determine student eligibility for the federally-funded child nutrition programs.

Students can become eligible to participate in the free and reduced-price meals program through direct certification or by completing an application.

#### **Direct Certification**

Federal regulation requires direct certification. Direct certification is a way to determine free and reduced-price meal benefit eligibility without an application. Local education agencies (LEAs) obtain data about individuals who receive assistance directly from the authorities who offer assistance (e. g food stamps and temporary assistance). LEAs compare data obtained from authorities to their student rolls to identify matches for direct certification.

#### **Application Process**

The Department requires LEAs to enter into an agreement in order to be eligible to administer the federally-funded child nutrition programs. The Department includes a free and reduced-price Application in the agreement packet with all of the federally required criteria.

The most substantial eligibility requirements are household income requirements. Income eligibility guidelines for free and reduced price meals are based on household size and income levels as prescribed annually by the United States Secretary of Agriculture. Free meals are available to students who live in households at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level and reduced price meals are available to students who live in households between 130 and 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.

#### **Additional North Carolina Procedures**

The Department is not required to provide, review, or approve child nutrition program applications that LEAs distribute to parents; however, the Department provides template applications that include all of the federal criteria. If the LEA does not use the template, then the Department reviews the LEA's application to ensure that all necessary elements are included.

The Department is not required to have an automated direct certification system, but a system was created to electronically match students from the Department's student information database to the state's Department of Health and Humans Food and Nutrition Services data.

## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)

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The Department's direct certification system was recognized in USDA's 2010 Report to Congress distinguishing North Carolina as one of the top States in direct certification effectiveness. The automated system eliminates the need for a paper application, thus minimizing the risk of human error in reporting and/or calculating income at various intervals. According to the Department's calculations, direct certification has eliminated the need for approximately 470,000 household applications this year alone.

*Recommendation:* None.

**4. DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION VERIFY THAT ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURES ARE BEING FOLLOWED CONSISTENTLY THROUGHOUT THE STATE? DOES NORTH CAROLINA USE A VERIFICATION PROCESS THAT IS DIFFERENT FROM, OR IN ADDITION TO, THE REQUIRED FEDERAL PROCEDURES?**

The Department of Public Instruction (the Department) verifies that eligibility procedures are being followed consistently throughout the state. The Department performs some review procedures that are in addition to the federal requirements. However, these additional procedures do not require significant additional time and provide appropriate oversight that is consistent with federal guidelines.

The Coordinated Review Guidance manual (the manual) issued by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) outlines in detail the procedures to be performed by state agencies to evaluate local education agencies (LEAs) that participate in the school lunch program. The Department uses this manual to verify student eligibility in the lunch and breakfast programs at LEAs and individual schools.

The manual requires an initial comprehensive on-site evaluation including both critical and general areas of review. The manual also describes the required procedures for selecting schools for the administrative reviews.

### **Critical Areas of Review**

USDA outlines critical areas of review to ensure uniformity in the evaluation process. Items that are evaluated as a part of the critical review include: eligibility certification, claiming procedures, benefit award, on-site observation, and meal components.

### **General Areas of Review**

USDA requires specific items be included in the general review. However, state agencies may develop additional procedures for the general areas as a part of the state agency's oversight responsibility. Items that are evaluated as part of the general review include: the free and reduced price process and meal patterns, civil rights compliance, local education agency monitoring responsibilities, and reporting and recordkeeping. Additional areas of general review implemented by the Department are discussed under the header "Additional Review Areas."

## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)

### School Selection Procedures

Each LEA must be reviewed at least once during the established five year cycle with no longer than six years between reviews. State agencies are encouraged to conduct more frequent administrative reviews of large LEAs and of any LEA which may benefit from a more frequent interval. There is no per year minimum number of reviews to be conducted. States are afforded the flexibility to schedule reviews within the cycle based on state agency considerations.

When selecting schools for administrative review, the Department must use the procedures and criteria as required by the Coordinated Review Guidance manual published by the USDA in 1993. The minimum numbers of schools within the LEA that must be selected for review is determined using the following table:

Number of Schools in the LEA	Minimum number of Schools to Review	Number of Schools in the LEA	Minimum Number of Schools to Review
1 to 5	1	41 to 60	6
6 to 10	2	61 to 80	8
11 to 20	3	81 to 100	10
21 to 40	4	101 or More	12*
*12 plus 5% of the number of schools over 100. Fractions must be rounded to the nearest whole number.			

Source: Coordinated Review Guidance, USDA, Food and Nutrition Services, 1993

### Central Office Review

During their annual Coordinated Review Effort, the Department reviews eligibility procedures performed by LEAs to determine the accuracy and consistency of the procedures throughout the State. All LEAs that participate in the School Lunch and School Breakfast programs are reviewed on a rotational basis to ensure that all LEAs are monitored at least once in each five year period as required by federal regulations.

When the LEA undergoes the Coordinated Review Effort (the review), the Department reviewers examine the verification procedures performed at the central office as well as a sample of individual schools within the LEA. During each review the free and reduced-price applications and the verification process completed by the LEA are inspected. Student eligibility verification performed by the LEA is confirmed through review of the free and reduced-price applications to determine that student eligibility status is consistent with USDA eligibility guidelines. Accuracy of the benefits award is also confirmed to ensure that students are receiving the level of benefits to which they are entitled.

During each central office review, the verification sample completed by the LEA is reviewed in its entirety. The Department reviews 100% of all applications verified by the LEA, although federal regulations only require state agencies to review a statically valid sample of

## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)

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applications and verification documents submitted by the household. Reviewers examine the documentation submitted by the households selected for review to ensure the documents are appropriate forms of household income documentation. Review teams then recalculate the income reported on the application to ensure the income reported is accurate and that household benefits were appropriately issued. Department reviewers verify the LEA took appropriate action to notify the household if incorrectly issued household benefits were identified, and also confirm that households were notified of any changes in benefits in a timely manner.

### **Individual School Review**

As a part of the Coordinated Review Effort, the Department's review teams also select a certain number of individual schools within the LEA for administrative review based on guidance in the USDA review manual. As part of the administrative review, the Department will review 100% of applications for free and reduced priced meals at the school to ensure that eligibility was determined correctly, although federal regulations only require state agencies to review a sample of 10% of applications and documents submitted by the household. Review teams also perform review of critical and general area review items as prescribed by the USDA review manual. This review consists of items such as eligibility certification, claiming procedures, benefit issuance, on-site observation, meal components, free and reduced price process, meal patterns, civil rights compliance, monitoring responsibilities, and reporting and recordkeeping.

### **Additional Review Areas**

As mentioned above, the Department review teams perform additional items of review during the normal Coordinated Review Effort cycle to achieve a level of assurance with which members of Department management are comfortable. These items include a review of the School Breakfast Program, the after school snack program, financial management procedures, food service management contracts, and procurement.

Although it is not required, USDA guidance encourages additional review to be completed in such areas as procurement, food service management, sanitation, financial management, and parent and student involvement as a part of the state agency's oversight responsibility. These items do not require an extreme amount of additional time and effort to complete, as review teams are already in place performing other items of review. Department Management stated that the amount of time is negligible as the importance of the procedures outweighs the amount of time spent. We agree that the additional review items add to the strength of state monitoring practices over the School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and help ensure consistency of the programs throughout the state.

At the conclusion of the administrative review process, a corresponding report documenting the results of the review, including any deficiencies is issued to the LEA and to the individual schools that are the subject of the review. If such deficiencies are noted, a written corrective action plan, approved by the Department, is required for any areas of non-compliance identified in the review. Non-compliance or failure to take corrective action by the LEA may result in the Department withholding federal funds. Any financial penalty taken against an LEA is reflected in a deduction from reimbursement payments.

## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONTINUED)

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The Department monitors progress on corrective action until all findings are adequately addressed at which point the review is finalized and closed.

As a part of the state fiscal year 2010-2011 coordinated review schedule, the Department completed 39 coordinated reviews. We reviewed 12 (30%) of the coordinated review efforts, including at least one from each region of the state. In all 12 instances, the reviews were completed in their entirety and included all levels of review as required by USDA.

*Recommendation:* None.

### 5. DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION REPORT ON WHETHER VERIFICATION PROCESSES OVER ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS ARE FOLLOWED CONSISTENTLY THROUGHOUT THE STATE?

The Department of Public Instruction (the Department) is performing all reporting procedures as required by state and federal policies.

#### Verification Summary Reports

All Local Education Agencies (LEA) are required to complete the verification process annually. The LEAs are required to report the results of their verification procedures to the Department through completion of the Verification Summary Report on or before March 1 of that academic year. LEAs submit the Verification Summary Report annually whether they are subject to a coordinated review or not. The Department is required to review and approve all reports submitted by the LEAs.

The Verification Summary Report enables the LEA to report the number and types of meal benefits issued to students. The Department reviews the Verification Summary Reports from each LEA to ensure: (1) that the number of students reported equals or is less than the LEA's average daily membership as of October 1; (2) the LEA implemented the correct sampling method and the correct sample size; (3) the correct number of applications were selected for verification based on the required sample size; and (4) the LEA reported the correct number of households that were selected for the verification sample.

The Department is required to submit a statewide Verification Summary Report annually to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) no later than April 15 of the review year. The state report contains the consolidated reports from all of the submitted LEA reports.

#### USDA Oversight

USDA reviewers are required to monitor how state agencies conduct the Coordinated Review Efforts (CRE). Federal reviewers are onsite during the year while the Department is conducting CREs to ensure that the Department's practices are in compliance with federal

## AUDIT FINDINGS AND RESPONSES (CONCLUDED)

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policy and USDA guidance. USDA reviewers inspect the CRE automated process and observe the Department review teams as they conduct the reviews.

