



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

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee

Evaluation of Innovative High School
Programs
First in America Innovative Education
Initiatives Act

*SL 2003-277, sec. 2 (Evaluation of
Programs)*
(SB 656)

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Summary Status of High School Innovation Projects under the Innovative Education Initiatives Act (GS 115C-238)

Backed by an \$11 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, in August 2003 the Governor's Education Cabinet and the Public School Forum of North Carolina launched the New Schools Project, a private-public partnership to focus leadership and financial resources on change in the state's high schools. Collaborators include:

- Office of Governor Mike Easley
- NC Education Cabinet
- NC Department of Public Instruction
- State Board of Education
- NC Community College System
- NC General Assembly
- Office of Lt. Governor Beverly Perdue
- NC Independent Colleges and Universities
- NC Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center
- Public School Forum of North Carolina
- SERVE
- The University of North Carolina System
- Principal's Executive Program

The New Schools Project (NSP) is forming partnerships with local school districts and higher education institutions to provide support to create over one hundred small high schools across the state. These schools will either be new start-up schools or conversion schools that use an existing comprehensive facility to house one or more discrete, small and autonomous schools. These schools will also offer every student a personalized learning experience and an academically rigorous curriculum in order to prepare all students for college, work, and citizenship. The NSP is also working to engage key stakeholders in shaping consensus for change in the state's high schools and in enabling action steps to get there.

The clear intent of the NSP is to engender dramatic structural change as opposed to supporting a "program." The essential thrust of NSP is straightforward: in order to improve public high schools everywhere, individual schools must be encouraged and assisted to invent and implement more effective means of serving students. The successes of these schools must be sustained, their processes must be supported, and their new structures for success must be replicated. The focus of the NSP initiative is the individual school, but the intent over time is to re-invent high school education in North Carolina.

Governor Easley's Learn and Earn Early College High School initiative, a project of the NC Department of Public Instruction and the New Schools Project, was launched in September 2004 in response to the dire workforce development needs in North Carolina. The initiative is designed to improve high schools, to better prepare students for college and career, to create a seamless curriculum between high school and college and to

provide work-based experiences to students. Learn and Earn early college high schools will meet these goals by establishing autonomous high schools on the campuses of colleges or universities and providing students the opportunity to earn an associate's degree or two years of transferable college credit while still in high school. In an era of dramatic economic change, Learn and Earn provides a high school experience that prepares students to meet the needs of a new economic reality. The Learn and Earn Early College High School initiative submitted a separate status report to the State Board of Education and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee in September 2005 in accordance with SL 2004-124, Sec. 7.22.

Collectively, the new or conversion high schools and the Learn and Earn early college high schools are called High School Innovation Projects (HSIPs). The HSIPs are and will be operating as Cooperative Innovative High School Programs under the Innovative Initiatives Education Act (GS 115C-238).

HSIPs in Implementation or Planning for the 2005-06 School Year

For the 2005-06 school year, 75 school sites are either in implementation or planning with the New Schools Project and the Learn and Earn Early College High School Initiative. For a lengthier description of each school site, please see [Attachment 1](#). Eleven new or conversion schools and fourteen early college high schools have opened for students for the 2005-06 school year. An additional 50 schools are in planning to open for the 2006-07 school year.

Each of the 11 new or conversion schools are small, thematically-focused, and academically rigorous high schools. Eight of these schools are health and life science themed high schools, two are pre-engineering themed high schools, and one is a computer technology themed high school. The 11 new or conversion schools are located on 8 existing high school campuses. Over the next three years, those 8 high school campuses will convert into a total of 22 small, thematically-focused, and academically rigorous high schools.

The fourteen Learn and Earn early college high schools that have opened for the 2005-06 school year are each located on a community college or university campus. Five of the early college high school sites were considered "acceleration sites" during the 2004-05 school year. These acceleration sites were in existence prior to the 2004-05 school year either as an early or middle college. Four of the acceleration sites served students over the course of the 2004-05 school year. Each of the early college high schools are serving students from across their respective districts.

Summary of HSIP Support Structures and Design Principles

The New Schools Project and the Learn and Earn Early College High School initiative provide an integrated support system intended to foster the conditions required to ensure

the long-term success of HSIPs. The integrated support system includes four basic supports:

- **cash grants** to support costs associated with planning and implementation;
- **coaches**, who are experienced and highly trained educational leaders, that will serve the HSIP Teams with facilitation and process design skills;
- access to successful **model schools** across the country;
- enrollment in **learning networks** to share best practices and curriculum development across the state.