In addition, USDA reviewers come to the Department every 2 - 3 years where they review all aspects of the CRE and other areas to determine whether the Department is operating in compliance with federal regulations. During the week of September 12 - 16, 2011, a five-person Management Evaluation team came from USDA to review the Department's work. USDA reviewers had no findings.

### **Other Reporting**

Other than the reports previously mentioned, the Department is not required to report on specific findings from its CRE to any other authority. In addition, the Department does not maintain a database of findings. It is management's stance that to do so would serve no statutory requirement or other useful purpose and would require additional staffing. Without findings being compiled in a database or maintained in a central system it is possible that common findings that occur in multiple LEAs or reoccurring findings are not being addressed as adequately as they could be.

***Recommendation:*** The Department should implement a tool to track and organize findings during CRE cycles. With the findings identified, training could be provided or other appropriate steps could be planned to address the issue prior to scheduled CREs.

***Agency Response:*** The Department currently reviews CRE findings/trends on a monthly basis. These trends are documented in the monthly CRE team meeting notes and are considered when planning training for School Food Authorities. In addition to the CRE team meeting notes, the Department agrees to track the findings in an organized, systematic format beginning with the 2011 -2012 review cycle.

## ORDERING INFORMATION

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Audit reports issued by the Office of the State Auditor can be obtained from the web site at [www.ncauditor.net](http://www.ncauditor.net). Also, parties may register on the web site to receive automatic email notification whenever reports of interest are issued. Otherwise, copies of audit reports may be obtained by contacting the:

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# **Career and College Promise**

## **Operating Procedures**

## Career and College Promise Operating Procedures (Guidelines)

Session Law 2011-145, the Appropriations Act of 2011, authorizes the State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges to establish the Career and College Promise program, effective January 1, 2012.

Career and College Promise provides seamless dual enrollment educational opportunities for eligible North Carolina high school students in order to accelerate completion of college certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees that lead to college transfer or provide entry-level job skills. North Carolina community colleges may offer the following Career and College Promise pathways aligned with the K-12 curriculum and career and college ready standards adopted by the State Board of Education:

1. A Core 44 College Transfer Pathway leading to a minimum of 30 hours of college transfer credit;
2. A Career and Technical Education Pathway leading to a certificate, diploma or degree;
3. A Cooperative Innovative High School Pathway approved under Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.

### Core 44 College Transfer Pathway

1. The Career and College Promise Core 44 College Transfer Pathway requires the completion of at least thirty semester hours of transfer courses, including English and mathematics.
2. To be eligible for enrollment, a high school student must meet the following criteria:
  - a. Be a high school junior or senior;
  - b. Have a weighted GPA of 3.0 on high school courses; and
  - c. Demonstrate college readiness on an assessment or placement test (See Attachment 1). A student must demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics to be eligible for enrollment in a Core 44 College Transfer Pathway.
3. To maintain eligibility for continued enrollment, a student must
  - a. Continue to make progress toward high school graduation, and
  - b. Maintain a 2.0 GPA in college coursework after completing two courses.
4. A student must enroll in one Core 44 College Transfer Pathway program of study and may not substitute courses in one program for courses in another.
5. A student may change his or her program of study major with approval of the high school principal or his/her designee and the college's chief student development administrator.
6. With approval of the high school principal or his/her designee and the college's chief student development administrator, a student who completes a Core 44 College Transfer Pathway while still enrolled in high school may continue to earn college transfer credits leading to the completion of the 44-hour general education transfer core.
7. With approval of the high school principal or his/her designee and the college's chief student development administrator, a student may enroll in both a Core 44 College Transfer Pathway program of study and a Career Technical Education program of study.
8. Currently enrolled high school students (Fall Semester 2011) who have successfully completed a college transfer STEM course with a grade of "C" or better may be admitted into a Career and College Promise College Core 44 Transfer Pathway in Spring Semester 2012 without meeting the entry GPA or testing requirements (i.e. PLAN). Students will be required to meet course prerequisite requirements.

## Career and College Promise Operating Procedures (Guidelines)

### Career Technical Education Pathway

1. The Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Pathway leads to a certificate or diploma aligned with a high school Career Cluster.
2. To be eligible for enrollment, a high school student must meet the following criteria:
  - a. Be a high school junior or senior;
  - b. Have a weighted GPA of 3.0 on high school courses or have the recommendation of the high school principal or his/her designee; and
  - c. Meet the prerequisites for the career pathway.
3. High school counselors should consider students' PLAN scores in making pathway recommendations.
4. College Career Technical Education courses may be used to provide partial or full fulfillment of a four-unit career cluster. Where possible, students should be granted articulated credit based on the local or state North Carolina High School to Community College articulation agreement.
5. To maintain eligibility for continued enrollment, a student must
  - a. Continue to make progress toward high school graduation, and
  - b. Maintain a 2.0 in college coursework after completing two courses.
6. A student must enroll in one program of study and may not substitute courses in one program for courses in another. The student may change his or her program of study major with approval of the high school principal or his/her designee and the college's chief student development administrator.
7. Currently enrolled high school students (Fall Semester 2011) who have successfully completed a community college technical education course with a grade of "C" or better may be admitted into a Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Certificate Pathway in Spring Semester 2012 without meeting the entry GPA or testing requirements (i.e. PLAN). Students will be required to meet course prerequisite requirements.

### Cooperative Innovative High School Programs

1. Cooperative Innovative High School Programs are located on college campuses, enroll 100 or fewer students per grade level, and provide opportunities for students to complete an associate degree program or earn up to two years of college credit within five years are defined as Cooperative Innovative High School Programs.
2. Eligibility requirements for Cooperative Innovative High School Programs are established jointly by local boards of education and local boards of trustees in accordance with G.S. 115C-238.50.
3. The State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges may waive the requirement that a Cooperative Innovative High School Program is located on the community college campus.

### Student Application Procedures

1. The high school will document eligibility criteria (high school GPA and PLAN or other assessment scores) on the student's transcript. A Home school or non-public high school student must submit a transcript and official test scores from an approved assessment test.
2. Students must complete a college application to be admitted into a Career and College Promise pathway.

## Career and College Promise Operating Procedures (Guidelines)

### College Program of Study Approval Procedures

1. A college must submit a program of study for each Career and College Promise program it plans to offer, using templates and program codes provided by the North Carolina Community College System Office.
2. Programs of study may not include elective options for students.
3. Programs of study must be approved before students can be enrolled.
4. By submitting and requesting approval for a Career and College Promise program of study, a college is verifying its capacity to teach all courses in the program of study.

### Program Accountability Plan

1. Colleges will assign student codes provided by the North Carolina Community College System Office.
2. The North Carolina Community College System Office and the Department of Public Instruction will report annually to the two governing boards on the following outcomes:
  - a. The impact of dual enrollment on high school completion
  - b. The academic achievement and performance of dually enrolled high school students.
  - c. The number of students who successfully complete college pathways or certificates while dually enrolled.
  - d. The persistence, completion rates, and academic achievement of students who continue into college programs after high school graduation.

**College Readiness\* Benchmarks on Approved Diagnostic Assessment Tests**

Test	PLAN**	PSAT**	Asset (NCCCS Cut Score)	COMPASS (NCCCS Cut Score)	Accuplacer (NCCCS Cut Score)
<b>English</b>	15	49	41 Writing	70 Writing	86 Sentence Skills
<b>Reading</b>	17	50	41 Reading	81 Reading	80 Reading
<b>Mathematics</b>	19	50	41 Numerical Skills and 41 Int. Algebra	47 Pre-Algebra and 66 Algebra	55 Arithmetic and 75 Elem. Algebra

In addition to the diagnostic assessments, colleges may use the following SAT and ACT scores recommended by the training companies as benchmarks for college readiness:\*

SAT		ACT	
English	500	English	18
Critical Reading	500	Reading	21
Mathematics	500	Mathematics	22

\*To be eligible for enrollment in a College Transfer Pathway, students must demonstrate college readiness in English, reading and mathematics on an approved test.

\*\*PLAN and PSAT scores recommended by ACT and College Board as indicators of college readiness.



# **Career and College Promise**

## **Core 44 College Transfer Pathways**

## Core 44 College Transfer Pathway - Humanities and Social Science (P1012A)

The Core 44 College Transfer Pathway is designed for high school juniors and seniors who wish to begin the pathway towards a baccalaureate degree. The Core 44 Pathway is a structured set of general education courses leading to completion of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science diploma (44 hours) or degree (64 hours). Upon completion of the diploma or degree and admission to a North Carolina public university or a participating independent college or university, students will receive credit for the undergraduate, lower-division general education core as established in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System.

### GENERAL EDUCATION (31 SHC)\*

#### English Composition (6 SHC)

ENG 111 Expository Writing (3 SHC)

The second composition course must be selected from the following:

ENG 112 Argument-Based Research (3 SHC) *or*

ENG 113 Literature-Based Research (3 SHC)

#### Humanities/Fine Arts (6 SHC)

ENG 131 Introduction to Literature (3 SHC)

ART 111 Art Appreciation (3 SHC)

#### Social/Behavioral Sciences (6 SHC)

HIS 121 Western Civilization I (3 SHC)

PSY 150 General Psychology (3 SHC)

#### Natural Sciences/Mathematics (7 SHC)

BIO 111 General Biology I (4 SHC)

MAT 161 College Algebra (3 SHC)

#### Other Required General Education (6 SHC)

COM 231 Public Speaking (3 SHC)\*\*

SPA 111 Elementary Spanish I (3 SHC)

*\*In order to offer the College Transfer Pathway (Humanities and Social Science), a college must submit a program of study for review and receive approval prior to implementation. The program of study must consist of courses approved for college transfer.*

*A college may substitute courses in the program of study; however, course substitutions must be indicated on the submitted program of study, must fulfill the appropriate general education category, and must match the prefix of the required course (with the exception of foreign language prefixes). A literature course is required; therefore, only transfer courses classified as general education literature may be substituted for ENG 131.*

*\*\*The following courses may be utilized as substitutions for COM 231:*

HIS 122 Western Civilization II (3 SHC)

HUM 115 Critical Thinking (3 SHC)

SOC 210 Introduction to Sociology (3 SHC)

### OTHER REQUIRED HOUR (1 - 3 SHC)

The following course is required:

ACA 122 College Transfer Success (1 SHC)

An additional 1 SHC may be included to meet local requirements for a mathematics lab.

An additional 1 SHC may be included to meet local requirements for a foreign language lab.

**Total Semester Hours Credit (SHC) in Program: 32 - 34**



## Core 44 College Transfer Pathway - Business and Economics (P1012B)

The Core 44 College Transfer Pathway is designed for high school juniors and seniors who wish to begin the pathway towards a baccalaureate degree. The Core 44 Pathway is a structured set of general education courses leading to completion of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science diploma (44 hours) or degree (67 hours). Upon completion of the diploma or degree and admission to a North Carolina public university or a participating independent college or university, students will receive credit for the undergraduate, lower-division general education core as established in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System.

### GENERAL EDUCATION (31-32 SHC)\*

#### English Composition (6 SHC)

ENG 111 Expository Writing (3 SHC)

The second composition course must be selected from the following:

ENG 112 Argument-Based Research (3 SHC) *or*

ENG 113 Literature-Based Research (3 SHC)

#### Humanities/Fine Arts (3 SHC)

ENG 131 Introduction to Literature (3 SHC)

#### Social/Behavioral Sciences (9 SHC)

HIS 121 Western Civilization I (3 SHC)

SOC 210 Introduction to Sociology (3 SHC)

ECO 251 Principles of Microeconomics (3 SHC)

#### Natural Sciences/Mathematics (7 SHC)

BIO 111 General Biology I (4 SHC)

MAT 161 College Algebra (3 SHC) (*or higher*)

*Quantitative options may not be selected.*

#### Other Required General Education (6-7 SHC)

CIS 110 Introduction to Computers (3 SHC)

COM 231 Public Speaking (3 SHC)\*\*

*\*In order to offer the College Transfer Pathway (Business and Economics), a college must submit a program of study for review and receive approval prior to implementation. The program of study must consist of courses approved for college transfer.*

*A college may substitute courses in the program of study; however, course substitutions must be indicated on the submitted program of study, must fulfill the appropriate general education category, and must match the prefix of the required course (with the exception of foreign language prefixes). A literature course is required; therefore, only transfer courses classified as general education literature may be substituted for ENG 131.*

*\*\*The following courses may be utilized as substitutions for COM 231:*

BIO 112 General Biology II (4 SHC)

ECO 252 Principles of Macroeconomics (3 SHC)

MAT 151 Statistics I (3 SHC)

### OTHER REQUIRED HOUR (1 - 2 SHC)

The following course is required:

ACA 122 College Transfer Success (1 SHC)

An additional 1 SHC may be included to meet local requirements for a mathematics lab.

**Total Semester Hours Credit (SHC) in Program: 32 - 34**

## Core 44 College Transfer Pathway – Life and Health Sciences (P1042A)

The Core 44 College Transfer Pathway is designed for high school juniors and seniors who wish to begin the pathway towards a baccalaureate degree. The Core 44 Pathway is a structured set of general education courses leading to completion of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science diploma (44 hours) or degree (64 hours). Upon completion of the diploma or degree and admission to a North Carolina public university or a participating independent college or university, students will receive credit for the undergraduate, lower-division general education core as established in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System.

<b>GENERAL EDUCATION (31 SHC)*</b>	
<b>English Composition (6 SHC)</b>	
ENG 111	Expository Writing (3 SHC)
The second composition course must be selected from the following:	
ENG 112	Argument-Based Research (3 SHC) <i>or</i>
ENG 113	Literature-Based Research (3 SHC)
<b>Humanities/Fine Arts (3 SHC)</b>	
ENG 131	Introduction to Literature (3 SHC)
<b>Social/Behavioral Sciences (3 SHC)</b>	
HIS 121	Western Civilization I (3 SHC)
<b>Natural Sciences/Mathematics (19 SHC)</b>	
BIO 111	General Biology I (4 SHC)
BIO 112	General Biology II (4 SHC)
CHM 151	General Chemistry I (4 SHC)
CHM 152	General Chemistry II (4 SHC)
MAT 171	Precalculus Algebra (3 SHC) ( <i>or higher</i> )
	<i>Quantitative options may not be selected.</i>
<p><i>*In order to offer the College Transfer Pathway (Life and Health Sciences), a college must submit a program of study for review and receive approval prior to implementation. The program of study must consist of courses approved for college transfer.</i></p> <p><i>A college may substitute courses in the program of study; however, course substitutions must be indicated on the submitted program of study, must fulfill the appropriate general education category, and must match the prefix of the required course (with the exception of foreign language prefixes). A literature course is required; therefore, only transfer courses classified as general education literature may be substituted for ENG 131.</i></p>	
<b>OTHER REQUIRED HOUR (1 - 2 SHC)</b>	
The following course is required:	
ACA 122	College Transfer Success (1 SHC)
An additional 1 SHC may be included to meet local requirements for a mathematics lab.	
<b>Total Semester Hours Credit (SHC) in Program: 32 - 33</b>	

## Core 44 College Transfer Pathway – Engineering and Mathematics (P1042B)

The Core 44 College Transfer Pathway is designed for high school juniors and seniors who wish to begin the way towards a baccalaureate degree. The Core 44 Pathway is a structured set of general education courses leading to completion of the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science diploma (44 hours) or degree (64 hours). Upon completion of the diploma or degree and admission to a North Carolina public university or a participating independent college or university, students will receive credit for the undergraduate, lower-division general education core as established in the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System.

### GENERAL EDUCATION (29 SHC)\*

#### English Composition (6 SHC)

ENG 111 Expository Writing (3 SHC)

The second composition course must be selected from the following:

ENG 112 Argument-Based Research (3 SHC) *or*

ENG 113 Literature-Based Research (3 SHC)

#### Humanities/Fine Arts (3 SHC)

ENG 131 Introduction to Literature (3 SHC)

#### Social/Behavioral Sciences (6 SHC)

HIS 121 Western Civilization I (3 SHC)

ECO 251 Principles of Microeconomics (3 SHC)

#### Natural Sciences/Mathematics (14 SHC)

##### *Natural Sciences (4 SHC)*

CHM 151 General Chemistry I (4 SHC)

##### *Mathematics (10 SHC)*

MAT 171 Precalculus Algebra (3 SHC)

MAT 172 Precalculus Trigonometry (3 SHC)

MAT 271 Calculus I (4 SHC)

*Quantitative options may not be selected.*

*\*In order to offer the College Transfer Pathway (Engineering and Mathematics), a college must submit a program of study for review and receive approval prior to implementation. The program of study must consist of courses approved for college transfer.*

*A college may substitute courses in the program of study; however, course substitutions must be indicated on the submitted program of study, must fulfill the appropriate general education category, and must match the prefix of the required course (with the exception of foreign language prefixes). A literature course is required; therefore, only transfer courses classified as general education literature may be substituted for ENG 131.*

### OTHER REQUIRED HOUR (1-3 SHC)

The following course is required:

ACA 122 College Transfer Success (1 SHC)

An additional 2 SHC may be included to meet local requirements for mathematics labs.

**Total Semester Hours Credit (SHC) in Program: 30-32**



# **Career and College Promise**

## **Career Technical Education Pathway Examples**

**Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Pathway**

**Career Cluster:** Architecture & Construction

**Pathway:** Construction

**Certificate:** Building Construction Technology

*(Pathways for a particular high school into a specific community college will vary. The following is provided as an example.)*

**High School:**

The *NC Career Clusters* are used to identify technical courses that assist students in meeting their educational goals. A high school counselor develops a plan of study which aligns courses with the student's identified career goal. The Career and College Promise Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway is aligned with the appropriate career cluster so that the high school student may design the most effective educational path toward his or her career choice.

**Dual Credit**

College CTE courses may be used for partial or full fulfillment of the four high school technical course credits in a career cluster.

**Articulation:**

Through the *North Carolina High School to Community College Articulation Agreement* and or a local CTE articulation agreement, several courses taken in high school may result in earned college credit. To meet SACS requirements high school articulated credit cannot exceed 50% of the certificate credit.

**College Certificate:**

High School juniors and seniors completing a prescribed number of courses during their high school and college education may earn a college certificate. These certificates are stackable toward a diploma and or Associate of Applied Science degree.