The guiding principles for creating an HSIP must include a strong academic focus that incorporates autonomy, personalized relationships, accountability, and a focus on equity and diversity. Each HSIP must incorporate the following characteristics into their innovative high school program:

Power of the Site: For new or conversion schools, it is integral that the school be completely a autonomous school. This autonomy allows for the school to structure its curriculum and student support systems to best meet the needs of its students. In addition, the power of the small school site allows the school to take advantage of the community resources available to support and enhance the school's thematic-focus.

For early college high schools, locating schools on a college campus is integral to student motivation and success and to an enduring collaborative partnership. It is a visible symbol to the community of dual accountability for student outcomes and academic success. Students are treated as college students and see themselves as college completers.

Teaching and Learning: Developing students' literacy skills is critical to academic success. Schools regularly engage students in rigorous, in-depth academic work, use active intellectual inquiry and sustained writing and revision in all classes. High standards set for all students; learning is meaningful, engaging and celebrated; learning is real and connected to world experiences and students' lives; and school is organized to support in-depth learning with a diverse student community.

Student Learning: Schools design a system of assessment that provides multiple opportunities for students to publicly exhibit what they know and can do. Assessments grow out of classroom work and provide on-going feedback to the school community, the teacher, the student and the parent on a student's progress toward achieving academic proficiency. Assessment is interwoven with classroom activities; student outcomes are measured using multiple assessments; and assessment informs school-based decisions.

Student Support: 'Smallness,' no more than 100 students per grade level, helps to create a learning community for students and teachers and provides opportunities for flexible and innovative structures to support students both academically and emotionally. All students are known well not only because the school is small, but also because the school values and gives priority to small class size and extended time with a teacher both

daily and over the course of the student's high school years. Enabling students to attain high standards requires attention to be paid to students' academic, affective and family needs; school structure and schedule is organized to support extended relationships with students; every adult has the capacity and life experience to be an effective counselor.

Democratic School Governance: Purposefully designed structures provide for everyone's voice to be heard and respected in the decision-making process with regard to hiring personnel, managing budgets, determining curriculum and pedagogy, developing students' activities and any other policies that affect the daily life of students and faculty. Shared decision-making supports the intellectual quality of instruction and strengthens the professional community of a school; issues of teaching and learning are the center of a dialogue among entire school community; and students and parents are empowered to participate in the life of the school and to have their voices heard in school-based and national forums.

Professional Development: Staff participates in on-going, embedded professional development that focuses on student success. Time during the school day is provided for staff development and the creation of learning communities. New teachers are mentored in order to help them to understand and to implement the goals of the community. Schools are communities of reflective practice and continuous learning; professional development and growth is expected of all adults; regularly scheduled, sustained professional development enables adults to model learning communities for students; and feedback and refinement of practice is the responsibility of all members of the school community.

Summary of 2004-05 HSIP Support and Assistance Activities

Support for HSIPs is ongoing and both formal and informal. Below are some notable developments over the 2004-05 school year.

Support Sessions for HSIP Planning Teams

- In October 2004, the New Schools Project and its partners hosted the second institute to assist planning teams working to develop health and life science-themed high schools. Teams came to Asheville prepared to share their plan for redesign, and with the help of Rick Lear from the University of Washington, planning team members received structured feedback on their plans. NSP also laid out expectations about the RFP for implementation, released in December 2004.
- In January 2005, NSP and its partners hosted the first institute to support planning teams from the five Learn and Earn "acceleration site" partnerships. Each team came to Raleigh with representatives of the K-12 partner(s) and the higher education partner(s). The two-day support session was structured to reinforce the design principles of teaching and learning, power of the site, and student support.

Representatives of the Department of Public Instruction and the Office of the Governor participated and emphasized the importance of this work.