College: Wilkes Community College

Program: Building Construction Technology Certificate

*To enroll in a **Carpentry** program, high school students must meet eligibility standards and prerequisite requirements for the pathway.*

BPR 130 Blueprint Reading Const. (2 SHC)

CST 131 OSHA/Safety/Certification (3 SHC)

CAR 111 Carpentry I (8 SHC)\*

ARC 131 Building Codes (3 SHC)

DFT 119 Basic CAD (2 SHC)

Total for Certificate: **18 SHC**

**Articulated Credit:** \*Effective July 1, 2012 or later, by successfully completing 7921 Drafting I and Drafting II – Architectural with a grade of "B" or higher in each course and a score of 93 on each End of Course Assessment, a high school student may earn college credit for DFT 119 Basic CAD through the NC High School to Community College Articulation Agreement. The current Articulation Agreement applies to course articulation prior to that date.

Industry Credentials: Upon completion of this certificate, students may qualify to sit for National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) or similar certification examinations.

**Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Pathway**

**Career Cluster:** Architecture & Construction

**Pathway:** Construction

**Certificate:** Carpentry

*(Pathways for a particular high school into a specific community college will vary. The following is provided as an example.)*

**High School:**

The *NC Career Clusters* are used to identify technical courses that assist students in meeting their educational goals. A high school counselor develops a plan of study which aligns courses with the student's identified career goal. The Career and College Promise Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway is aligned with the appropriate career cluster so that the high school student may design the most effective educational path toward his or her career choice.

**Dual Credit**

College CTE courses may be used for partial or full fulfillment of the four high school technical course credits in a career cluster.

**Articulation:**

Through the *North Carolina High School to Community College Articulation Agreement* and or a *local CTE articulation agreement*, several courses taken in high school may result in earned college credit. To meet SACS requirements high school articulated credit cannot exceed 50% of the certificate credit.

**College Certificate:**

High School juniors and seniors completing a prescribed number of courses during their high school and college education may earn a college certificate. These certificates are stackable toward a diploma and or Associate of Applied Science degree.

**College:** Alamance Community College

**Program:** Carpentry Certificate

***To enroll in a Carpentry program, high school students must meet eligibility standards and prerequisite requirements for the pathway.***

BPR 130 Blueprint Reading Const. (2 SHC)

CAR 110 Introduction to Carpentry (2 SHC)\*

CAR 111 Carpentry I (8 SHC)\*

**Total for Certificate: 12 SHC**

**Articulated Credit:** \*Effective July 1, 2012 or later, by successfully completing 7721 Carpentry I with a grade of "B" or higher in each course and a score of 93 on each End of Course Assessment, a high school student may earn college credit for CAR 110 Introduction to Carpentry through the NC High School to Community College Articulation Agreement. The current Articulation Agreement applies to course articulation prior to that date.

**Industry Credentials:** Upon completion of this certificate, students may qualify to sit for National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) or similar certification examinations.

**Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Pathway**

**Career Cluster:** Architecture & Construction

**Pathway:** Construction

**Certificate:** Electrical/Electronics Technology

*(Pathways for a particular high school into a specific community college will vary. The following is provided as an example.)*

**High School:**

The *NC Career Clusters* are used to identify technical courses that assist students in meeting their educational goals. A high school counselor develops a plan of study which aligns courses with the student's identified career goal. The Career and College Promise Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway is aligned with the appropriate career cluster so that the high school student may design the most effective educational path toward his or her career choice.

**Dual Credit**

College CTE courses may be used for partial or full fulfillment of the four high school technical course credits in a career cluster.

**Articulation:**

Through the *North Carolina High School to Community College Articulation Agreement* and or a *local CTE articulation agreement*, several courses taken in high school may result in earned college credit. To meet SACS requirements high school articulated credit cannot exceed 50% of the certificate credit.

**College Certificate:**

High School juniors and seniors completing a prescribed number of courses during their high school and college education may earn a college certificate. These certificates are stackable toward a diploma and or Associate of Applied Science degree.

**College:** Edgecombe Community College

**Program:** Electrical/Electronics Technology Certificate

***To enroll in the Electrical/Electronics Technology Certificate program, high school students must meet eligibility standards and prerequisite requirements for the pathway.***

ELC 112 DC/AC Electricity (5 SHC)\*

ELC 113 Basic Wiring I (4 SHC)

ELC 117 Motors & Controls (4 SHC)

ELC 126 Electrical Computations (3 SHC)\*

ISC 112 Industrial Safety (2 SHC)

**Total for Certificate: 18 SHC**

**Articulated Credit:** \*Effective July 1, 2012 or later, by successfully completing 7631 Electronics I, AND 7632 Electronics II with a grade of "B" or higher in each course and a score of 93 on each End of Course Assessment, a high school student may earn college credit for ELC 112 DC/AC Electricity, AND ELC 126 Electrical Computations, through the NC High School to Community College Articulation Agreement. The current Articulation Agreement applies to course articulation prior to that date.

**Industry Credentials:** Upon completion of this certificate, students may qualify to sit for National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) or similar certification examinations.



**Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Pathway**

**Career Cluster:** Architecture & Construction

**Pathway:** Maintenance/Operations

**Diploma:** Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Technology

*(Pathways for a particular high school into a specific community college will vary. The following is provided as an example.)*

**High School:**

The *NC Career Clusters* are used to identify technical courses that assist students in meeting their educational goals. A high school counselor develops a plan of study which aligns courses with the student's identified career goal. The Career and College Promise Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway is aligned with the appropriate career cluster so that the high school student may design the most effective educational path toward his or her career choice.

**Dual Credit**

College CTE courses may be used for partial or full fulfillment of the four high school technical course credits in a career cluster.

**Articulation:**

Through the *North Carolina High School to Community College Articulation Agreement* and or a *local CTE articulation agreement*, several courses taken in high school may result in earned college credit. To meet SACS requirements high school articulated credit cannot exceed 50% of the certificate credit.

**College Certificate:**

High School juniors and seniors completing a prescribed number of courses during their high school and college education may earn a college certificate. These certificates are stackable toward a diploma and or Associate of Applied Science degree.

**College: Blue Ridge Community College**

**Program:** Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Technology Diploma

***To enroll in an Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Technology Diploma program, high school students must meet eligibility standards and prerequisite requirements for the pathway.***

ACA 115 Success and Study Skills (1 SHC)  
MAT 101 Applied Mathematics I (3 SHC)  
ENG 102 Applied Communications II (3 SHC)  
AHR 110 Introduction to Refrigeration (5 SHC)  
AHR 111 HVACR Electricity (3 SHC)  
AHR 112 Heating Technology (4 SHC)  
AHR 113 Comfort Cooling (4 SHC)  
AHR 114 Heat Pump Technology (4 SHC)  
AHR 120 HVACR Maintenance (2 SHC)

AHR 130 HVAC Controls (3 SHC)  
AHR 160 Refrigerant Certification (1 SHC)  
AHR 170 Heating Lab (1 SHC)  
AHR 171 Comfort Cooling Lab (1 SHC)  
AHR 172 Heat Pump Lab (1 SHC)  
AHR 180 HVACR Customer Relation (1 SHC)s  
AHR 210 Residential Building Code (2 SHC)  
BUS 280 REAL Small Business (4 SHC)  
***Total SHC: 43 SHC***

**Articulated Credit:** Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Technology is not an educational program that is available as at the secondary level.

**Industry Credentials:** Upon completion of this diploma, students may qualify to sit for North American Technician Excellence (NATE) or similar certification examinations.

**Career and College Promise Career Technical Education Pathway**

**Career Cluster:** Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

**Pathway:** Transportation Operations

**Certificate:** Automotive Systems Technology

*(Pathways for a particular high school into a specific community college will vary. The following is provided as an example.)*

**High School:**

The NC Career Clusters are used to identify technical courses that assist students in meeting their educational goals. A high school counselor develops a plan of study which aligns courses with the student's identified career goal. The Career and College Promise Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway is aligned with the appropriate career cluster so that the high school student may design the most effective educational path toward his or her career choice.

**Dual Credit**

College CTE courses may be used for partial or full fulfillment of the four high school technical course credits in a career cluster.

**Articulation:**

Through the North Carolina High School to Community College Articulation Agreement and or a local CTE articulation agreement, several courses taken in high school may result in earned college credit. To meet SACS requirements high school articulated credit cannot exceed 50% of the certificate credit.

**College Certificate:**

High School juniors and seniors completing a prescribed number of courses during their high school and college education may earn a college certificate. These certificates are stackable toward a diploma and or Associate of Applied Science degree.

**College:** Davidson County Community College

**Program:** Automotive Systems Technology Certificate

*To enroll in an Automotive Systems Technology certificate program, high school students must meet eligibility standards and prerequisite requirements for the pathway.*

AUT 141 Suspension & Steering Sys (3 SHC)

AUT 151 Brake Systems (3 SHC)\*

AUT 161 Basic Auto Electricity (5 SHC)\*

AUT 171 Auto Climate Control (4 SHC)

AUT 181 Engine Performance 1 (3 SHC)

**Total for Certificate: 18 SHC**

**Articulated Credit:**

\*Effective July 1, 2012 or later, by successfully completing 7512 Automotive Brakes, 7514 Automotive Electrical, AND 7515 Automotive Electrical Advanced, with a grade of "B" or higher in each course and a score of 93 on each End of Course Assessment, a high school student may earn college credit for AUT 151 Brake Systems and AUT 161 Basic Auto Electricity through the NC High School to Community College Articulation Agreement. The current Articulation Agreement applies to course articulation prior to that date.

**Industry Credentials:**

Upon completion of this certificate, students may qualify to test for the Automotive Brakes and Automotive Electrical/Electronic Systems certification exams offered by the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE).