- In February 2005, NSP and its partners hosted a two-day winter institute to support teams from the ten Learn and Earn planning sites. Secondary and postsecondary partners worked with school change coaches to share their work and invite feedback and to reinforce the design principles using critical friends protocols. A representative from the Office of the Governor spoke to the teams about the importance of this work, the Governor's support for the initiative and the status of Learn and Earn funding.
- In April and May 2005, NSP conducted two one-day initial support sessions for R3 (northeastern NC schools) and New Tech planning sites. During these sessions, NSP reviewed structures of support, design principles, non-negotiables and introduced planning teams to their coaches and High School Innovation Project Team manuals.
- In August 2005, NSP staff held initial support sessions for planning teams from Cohort IV international studies schools (in conjunction with Asia Society), Cohort IV schools of local design, and Cohort V Learn and Earn early college high schools. NSP staff during these sessions reviewed the need for high school redesign, discussed the NSP high school redesign design principles and non-negotiables, and discussed the requirements of the planning grants. Planning teams also met their coach and began discussing next steps.

Study Site Visits to Model Schools

- In January 2005, NSP coordinated a site visit to two early college high schools in Memphis, Tennessee. In collaboration with the Middle College National Consortium, NSP staff planned pre-visit readings, on-site seminars focused on the design principles of student support and power of the site, site visits to Hollis F. Price Early College High School at Lemoyne Owen College and to Middle College High School at Southwest Tennessee Community College, and group debriefings. Five teams of Learn and Earn sites, two representatives from the Department of Public Instruction and one representative from the NC Community College System participated.
- In February and March 2005, NSP coordinated three site visits to model schools in California (New Tech High in Napa and Sacramento), New York (Middle College High School @ LaGuardia Community College, International High School @ LaGuardia Community College and Humanities Prep) and Michigan (Mott Middle College High School). Site visits were framed by pre-visit readings, on-site seminars focused on design principles and group debriefings. Participants included representatives of thirteen LEAs, higher education partners, the Department of Public Instruction, the NC Community College System, the Office of the Governor and the Office of the Lieutenant Governor.

Professional Development Institutes

- In April 2005, NSP hosted a two-day conference focused on developing the capacity to change instruction. Thom Markham from the Buck Institute for Education spent one day working with coaches and principals from schools in Cohorts I, II and III and one day working with teachers from those same sites.
- In June 2005, NSP held its summer institute focused on effective teaching strategies in redesigned high schools. Teachers and administrators from 26 high school innovation projects from across the state, most of which are opening this fall, attended the four day conference. Participants were involved in one of four professional development strands: project-based learning, on-site professional development, literacy, and leadership for small school success. School teams also had extensive time with their coach to continue planning for the opening of school.

Leadership Institute for High School Redesign and the Small School Success Network

- NSP formalized an agreement with the UNC Principals Executive Program (PEP) to launch the Leadership Institute for High School Redesign. The Institute will plan and deliver professional development focused on effective instructional leadership for principals in redesigned high schools. NSP and PEP also launched the Small School Success Network (S³N), a program of the Institute, which will provide a peer support network for principals in redesigned high schools. The first event was held at the leadership for small school success professional development strand held at the Summer Institute. The session focused on helping the principals develop a shared vision of high school innovation, identifying challenges the principals are or will be facing, and developing a communications and marketing strategy for their new school. The Institute also held in August its first series of peer support network meetings for principals in the new small schools that are opening this fall. The meetings were primarily focused on challenges the principals were facing in opening their new schools. A summary of the issues discussed at the first peer support network meetings is attached. S³N will hold peer support network meetings every two months.

Summary of Policy Development Activities

Over the past year, NSP and the Department of Public Instruction helped eight early college high school acceleration and planning sites apply for program recognition as a Cooperative Innovative High School Program under the NC *Innovative Education Initiatives Act*. This recognition allowed for the State Board of Education and the NC Community College System to waive a variety of policy requirements that otherwise would not have been allowed to be waived. With that recognition, the State Board of Education granted waivers in the areas of transportation funding, state administrative support, and school calendar requirements in March 2005. In addition, the NC

Community College System granted requested waivers in the areas of required minimum age of students for enrollment in community college courses, enrollment of high school students in developmental courses, and priority registration of high school students in community college courses in March 2005. The New Schools Project staff, in collaboration with the Office of the Governor, the Department of Public Instruction, the NC Community College System, and the UNC Office of General Administration, has also identified and proposed legislative changes that provide all schools a consistent process by which to address policy barriers.

Summary of Advocacy and Communications Activities

Statewide Action Plan for High School Innovation

In December 2004, NSP, in collaboration with the Office of Governor Mike Easley, the NC Education Cabinet, the Department of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, the NC Community College System, the General Assembly, the NC Independent Colleges and Universities, the NC Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center, the Public School Forum of North Carolina, SERVE, and the University of North Carolina System released the first-ever statewide Action Plan for High School Innovation (workbook and companion DVD) at two one-day conferences in Raleigh and Charlotte. Ninety six of the 115 LEAs in the state attended. The action plan was officially adopted by the State Board of Education at the August 2004 Board meeting. The action plan provides evidence on the need for high school reform in North Carolina and provides schools, districts, and communities with specific action steps to follow to begin the process of redesigning the high schools in their communities. See Attachment 2 for a copy of the statewide Action Plan for High School Innovation.

INNOVATOR

In June 2005, NSP began producing and distributing the *INNOVATOR*, a bimonthly, electronic briefing focused on high school reform efforts in North Carolina and from across the nation. The briefing highlights success stories from NC redesigned high schools, best practices in high school reform, and recent research on high school reform. The *INNOVATOR* is distributed to teachers, administrators, coaches, superintendents, Board of Advisors, Department of Public Instruction staff, General Assembly members, the Governor's staff, State Board of Education members, and several other NSP partners. The *INNOVATOR* has proven to be a successful communications and advocacy strategy in providing our school teams, partners, and other stakeholders with information about high school redesign and the need for change. NSP is currently in the process of expanding the distribution list to include teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders not currently involved with the initiative. See Attachment 3 for a copy of *INNOVATOR*.

Summary of Evaluation Activities

The New Schools Project, in coordination with our evaluation partners, is monitoring and evaluating each school's progress in implementing their plan for redesign, as well as their progress in meeting the needs of each student. Fouts and Associates, our external grantee evaluators through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, are evaluating and collecting data on the new and conversion school's implementation progress. AIR/SRI is evaluating the progress of the Learn and Earn Early College High School initiative. NSP is also currently working with SERVE in the development of a proposal to research and evaluate the Learn and Earn early college high schools.

- Next year we will be able to provide attendance data and ABC data for each of the new or conversion schools and the Learn and Earn early college high schools that are operating this school year. Data points around graduation rates and higher education persistence rates for these schools will be available over the next five years.



**North Carolina New Schools Project
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction**

**Summary of Cohort I School Sites
Awarded Implementation Grants**

September 2005

School of Inquiry and Life Sciences (SILSA), Asheville City Schools

Start Date: August 17

<http://www.asheville.k12.nc.us/sites/silsa/default.aspx>

Contacts: Robert Logan
Superintendent
Robert.logan@asheville.k12.nc.us
(828) 350-6145

Greg Townsend
Principal, School of Inquiry and Life Sciences at Asheville
greg.townsend@asheville.k12.nc.us
(828) 255-5358

In August 2005, Asheville High School will start an autonomous small school on its campus, the School of Inquiry and Life Sciences. The school is expected to serve 100 ninth graders this fall, with a total enrollment of 400 students when the school is fully implemented. In addition to a rigorous academic curriculum and strong student support from faculty, the school will also provide students with life sciences immersion experiences each year based on the students' interests and abilities. These experiences include service-learning and job-shadowing requirements, as well as an internship during their fourth year that will be a part of their senior portfolio. Third and fourth year students will also have the option to enroll in courses of special interest at Asheville-Buncombe Technical College and the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

Health and Life Sciences High School, Cumberland County Schools

Start Date: August 25

Contact: William Harrison
Superintendent
billh@ccs.k12.nc.us
(910) 678-2312

Katrenna Rich
Principal, Health and Life Sciences High School
katrennarich@ccs.k12.nc.us
(910) 484-8121 x344

The Health and Life Sciences High School will open for the 2005-06 school year with an expected enrollment of 75 ninth graders and an expected total enrollment of 300 to 400 students when the school is fully implemented. The school will be an autonomous high school located in a separate building on the Douglas Byrd High School campus and will serve a diverse group of students from across Cumberland County.

The school's objectives include providing students with opportunities to develop a strong foundation in science, math, technology, and communication skills in a real-world context, to increase student awareness of health-related career opportunities, and to prepare students for post-secondary education and health-related careers. Students will lead parent-teacher conferences each semester and will demonstrate their learning through presentations, projects and work-based learning. Students will have the option to earn dual credit in college courses at the four partnering higher education institutions, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Fayetteville State University, University of North Carolina at Pembroke, and Methodist College. In addition, students will have opportunities to participate in internships with local health care professionals.