## North Carolina STEM High School/ Program

STEM Attributes * Reference STEM Implementation Rubric	Early	Developing	Prepared	Target
<b>Integrated Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum, aligned with state, national, international and industry standards</b>				
A1) Project-based learning with integrated content across STEM subjects				
A2) Connections to effective in and out-of-school STEM programs				
A3) Integration of technology and virtual learning				
A4) Authentic assessment and exhibition of STEM skills				
A5) Professional development on integrated STEM curriculum, community/industry partnerships and postsecondary education connections				
A6) Outreach, support and focus on underserved, especially females, minorities, and economically disadvantaged				
<b>On-going community and industry engagement</b>				
B1) A communicated STEM plan is adopted across education, communities and businesses				
B2) STEM work-based learning experiences, to increase interest and abilities in fields requiring STEM skills, for each student and teacher				
B3) Business and community partnerships for mentorship, internship and other STEM opportunities that extend the classroom walls				
<b>Connections with postsecondary education</b>				
C1) Alignment of student's career pathway with post-secondary STEM program(s)				
C2) Credit completion at community colleges, colleges and/or universities				

\*Prepared or Target measure required for North Carolina STEM High School/ Program



# NC Statewide K12 STEM Strategy Aligned with Post-Secondary & Economic Needs

Priority	Goals	Recommended Strategies
<b>Increasing STEM Achievement</b>	<p>Increase student interest in STEM fields and in continuing their education</p> <p>Increase STEM Achievement of K-12 students</p> <p>Increase the graduation rate of students in STEM programs</p> <p>Decrease postsecondary remediation rates</p> <p>Increase the number of teachers prepared and delivering integrated STEM education</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>STEM Attributes</i></li> <li>2. <i>Measurable Goals &amp; Indicators</i></li> <li>3. <i>High-Quality Tools &amp; Supports for Schools &amp; Districts</i></li> <li>4. <i>STEM Designation</i></li> <li>5. <i>STEM Educator Development</i></li> </ol>
<b>Build Community Understanding and Support</b>	<p>Increase community understanding, awareness, and support for the economic challenges.</p> <p>Increase the connections, partnerships, and growth of high-quality programs, schools, and tools</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <i>Public Awareness Campaign</i></li> <li>7. <i>Identify and Convene Best Practices</i></li> <li>8. <i>One-Stop STEM Portal</i></li> </ol>
<b>Align Public &amp; Private Resources</b>	<p>Increase returns on public and private investments in STEM education</p> <p>Align &amp; coordinate the investments of public &amp; private sector partners to scale high-quality programs efficiently</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. <i>Invest Public &amp; Private Funds</i></li> <li>10. <i>Public/Private Partner</i></li> <li>11. <i>Incentivize Collaborations</i></li> <li>12. <i>STEM Council</i></li> </ol>



10/17/2011





# North Carolina's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Strategy

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>STEM EDUCATION – AN ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE FOR NORTH CAROLINA</b>	<b>4</b>
Aligning K12 with K20 and Economic Needs	5
<b>THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE STEM EDUCATION STRATEGY</b>	<b>5</b>
Framework-at-a-Glance for Statewide STEM Education Strategy	6
<b>PRIORITY 1: IMPROVING STEM ACHIEVEMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
ATTRIBUTES OF STEM SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS	8
STEM ACHIEVEMENT MEASURES	9
STEM DESIGNATION	12
STEM TOOLS & SUPPORTS	12
STEM EDUCATOR DEVELOPMENT	13
<b>PRIORITY 2: BOLSTER COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING &amp; SUPPORT</b>	<b>14</b>
PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN	14
BEST PRACTICE IDENTIFICATION	14
ONE-STOP STEM PORTAL	15
<b>PRIORITY 3: CONNECT, LEVERAGE &amp; INCREASE STEM RESOURCES</b>	<b>18</b>
STEM INVESTMENTS	18
PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNER	19
COLLABORATION INCENTIVES	20
STEM COUNCIL	21
<b>ENDNOTES</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>APPENDIX I – CURRENT &amp; NEEDED INITIATIVES</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>APPENDIX II – ADDITIONAL PROGRESS MEASURES</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>APPENDIX III – STEM SCHOOLS RUBRIC (DRAFT)</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDIX IV – WEB-BASED RESOURCE DESIGN DOCUMENTS</b>	<b>28</b>



## Executive Summary

North Carolina has arguably the finest business climate in America. However, the state is undergoing a critical economic transformation, moving rapidly from a low-skill, low-wage economy to a high-skill, knowledge-based economy driven by technology and innovation. These changes demand an adaptable workforce - one with the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skills embedded within the critical 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills required for successful citizenship. To maintain North Carolina's supremacy, future workers must have the STEM skills leading companies demand and citizenship in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century now requires for success.

Fortunately, North Carolina can boast a high number of statewide and local STEM education initiatives, as well as strong education standards and public and private organizations promoting education innovation in their communities and regions. No matter their geographic, political, or economic disposition, North Carolina's leaders agree that a **coordinated, statewide STEM Education strategy** with clear direction, support and goals is needed to ensure a workforce that is prepared for the high-skill, high-wage, high-demand jobs of a knowledge-based and innovation economy.<sup>1</sup> The plan must be built on a shared vision that leverages public and private resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible, moving North Carolina further and faster toward a world-class workforce and sustained economic growth and development in a global market.

North Carolina is poised to lead the nation with vibrant STEM-based education and economic systems. It is time for North Carolina to connect the many "islands of excellence" across the state into a bright future for all its citizens and communities. To build and maintain the world-class workforce needed to ensure economic prosperity in a global market, North Carolina must focus on the following three priorities and measure our progress against these strategies:

### Priority 1: Increasing our student, educator and institutional STEM Achievement

*Strategy: Adopt a set of attributes for STEM schools and programs, aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, to assist public and private organizations align, coordinate and advance STEM skills for all students.*

*Strategy: Measure a set of student achievement indicators along the education-to-workforce continuum to guide the current and future implementation of the STEM Strategy.*

*Strategy: Implement a designation for STEM Schools and Programs, aligned with the STEM Attributes and these student achievement indicators.*

*Strategy: Identify high-quality tools and supports – such as rubrics, self-assessments – to enable schools, programs and businesses to advance consistent understanding and application of the adopted STEM Attributes.*

### Priority 2: Gaining and sustaining broader community understanding and support for education innovations that support our economic needs

*Strategy: Coordinate a public awareness campaign to 100 counties utilizing public/private partnerships, to inspire and engage North Carolina citizens in this economic challenge.*



*Strategy: Identify and convene leading programs, partners and schools to advance and highlight best practices to every county*

*Strategy: Provide a one-stop action-oriented resource for students, educators, parents, and businesses to get involved in the STEM initiative.*

**Priority 3: Connecting, leveraging & increasing STEM Resources across public and private sectors to improve our citizens and their economic future**

*Strategy: Invest public and private funds over the next 10 years to scale effective STEM programs, policies and practices throughout every economic development region of North Carolina*

*Strategy: Identify and fund a public/private partner that coordinates, evaluates and monitors STEM Education programs and initiatives*

*Strategy: Incentivize collaborations based on evidence-based policies, programs and practice that greatly increases the number of students gaining STEM skills and continuing in STEM fields of work.*

*Strategy: Establish a STEM Council to facilitate and coordinate the implementation of North Carolina's comprehensive STEM strategy.*

## **STEM Education – An Economic Imperative for North Carolina**

North Carolina is undergoing a critical economic transformation. The state is moving rapidly from a low-skill, low-wage economy to a high-skill, knowledge-based, technology, and innovation economy, and these changes demand an adaptable workforce. As this transformation occurs, NC's traditional "middle jobs" — those that paid a family-sustaining wage and required minimal formal education or training— are disappearing. Furthermore, impending baby-boom retirements will exacerbate an emerging gap between workers' skills and job demands.

In our state's newly emerging industries, such as agribusiness, advanced manufacturing, technology and research, excellence in *Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)* is essential. As the President indicated in his 2011 State of the Union address, "We know what it takes to compete for the jobs and industries of our time.... **We need to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world.**"<sup>2</sup> This country's "success as a nation depends on strengthening America's role as the world's engine of discovery and innovation."<sup>3</sup> Technological innovation accounted for almost half of this country's economic growth over the past 50 years, and almost all 30 of the occupations expected to grow the fastest in the next decade will require at least some background in STEM.<sup>4</sup>

In North Carolina there are approximately 400,000 STEM-related jobs, and more than 70,000 net new STEM-related jobs will be created by 2020. This reflects a growth rate greater than for all other jobs in North Carolina. STEM-related jobs in North Carolina pay 64 percent more than the average job., These STEM-related jobs will serve as the economic engine driving this state's future. Yet, even during the periods of highest unemployment, companies reported difficulty finding qualified workers for STEM-related jobs.<sup>5</sup>

North Carolina has arguably the finest business climate in America. Sources such as Site Selection Magazine, Chief Executive Magazine and Forbes consistently tout North Carolina as a leading state in which to do business. The state was 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation for job creation between September 2009 and September 2010, and 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation for personal income growth since June 2009. There has been a ten percent increase in corporate profits.<sup>6</sup> To maintain that supremacy, workers must have the skills leading companies demand, and those skills are clearly STEM focused.