J.F. Webb High School, Granville County Schools

Start Date: August 12

Contacts: Tom Williams
Superintendent
williamst@ges.k12.nc.us
(919) 693-7391

Julie Finch
Principal, J.F. Webb School of Health and Life Sciences
finchj@gcs.k12.nc.us
(919) 693-2521

J.F. Webb High School is planning to complete a whole school conversion into three small, thematically focused high schools by the 2007-08 school year. The J.F. Webb

School of Health Sciences, the first of the small, thematically-focused high schools, will open for the 2005-06 school year. Each of the schools is expecting a total enrollment of no more than 350 students. The planning for the additional two schools, the J.F. Webb School of Engineering and Skilled Trades and the J.F. Webb School of Business and Technology, will begin during the 2006-07 school year, with the two schools opening for the 2007-08 school year.

The three schools will provide a rigorous academic curriculum with access to honors level, community college level and university level courses. Teachers will collaborate with business leaders and community members to develop a curriculum that is based in a real-world context and that is focused on problem solving. In addition, each school will have an Advisory Network comprised of individuals from related industries, community colleges, and universities that will provide expertise on post-secondary education and the world of work.

South Granville High School, Granville County Schools

Start Date: August 12

Contacts: Tom Williams
Superintendent
williamst@gcs.k12.nc.us
(919) 693-7391

Catherine Brooks
Principal, South Granville School of Health Sciences
brooksc@gcs.k12.nc.us
(919) 528-1507

South Granville High is planning to complete a whole school conversion into three small, thematically-focused high schools by the 2007-08 school year. The South Granville School of Health Sciences, the first of the small, thematically-focused high schools, will open for the 2005-06 school year. The additional two schools, the South Granville School of Agriscience and the South Granville School of Business and Finance, will begin planning during the 2006-07 school year and will open for the 2007-08 school year. All three schools are expecting total enrollments of no more than 350 students.

Teams and committees of parents, community members, and business partners will help to collaboratively develop a rigorous curriculum and meaningful programs for the schools. In addition, an Advisory Network of business partners will provide input on the connections between the schools' curriculum and the world of work. Students will also be assigned to a teacher advisor with whom that will work for all four years. Students will meet with their advisor daily in small groups to discuss each student's progress and long-term academic and career goals.

Newton-Conover Health Science High School, Newton-Conover City Schools
Start Date: August 25

Contacts: Janie Sigmon
Associate Superintendent, Newton-Conover City Schools
Janie.sigmon@nccs.k12.nc.us
(828) 464-3191

Jerry Willard
Director, Newton-Conover Health Science High School
jwill212@bellsouth.net
(828) 465-0920

The Newton-Conover Health Science High School will open for the 2005-06 school year with an expected enrollment of 48 ninth graders and a total enrollment of 200 students when the school is fully implemented. The school will be located in a separate building on the Newton-Conover High School campus. Students will be selected to attend the school through an application process, and the student body will be representative of the diversity in the current high school student population.

In addition to the school's curricular focus on the health sciences, coursework and learning experiences will also focus on developing students' language skills both in the health sciences professional vocabulary and in a second language, primarily Spanish. Students will be provided immersion opportunities to develop their second language skills, such as living in a home with parents who speak a different language or participating in an international experience during their first two years.

Scotland High School, Scotland County Schools
Start Date: August 25

Contacts: Shirley Prince
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(910) 276-1138

David Kincaid
Principal, School of Engineering and Skilled Trades
dskincaid@scsnc.org
(910) 276-7370

Billy Simpson
Principal, School of Health Sciences
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(910) 276-7370

Scotland High School is planning to complete a whole school conversion into six small, thematically-focused high schools by the 2007-08 school year. Two of these schools, the School of Health Sciences, and the School of Engineering and Skilled Trades, will open for the 2005-06 school year and will have total enrollments of no more than 300 tenth through twelfth graders. The additional schools, the School of Arts and Communication, the School of Math, Science, and Technology, the School of Business and Finance, and the School of Leadership and Public Service, will open for the 2006-07 school. All of the schools are expecting total enrollments of no more than 400 students in grades nine through twelve when fully implemented.

East Wake High School, Wake County Public Schools

Start Date: August 25

<http://ewhs.wcpss.net/shs/index.php>

Contacts: William McNeal
Superintendent
wmcneal@wcpss.net
(919) 850-1606

Craig Baker
Principal, East Wake School of Health Sciences
acbaker@wcpss.net
(919) 365-2634

East Wake High School is planning to complete a whole school conversion into four small, thematically-focused high schools by the 2007-08 school year. The East Wake School of Health Sciences, the first of these schools, will open for the 2005-06 school year with an expected enrollment of 300 ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders. The school will have a total enrollment of no more than 400 students when it is fully implemented. Teachers will use project-based learning and interdisciplinary studies to help students make sense of different subject areas. All students will be assigned a personal learning coach to act as a mentor and advocate throughout high school.

Planning for the additional three schools will begin in the summer of 2005. The East Wake School of Information Technology will open for the 2006-07 school year, and the East Wake School of Engineering and the East Wake School Arts, Humanities, and Education will open for the 2007-08 school year. Each school will have total enrollments when fully implemented of no more than 400 students.

Atkins Academic and Technology High Schools, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

Start Date: August 25

<http://web2k.wsfcs.k12.nc.us/atkinshs/>

Contacts: Donald L. Martin, Jr.
Superintendent
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Daniel A. Piggott
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Carolyn Preyear
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The Atkins Academic and Technology High Schools is a new facility that will be composed of three small, thematically-focused high schools: a School of Biotechnology, a School of Computer Technology, and a School of Pre-Engineering. All three small schools will open for the 2005-06 school year serving only ninth and tenth graders. One grade level will be added per school year until the three schools are serving ninth through twelfth graders by the 2007-08 school year. Each of the three schools will have a total enrollment of no more than 400 students when fully implemented.

Each school will offer a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum, which includes academic coursework fulfilling both high school graduation and college entrance requirements, as well as coursework focused on the specific school's area of interest. Students will also have the opportunity to complete courses at Wake Forest University, Forsyth Technical Community college, or through the school's distance learning lab. Incoming freshmen will participate in a seminar that describes the unique opportunities available at each school in order to help them decide which school to attend.

Summary of Cohort II

Learn and Earn Early College High Schools Awarded Implementation Grants

(The implementation grants are state-funded and are not funded by the Gates Foundation. The initiative is under the New Schools Project umbrella and is affiliated with the Early College High School Initiative)

What are Learn and Earn Early College High Schools?

Governor Mike Easley launched the Learn and Earn Early College High School Initiative in response to a dire workforce development need in North Carolina. The Initiative is designed to improve high schools, to better prepare students for college and career, to create a seamless curriculum between high school and college and to provide work-based experiences to students. Learn and Earn Early College High Schools will meet these goals by establishing autonomous high schools on the campuses of colleges or universities and providing students the opportunity to earn associate's degrees or two years of transferable college credit while still in high school. In an era of dramatic economic change, Learn and Earn provides a high school experience that prepares students to meet the needs of a new economic reality.

What are the essential design elements of Learn and Earn Early College High Schools?

Learn and Earn early college high schools benefit from support partnerships with the NC Department of Public Instruction, University of North Carolina System, NC Community College System, and the New Schools Project to develop new high schools with the following design characteristics:

1. Be an autonomous high school located on the campus of a college or university;
2. Provide students the opportunity to complete high school with a high school diploma and an associate's degree or two years of transferable credit at no cost to the student;
3. Serve students in grades 9-12 or 13;
4. Create clear ties to the workplace, including a graduated series of work-based learning experiences for students;
5. Serve a student body that reflects the diversity of the district in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic status, academic ability, achievement level, and motivation;
6. Design and implement affective and academic systems of support to help students attain the high expectations presented by the early college model;
7. Redesign the ninth and tenth grades to build high levels of academic readiness; and
8. Partner with middle schools to prepare rising high school freshmen for the early college experience.

Anson County Early College High School

Partners: Anson County Schools and South Piedmont Community College
Start Date: August 25

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Deborah Davis
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Beginning with 70 ninth and tenth grade students for the 2005-06 school year, Anson County Early College High School will serve up to 250 students when fully implemented. The school has developed a *21st Century Communication Skills* course that all students in the first and second years will complete. The course will focus on developing the student's communication skills while also engaging the students in discussions about major social issues.

Buncombe County Early / Middle College

Partners: Buncombe County Schools and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College

Start Date: August 18

<http://www.bccc.buncombe.k12.nc.us/>

Contacts: Clifton Dodson
 Superintendent
 cliff.dodson@bcsemail.org
 (828) 255-5921

Meg Turner
Principal
margaret.turner@bcsemail.org
(828) 232-4123

The school is converting from a middle college into an early college high school for the 2005-06 school. For the 2005-06 school year, the school is expecting to enroll 60 ninth graders and 40 twelfth graders. The school graduated 59 middle college students this past school year, with 25 of those students having completed a college-level course.