Both public and private sectors recognize this need, and have stepped up to develop efforts to address it. Through Governor Beverly Perdue's JobsNOW initiative, the state aggressively is working to create jobs, train and retrain its workforce, and lay the foundation for a strong and sustainable economic future. **North Carolina is committed to ensuring its future economic prosperity by building a pipeline of highly skilled workers and increasing the number of high-skill/high-wage/high-demand jobs available to its citizens. This will require achieving higher educational attainment levels for all citizens.**<sup>7</sup>

This critical need is non-partisan, a concern for Republicans and Democrats, public and private citizens, local and state and national leaders. The Lt. Governor's JOBS Commission is a bipartisan effort to align education requirements with today's business needs. In addition, North Carolina can boast of a myriad of STEM programs and initiatives across public and private sectors. These programs are not only designed to produce and inspire the next generation of scientists, technologists, engineers, and mathematicians, but also help prepare ALL students

successfully compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. These include programs and activities intended to directly engage students, as well as programs and activities designed to recruit, prepare, and retain effective educators in the STEM areas. North Carolina has strong pockets of promising practices and many strengths to be leveraged across the state.

This critical workforce need combined with a large number of programs and high rate of innovation requires a coordinated STEM Education Strategy to align, innovate, and advance the STEM skills all students need to ensure their success in every community of North Carolina.

### ***Aligning K12 with K20 and Economic Needs***

North Carolina has not been idle in STEM education. Through *Career and College – Ready, Set, Go!* and programs such as *Career & College Promise*, North Carolina is leading the transformation of our state’s system of public education to ensure all students graduate from high school equipped to succeed in a career, in a two- or four-year college, or in technical training, and prepared to compete successfully in a global, knowledge-based and innovation economy. The Standard Course of Study has been updated based on nationally-recognized Common Core standards and international standards. Teachers and principals are being provided tools and access to professional development that will help them reach all students, and technology is being used to support student learning. Because excellence in STEM skills are essential for our workforce in a global, knowledge-based, and innovation economy, a crucial component of the transformation includes improving STEM Education for all students.

North Carolina recognizes our workforce needs are not that of a single organization, institution or sector. Many of the initiatives to reach these goals should directly connect and leverage existing or future efforts across institutions along the education-to-workforce continuum.

## **The Framework for the STEM Education Strategy**

Students and educators are the focal point of every effective education strategy, but North Carolina understands these critical resources are a vital part of a larger system and environment. Through extended conversation with K20 education system leaders, research of hundreds of local, state and national initiatives, and deliberate engagement of private sector, foundations, economic development and other non-education stakeholders, North Carolina has created the first statewide STEM Education Strategy. The STEM Education Strategy focuses on three immediate and reinforcing priorities, outlines measurable goals and twelve corresponding strategies. These twelve corresponding strategies have been vetted through multiple lenses to position North Carolina as a leader, both educationally and economically.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and NCCCS have produced a list of Current and Needed STEM Initiatives associated with the three priorities, provided in Appendix 1.

**Framework-at-a-Glance for Statewide STEM Education Strategy**

Priority	Goals	Recommended Strategies
<p><b>Increasing our student, teacher and institutional STEM Achievement</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase student interest in STEM fields and in continuing their education</li> <li>• Increase STEM Achievement of K-12 students</li> <li>• Increase the graduation rate of students in STEM programs</li> <li>• Decrease postsecondary remediation rates</li> <li>• Increase the number of teachers prepared and delivering integrated STEM education</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Adopt a set of attributes for STEM schools and programs, aligned with 21st Century Skills, to assist public and private organizations align, coordinate and advance STEM skills for all students.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Measure a set of measurable indicators along the education-to-workforce continuum to guide the current and future implementation of the STEM Strategy.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Implement a designation for STEM Schools and Programs, aligned with the STEM Attributes, to drive the goals and measures outlined within this STEM Strategy.</i></li> <li>4. <i>Identify high-quality tools and supports – such as rubrics, self-assessments – to enable schools, programs and businesses to advance consistent understanding and application of the adopted STEM Attributes.</i></li> <li>5. <i>Advance professional development for pre-service and in-service educators aligned with the integrated STEM teaching and learning.</i></li> </ol>
<p><b>Gaining and sustaining broader Community Understanding and Support for the needs of a knowledge-based economy</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase community understanding, awareness, and support for the economic challenges.</li> <li>• Increase the connections, partnerships, and growth of high-quality programs, schools, and tools</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <i>Coordinate a public awareness campaign to 100 counties utilizing public/private partnerships, to inspire and engage North Carolina citizens in this economic challenge.</i></li> <li>7. <i>Identify and convene leading programs, partners and schools to advance and highlight best practices to every county</i></li> <li>8. <i>Provide a one-stop action-oriented web-based resource for students, teachers, parents, and businesses to access and get involved in STEM learning</i></li> </ol>
<p><b>Connecting, Leveraging &amp; Increasing STEM Resources across public and private sectors to improve our citizens and their economic future</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase returns on public and private investments in STEM education</li> <li>• Align &amp; coordinate the investments of public &amp; private sector partners to scale high-quality programs efficiently</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. <i>Invest public and private funds over the next 10 years to scale effective STEM programs, policies and practices throughout every economic development region of North Carolina</i></li> <li>10. <i>Identify and fund a public/private partner for the coordination, evaluation and monitoring of STEM Education programs and initiatives</i></li> <li>11. <i>Incentivize collaborations based on evidence-based policies, programs and practice that greatly increases the number of students gaining STEM skills and continuing in STEM fields of work.</i></li> <li>12. <i>Formally establish a STEM Council to facilitate and coordinate the</i></li> </ol>



## **Priority 1: Improving STEM Achievement**

Increasing student interest and performance in STEM will require a relevant, rigorous curriculum, delivered by educators that have mastered integrated content across subjects, pedagogy, and 21<sup>st</sup> century instructional tools and assessments. Students and educators will operate in schools that have both effective instructional leaders and the support of parents, business and industry, and the community.

### **Goals:**

- ✓ Increase student interest in STEM fields and in continuing their education
- ✓ Increase STEM Achievement of K-12 students
- ✓ Increase the graduation rate of students in STEM programs
- ✓ Increase the number of educators prepared and delivering integrated STEM education
- ✓ Decrease the postsecondary remediation rates

***Strategy: Adopt a set of attributes for STEM schools and programs, aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, to assist public and private organizations align, coordinate and advance STEM skills for all students.***

North Carolina has strong pockets of promising practices and many strengths to be leveraged across the state. However, we lack a framework to scale what works and a clear delineation of the characteristics of a quality STEM education.

Beyond focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, STEM Education provides the opportunity to teach students what to do when they do not know what to do, how to process and take action in new and uncomfortable situations, and how to understand, interact, and lead in the jobs, communities, and world in which they live. Effective STEM Education schools and programs are characterized by the following:

### **Integrated Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum, aligned with state, national, international and industry standards**

- Project-based learning with integrated content across subjects
- Connections to effective in- and out-of-school programs
- Integration of technology and virtual learning
- Authentic assessment and exhibition of STEM skills
- Professional development on integrated STEM curriculum, community/industry partnerships and connections with postsecondary education connections
- Outreach, support and focus on underserved, especially females and minorities and economic disadvantaged

### **On-going community and industry engagement**

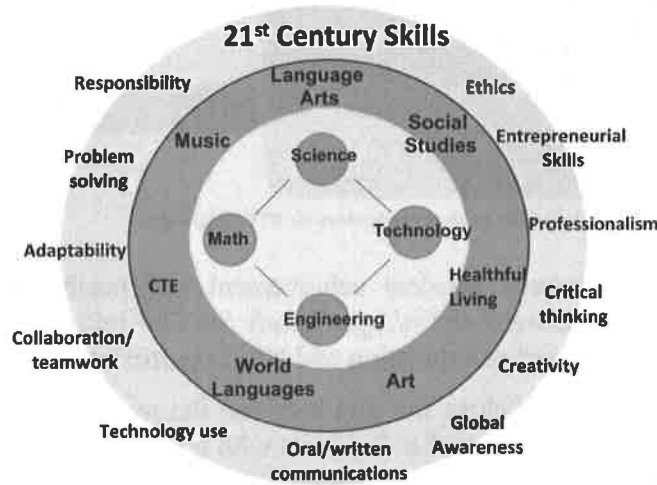
- A communicated STEM plan is adopted across education, communities and businesses
- Work-based learning experiences, to increase interest and abilities in fields requiring STEM skills, for each student and educator
- Business and community partnerships for mentorship, internship and other opportunities that extend the classroom walls

**Connections with postsecondary education**

- Alignment with students' career pathway with postsecondary program(s)
- Acquisition of postsecondary credit and industry credential while in high school

These attributes are central to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills expected to be the overall goal of all education in North Carolina, as outlined in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1



***Strategy: Measure a set of student-achievement indicators along the education-to-workforce continuum to guide the current and future implementation of the STEM Strategy.***

In order to achieve the goals and remain focused on the priorities, no single measure or metric can suffice. And, while individual programs should receive rigorous evaluation and measurement, the Statewide STEM Education Strategy will need data-driven prioritization based on valuable indicators in multiple areas. Both traditional education measures of student achievement (graduation rate, math completion, etc.) and teacher/leader effectiveness measures are part of the prioritization, but must be designated with the end in mind – that is, preparing and growing North Carolina's trained workforce. In order to measure progress and provide ongoing prioritization, North Carolina should define a statewide STEM scorecard, highlighting indicators in four primary areas:

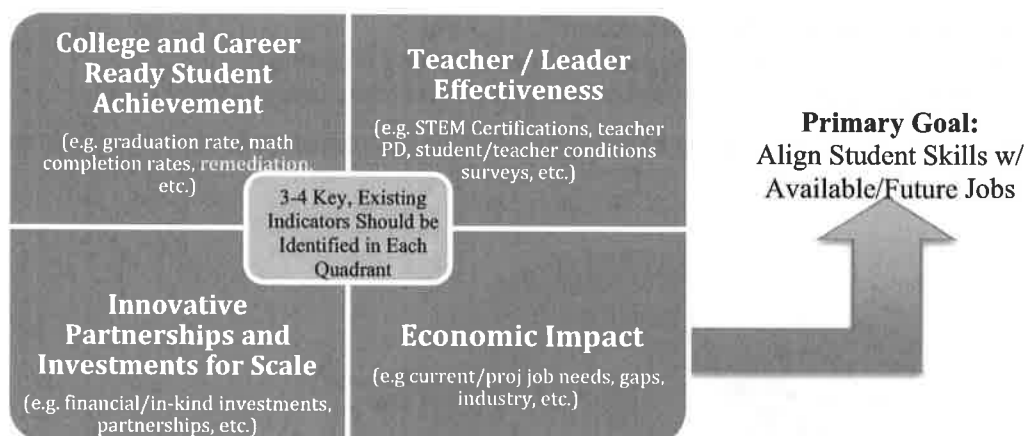


Figure 2.0 – Draft Scorecard areas to track specific progress indicators for STEM Strategy.