Catawba Valley CHALLENGER Early College High School

Partners: Catawba County Schools, Newton-Conover Schools, Hickory City Schools, Alexander County Schools, and Catawba Valley Community College

Start Date: August 8

Contacts: Tim Markley
Superintendent
tmarkley@catawba.k12.nc.us
(828) 464-8333

Eddy Daniel
Principal
Eddy_Daniel@catawba.k12.nc.us
(828) 327-7000

The school has accepted 100 ninth graders for the 2005-06 school year and is planning a total enrollment of 400 students when fully implemented. Students at CHALLENGER will be assigned a “Personal Adult Advocate” (PAA), a specific teacher advisor who will closely monitor the student’s academic progress and advise the student over the course of their time at the school. The PAA will also serve as a first line of communication for parents about their student’s progress.

Chatham Early / Middle College

Partners: Chatham County Schools and Central Carolina Community College

Start Date: January 2006

Contacts: Ann Hart
Superintendent
ahart@chatham.k12.nc.us
(919) 542-3626

Mary Mertz
Principal
mmmertz62@cccc.edu
919-542-6495 x215

The school is expecting a total enrollment of 200 students when fully implemented. Students at the school will be assigned an advisor for their entire 5 years in the program and will become part of an advisement group of students, or “house,” that will collectively work with each advisor. In addition, students will attend an AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) course each day that will focus on goal-setting and strategies for success.

Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School

Partners: Durham Public Schools and North Carolina Central University

Start Date: August 25

<http://echs.dpsnc.net/index.html>

Contacts: Ann Denlinger
Superintendent
ann.denlinger@dpsnc.net
(919) 560-2503

Nick King
Principal
Nicholas.King@dpsnc.net
(919) 530-7793

During the 2005-06 school year, the school is expecting to enroll approximately 170 ninth and tenth graders. In addition to offering all students a rigorous curriculum to help prepare them for college, Clement Early College High School also provides additional support and motivation to encourage women and minorities to pursue careers in science, math, technology, and engineering. SECME, through the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Early College High School Initiative, provided funding for the development of the Clement Early College High School.

Collaborative College for Technology and Leadership

Partners: Iredell-Statesville Schools, Mooresville Graded School District, and Mitchell Community College

Start Date: August 25

<http://www.iss.k12.nc.us/schools/EarlyCollege/index.htm>

Contacts: Terry Holliday
Superintendent
tholliday@iss.k12.nc.us
(704) 872-8931

Penny Hedrick
Principal
phedrick@iss.k12.nc.us
(704) 878-3200

The school is expecting to enroll approximately 85 ninth graders for the 2005-06 school year. When fully implemented, the school will serve 340 students. In addition to their course requirements, students will be expected to complete in order to graduate a variety of projects, service learning and community service requirements, summer leadership modules, and technology-enriched professional portfolios.

Cross Creek Early College High School

Partners: Cumberland County Schools and Fayetteville State University

Start Date: August 25

Contacts: William Harrison
Superintendent
billh@ccs.k12.nc.us
(910) 678-2312

Melinda Vickers
Principal
mvickers@ccs.k12.nc.us
(910) 672-1636

The school is expecting to enroll 75 ninth graders for the 2005-06 school, and will have a total enrollment of 300 students when fully implemented. The school will be housed in the Fayetteville State University (FSU) School of Education, and will serve as a teacher education partnership site providing internship and student teaching opportunities for FSU students. In addition, early college and university faculty will participate together in content-driven professional development over the course of the year.

Davidson Early College High School

Partners: Davidson County Schools, Lexington City Schools, Thomasville City Schools, and Davidson County Community College along with Davidson Vision and Davidson County Workforce Development

Start Date: August 25

Contacts: Fred Mock
Superintendent
FMock@davidson.k12.nc.us
(336) 242-5501

Ben Terrell
Acting Principal
bterrell@davidson.k12.nc.us
(336) 242-5557

The school is converting from a middle college into an early college high school for the 2005-06 school. All students will take college courses along with school classes and the high school calendar will be aligned with the college. Students will also be enrolled in a daily Seminar program designed to provide both academic and personal life skills.

Davidson Vision and Davidson County Workforce Development will play an increasingly important role in the partnership as students begin work on Senior Projects as well as internships and service opportunities.

The Early / Middle College at GTCC

Partners: Guilford County Schools and Guilford Technical Community College
Start Date: August 16

Contacts: Terry Grier
Superintendent
griert@gtcc.edu
(336) 370-8100

Tony Watlington
Principal
watlint@gUILFORD.K12.NC.US
(336) 819-2957

The school is converting from a middle college into an early college high school for the 2005-06 school year. Last year, the school graduated 58 middle college students. All of the graduating students received a college / university prep diploma. Forty-nine of the school's 135 students last year attempted at least one college course. The school is expecting a total enrollment of approximately 130 students for the 2005-05 school year.

Edgecombe County Early College High School

Partners: Edgecombe County Public Schools and Edgecombe Community College
Start Date: August 11

Contacts: Steve Stone
Superintendent
sstone@ecps.us
(252) 641-2656

Marcia Edge
Principal
edgem@edgecombe.edu
(252) 823-5166 x297

The school is converting from a middle college into an early college high school for the 2005-06 school year. The school is expecting an enrollment of 75 students. The school will serve a total enrollment of 125 students (25 at each grade level 9-13) when it is fully implemented. Students at Edgecombe Early College High School have participated and will continue to participate in community volunteering and outreach activities with local elementary schools, homeless shelters, and other community organizations. An additional staff position will also be created for the 2005-06 school year to coordinate job shadowing and internship opportunities for students through the Edgecombe Workforce Development and Training Program.

Nash-Rocky Mount Early / Middle College High School

Partners: Nash-Rocky Mount Schools and Nash Community College

Start Date: August 9

Contacts: George Norris
Superintendent
gnorris@nrms.k12.nc.us
(252) 459-5220

Fay Agar
Principal
fgagar@nrms.k12.nc.us
(252) 451-2890

The school is converting from a middle college into an early college high school for the 2005-06 school year. Last year, the school graduated 50 middle college students. Seventeen current middle college students enrolled in summer school college courses. The school has enrolled 136 ninth through twelfth graders for the 2005-06 school year.

Robeson County Early College High School

Partners: Public Schools of Robeson County and Robeson Community College

Start Date: August 25

Contacts: Colin Armstrong
Superintendent
armstrongc.psrc@robeson.k12.nc.us
(910) 670-6000

Wesley Revels
Principal
revelsw.swett@robeson.k12.nc.us
(910) 521-3253

For the 2005-06 school year, the school is planning to enroll 120 students in grades 9-11, and will add 40 ninth grade students a year until the total enrollment reaches 200 students in grades 9-13. Students at Robeson County Early College High School will participate several times a week in two unique courses, Power Up and Leadership. The Power Up course is a project-driven course that focuses on team building, leadership development, and the basics of project management. The Leadership course focuses on problem-solving using real problems within the school environment

Rutherford Early College High School (REaCH)

Partners: Rutherford County Schools and Isothermal Community College

Start Date: August 16

Contacts: Donna Peters
 Superintendent
 dpeters@rutherford.k12.nc.us
 (828) 245-0252

 Renn Dominguez
 Principal
 rdomingu@rutherford.k12.nc.us
 (828) 286-3636 x290

Focusing on rigor, relevance, and relationships, REaCH offers Rutherford County Public School Students an opportunity to obtain an Associate Degree from Isothermal Community College while simultaneously completing a High School Diploma. A strenuous curriculum, along with highly innovative teaching strategies, offers students a unique learning environment. Another unique feature is the small learning community with only 300 students when fully implemented; this allows for strong personal ties within the school.

Sampson County Early College High School

Partners: Sampson County Schools, Clinton City Schools, and Sampson Community College

Start Date: August 8

<http://earlycollege.sampsoncc.edu/>

Contacts: Steve Hobbs
 Superintendent
 shobbs@sampson.k12.nc.us
 (910) 592-1405

 Linda Jewel Carr
 Principal
 ljewell-carr@sampsoncc.edu
 (910) 592-8084 x2030

SECHS enrolled 50 ninth graders for 2005. The school selected 8-12 students from each of five the high schools. The Consortium is working to reinvent the secondary high school setting by providing a meaningful experience on the Sampson Community College Campus. Student success is ensured through academic rigor bonded by adult-student relationships and enhanced through relevant internships in project-based learning experiences