The pertinent education measures (student achievement and teacher/leader effectiveness) are currently included within the *Career & College: Ready Set Go!* initiative funded through Race to the Top, as well as the State Board of Education and NC Department of Public Instruction.

However, in order to effectively “close the gap between the number of existing and future jobs requiring STEM skills and the number of individuals with a valuable, post-secondary credential to fill those jobs” (Reference: SL 2010 41), consistent information on the number, types and availability of jobs in North Carolina’s workforce is critical. The NC Department of Commerce and Workforce Commission have deep economic data from which key indicators could be identified.

Finally, financial, in-kind and resource alignment measures should be identified that provide insight into the investments by both public and private sector partners. State investments in these areas, as well as local, state and national investments in financial and in-kind support for STEM related activities – be they from public or private sources – will need to be measured to ensure collaboration, understand return on investment and inform prioritization decisions.

### Indicators to Guide State STEM Strategy

The following measures are recommended for immediate compilation in 2011-2012 (baseline). These are listed as aligned with the education-to-workforce continuum:



# NC Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Strategy

Goal	Indicator*	Status
Increase STEM Interest of Students	Early Grades Student Survey	Pending
	ACT/SAT Survey	Pending
Increase K20 STEM Achievement	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Math Proficiency	Existing (DPI)
	5 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Science Proficiency	Existing (DPI)
	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Algebra I Completion	Existing (DPI)
	Algebra II/Integrated Math III Completion	Pending (DPI)
	Career Readiness Certificate (ACT or WorkKeys)	Pending (DPI, NCCCS)
	Entry into either <i>Career &amp; College Promise</i> STEM Pathway	January 1, 2012
	Completion of <i>Career &amp; College Promise</i> STEM Pathway	January 1, 2012
	Entry into any of 8 STEM Career & Technical Ed. Clusters	Existing (DPI)
	Completion of STEM Career & Technical Ed. Concentrations	Existing (DPI)
	STEM Credentials Awarded	Existing (NCCCS)
	AP Course Completion in STEM areas (e.g. Physics, Computer Sci., etc.)	Existing (DPI)
	Remediation rates in Math	Existing (NCCCS, UNC)
	University Transfer from CC with STEM, AAS	Existing (NCCCS)
	4-year STEM Degrees	Existing (UNC)
Graduate STEM Degrees	Existing (UNC)	
Increase Entry into STEM Jobs in NC	STEM Jobs (by cluster, by education requirement)	Existing (DOC/WIB/ESC)?
Increase STEM Certified Teachers	STEM Licensure/Certifications Begun	Needed
	STEM Licensure/Certifications Awarded	Needed

\* Measures are aggregated at School, District or State level. Student and Program level data would require Unique Student Identifier.

The measures listed in black are currently collected, and should be compiled as soon as possible to prepare a baseline. Those listed in “red” are needed and should be prioritized. These measures are aligned and agreed to by K-20 systems. However, until a common unique identifier for students is utilized by all K20 systems, measurement will only be possible in the aggregate (School, District, Region or State level), not the program or student level.

The business sector has often repeated the mantra “what gets measured gets done”. By initiating these measures along the education-to-workforce continuum, North Carolina will guide the Statewide STEM Strategy at multiple levels. As soon as possible, the following additional steps should be taken to increase local and state alignment with this strategy:

- Programs, policies and partnerships in current or new initiatives to advance the Statewide STEM Strategy should focus on at least one of the above indicators.
- Common measures and indicators for public and private investments in STEM education should be identified and compiled.
- Where and when possible, North Carolina and its partners should utilize the data compiled to guide and prioritize resources, policies and efforts towards agile decision-making to ensure the largest possible student progression in this STEM pipeline.
- Additional, highly-pertinent measures and indicators may be identified to further enable guidance, policy and focus of the Statewide STEM Strategy
- When available, a common unique student identifier (K-20) should be used to allow for program specific data.

NC DPI and NCCCS have outlined more detailed indicators associated with the STEM Strategy which may also be taken into consideration, included in Appendix II.

**Strategy: Implement a designation for STEM Schools and Programs, aligned with the STEM attributes and measures outlined within this STEM Strategy.**

The term “STEM School” or “STEM Program” has become common across the country to designate a school or program with a particular focus on science, technology, engineering and/or math. However, no consistent method for applying the disciplines, rigor or integration of STEM subjects is in place. North Carolina should encourage and support the growth of STEM-focused institutions and programs by creating a STEM Designation for STEM Schools and STEM Programs.

Once adopted, a STEM Designation based on the STEM attributes will provide clear communication and consistent application of the term “STEM” to schools and programs. Much like the role of Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Certification in building standards, a STEM Designation can be a goal, an honor, and a framework for change.

Such a framework provides both a “roadmap” and a “destination” for schools and programs. For those STEM schools/programs able to show evidence of MOST of these attributes, the designation allows clarity and understanding of their approach with some fidelity to the statewide STEM strategy. For others, the designation makes clear where they might continue working with partners, stakeholders, and leaders to achieve the attributes that have not yet been attained in order to be designated a STEM School or program.

Beyond the honor of obtaining a STEM Designation, the adoption of STEM indicators and measures will assist the state, its schools and programs understand on the goals critical along the STEM education-to-workforce continuum.

**Strategy: Identify high-quality tools and supports – such as rubrics, self-assessments – to enable schools, programs and businesses to advance consistent understanding and application of the adopted STEM Attributes.**

North Carolina should identify and, when needed, support the creation of rigorous, aligned tools and supports to facilitate schools and programs who wish to advance STEM skills for its students. These tools and supports should be evidence-based in nature, aligned with national and international standards, and increase the connectivity and consistency of STEM schools and programs. Organizations, both public and private, should build and share such tools and supports

Yes	S	T	E	M
No	S			M
No		T	E	
No	S	T		M
No	S			
No		T		
No			E	
No				M

**Is this STEM?**

STEM is integrated and advances all subjects. While programs may be effective in one, two, or three of the areas, they will need to show attributes and gains in all four areas for designation.

aligned with the STEM attributes and STEM Indicators, and those tools and supports that are aligned and show value for schools and programs should be considered for endorsement and proliferation by the STEM public/private partner and STEM Council (see Priority 3).

For example, the Golden LEAF Foundation, the William & Ida Friday Institute for Education Innovation at NC State University and the North Carolina STEM Community Collaborative have collaborated on a rubric and self-assessment aligned with the STEM attributes (See Appendix III). The tools were originally designed for evaluation of programs under a private grant initiative. However, through the collaborative efforts, the tools will support schools – especially high schools – and programs within Race to the Top initiative, the Golden LEAF Foundation’s STEM grant initiative, and NC State’s MISO project documenting STEM projects. Tools and supports such as these should also be identified and distributed to any school or program willing to advance the Statewide STEM Education Strategy. These tools not only support the on-the-ground efforts of schools and programs, but when implemented consistently, provide for increased alignment of public and private investments in STEM students, educators, schools and communities.

***Strategy: Advance professional development for pre-service and in-service educators aligned with the integrated pedagogy and project-based learning methods of STEM teaching and learning.***

Research shows that the single most important factor in student achievement is the impact of the teacher in the classroom. North Carolina recognizes that the educator in the classroom is part of a large system of education. As the ‘point of the spear’ for STEM education, the state must invest in training, professional development, tools and certification that allow for teachers and school leaders to master the integrated practices, pedagogy and curriculum to advance the STEM skills, attributes and learning for all students. Whether project-based, problem-based, Socratic, inquiry-based, virtual or other method, teachers will need access before entering the classroom and professional development, learning opportunities, and peer supports to continuously meet the demands of STEM education and improve instruction in the face of changing standards.

In particular, North Carolina should leverage its own substantial efforts with national partners and expertise in the areas of:

- Certification and/or Licensure for STEM Teachers (pre-service and in-service)
- Alternative Licensure methods for STEM Teachers
- STEM Teacher and Leader Development tied to the STEM Attributes and Tools
- Lateral-Entry for STEM Professionals into Education
- Part-time or Split-time STEM Professionals in the Classroom
- Alignment of STEM Teaching with Common Core, National and International Standards

## **Priority 2: Bolster Community Understanding & Support**

Helping citizens understand the urgent need of STEM Education and building a sustained commitment to support STEM Education will require all citizens understand how to get involved and appreciate the consequences of failing to act – for themselves, their children, and their communities. It will require a shared vision of the future is regularly communicated and discussed by leaders in every sector, of every background, and in every community. It will require sharing information in an open, consistent, and straightforward manner. It will require engaging all stakeholders in meaningful ways and inspiring them to action that produces results in both the short- and long-term.

### **Goals:**

- ✓ Increase community understanding, awareness, and support for the economic challenges.
- ✓ Increase the connections, partnerships, and growth of high-quality programs, schools, and tools

***Strategy: Coordinate a public awareness campaign to 100 counties utilizing public/private partnerships, to inspire and engage North Carolina citizens in this economic challenge.***

Traditionally, STEM education has been the domain of certain geographies (e.g. Research Triangle Park) or certain occupations (e.g.- doctors, engineers, researchers, etc.). The majority of adults in America consider themselves “not a ‘math person’”. While leaders in North Carolina recognize the economic value of strong STEM education for all students – especially in light of massive economic transformation across the state – there is considerable confusion on how, where and when students, educators and the general public can best get involved, get connected and take action to advance STEM skills.

North Carolina must engage the general public through traditional and social media efforts to raise awareness STEM education. Such a campaign should include messages that will:

- Convey the economic value of STEM skills to current and future students and adults.
- Increase awareness of high-quality STEM Schools and Programs in every economic development region of the state.
- Illustrate critical education changes and opportunities (e.g.- Common Core Mathematics, Virtual Learning, etc.) in ways that advance understanding and adoption of STEM skills.
- Raise awareness of the priorities, attributes, designations, and measurements of the Statewide STEM Strategies.
- Take advantage of public and private efforts, expertise, and outlets to encourage students, parents educators and business leaders to increase the number of students accessing and completing high-quality STEM programs.

***Strategy: Identify and convene leading programs, partners and schools to advance and highlight best practices to every county.***

Over 500 schools, programs, non-profits, competitions, private partners, and informal learning organizations have been identified in North Carolina (see “One-Stop Web Resource”). These

efforts vary in focus, quality, geography, funding, target audience, and in almost every other category and measure. These programs tend to focus most of their energy and resources on programmatic activities for which they were created – not highlighting themselves or seeking additional partners. However, this critical and varied group of partners, programs and schools offers a wonderful opportunity for the State to maximize shared resources, align efforts through partnership, collaborate for further reach and value, and innovate new and better practices for the enrichment of STEM skills.

A public/private partner (see “Priority 3”) should assist with the identification and convening of STEM Schools, programs and partners to advance and highlight best practices in every economic development region of the state. These best practices can serve as examples to regions without previous access, can spur additional innovations and partnerships, can assist effective programs in growing, and, ultimately, advance student achievement in every county.

***Strategy: Provide a one-stop action-oriented resource for students, educators, parents, and businesses to get involved in the STEM initiative.***

Access to information about STEM programs and schools is more critical and more available than ever before. However, no single resource for students, educators, businesses and the general public exist in North Carolina. As in other states, a single resource will allow these critical stakeholders access to each other and to STEM schools and programs with which they would like to be involved. For STEM Schools and Programs, such a single resource can assist in growing programs and partnerships.

A STEM Portal – a one-stop action-oriented web-based resource connecting students, educators, businesses and general public with STEM schools and programs – should take advantage of the valuable efforts undertaken by different organizations in the past. The University of North Carolina General Administration has documented university-level programs targeting K12 education as recently as 2009. The North Carolina Science Mathematics and Technology Education Center also documented and provided a searchable listing of programs targeting K12 math and science opportunities, while the North Carolina Business Committee on Education (NCBCE) has an Education Resource Guide for use by business, within which some overlap with STEM Education occurs.

The NC STEM Community Collaborative at the request of the Lt. Governor’s Office, with the support of the Department of Public Instruction the Golden LEAF Foundation, have undertaken the design and project scope for a STEM Portal.

- The collaborative effort has documented over 500 organizations, public and private, with some form of STEM program. These include cross-referenced materials from previous efforts, as well as further statewide surveys.
- A Design Charette and focus groups with over 50 students, educators and administrators, business leaders, policy makers and foundation representatives was held at the Burroughs Wellcome Fund August 2011. The session, facilitated and documented by UNC-CH School of Government Professor Shannon Tufts and her team, resulted in a report of the nice-to-have and need-to-have features of a STEM Portal for the different stakeholders.
- Surveys of other States’ sites and interviews of State personnel regarding the service, features, costs and lessons learned through similar endeavors have been compiled by Stephanie Wright, graduate intern in mathematics and social sciences.

- Private sector support and partnerships have been successfully sought (over \$25,000 from two different companies) to support the design and implementation of such a resource.

A STEM Portal is a tangible, useful tool to attract and activate those who wish to connect and advance STEM skills in their area. These previous efforts should be built upon, and it appears private sector funding and expertise combined with public sector endorsement and hosting would provide a comprehensive, action-oriented web-based resource for stakeholders to advance the Statewide STEM Strategy. (See Appendix III)

### **Priority 3: Connect, Leverage & Increase STEM Resources**

Leveraging public, private, and technology resources will allow North Carolina to achieve the greatest possible impact for its investments. This will require coordination, evaluation, and monitoring of STEM Education programs and initiatives. In addition, this will require formal and informal collaboration between schools, school systems, business and industry, and other private and public sector partners eliminating redundancies, inefficiencies, and inequities. Working together on challenges of scale will require difficult decisions, prioritization, and new models.

**Goals:**

- ✓ Increase returns on public and private investments in STEM education
- ✓ Align & coordinate the investments of public & private sector partners to scale high-quality programs efficiently

***Strategy: Invest public and private funds over the next 10 years to scale effective STEM programs, policies and practices throughout every region of North Carolina.***

Investments in STEM education have primarily come in the form of federal, state and local public education initiatives – such as *Career & College: Ready Set Go!*, *Race to the Top*, or *Math Science Partnerships*, *STEM Schools*, etc. Public sector investments in education overall are significantly higher than any other source – private foundation grants, private industry philanthropy, and other financial and in-kind investments from non-governmental sources are less than 2% of education investments. Many of these efforts have resulted in valuable impact for target audiences. Investments in local and individual schools and programs should and will continue. However, sustaining innovative initiatives and scaling the best practices and impacts of these investments and their associated programs has been difficult, if not impossible.

Barriers to scaling high-quality and effective STEM efforts include:

- Lack of clear documentation of impact, effort, or growth parameters for programs.
- Lack of sustainable resources – a “pilot” program may be successful, but not be feasible at scale, lack a plan for growth, or be able to access resources to “live” or grow beyond a pilot phase.
- Lack of access to a channel to grow high-growth programs
- Lack of connection, understanding or value of out-of-state or nationally-validated programs already in existence
- Loss of interest, public will or continuous leadership support – due to political realities, issues or programs may be shunned or avoided.
- Non-supportive or blocking policies – innovative programs may be hampered by existing, and sometimes unassociated policies. When policy waiver procedures exist, they can take time, even when expedited.

STEM education, however, presents a unique opportunity to align public and private investments, especially when focused on scaling what works. Private sector partners can see clearly valuable outcomes in the form of a trained workforce, even in non-traditional areas such as manufacturing and agriculture. The current policy environment also lends itself to policies that will support scaling what works rather than building a new or

different effort. Finally, as public sector coffers return either flat or fewer resources, the state will require identification of partners and sharing of responsibility, expertise and models to reach a growing number of students and educators.

In 2010, a number of public and private partners such as The North Carolina Board of Science & Technology recommended an initiative that would include:

- A challenge grant from the State to encourage private sector investments in scaling.
- Identification of and focus on hands-on STEM learning experiences for K-12 grade, with a particular focus on the first 8 years of schooling.
- Success measured through identified student achievement, growth or expansion of programs, increase of access of high-quality programs to all regions, and alignment of programs with ongoing workforce and economic cluster needs of the state and its regions.

The State of Massachusetts, consistently referenced by experts and researchers as a leader in STEM education, recently announced a similar program called “@Scale”, to identify programs of high-quality and value to different economic development regions of the state. At the time of launch, public sector funds were in the process of identification, and private sector investments were under consideration once supported publicly.

Given the rapid expansion of North Carolina’s knowledge-based economy, the multitude of high-quality programs, and the current environment, a set of public and private sector investments directly focused on scaling programs, policies and practices to every economic development region of North Carolina over the next decade must be identified and coordinated to dramatically increase the STEM skills of North Carolina’s workforce.

***Strategy: Identify and fund a public/private partner for the coordination, evaluation and monitoring of STEM Education programs and initiatives.***

Leveraging public, private, and technology resources will allow North Carolina to achieve the greatest possible impact for its investments. This will require coordination, evaluation, and monitoring of STEM Education programs and initiatives. In addition, this will require formal and informal collaboration between schools, school systems, business and industry, and other private and public sector partners eliminating redundancies, inefficiencies, and inequities.

This will require a public/private partner with:

- Sufficient access to and in-house STEM expertise and business management;
- A unique, established network of local, state and national STEM partners, networks and experts;
- A willingness to prioritize the scaling and connectivity of high-quality and effective programs across the K20 education-to-workforce continuum above any single program;
- The endorsement, support, guidance and input of public and private leaders from across the local, state, and national STEM education, education policy and innovation landscape; and
- The capacity to accept public or private resources and quickly disperse them, in consultation with NC DPI and other partners, to a network of partners, schools and programs.

The role of this public private partner will include working with NC DPI, and other public and private stakeholders in North Carolina and beyond, to: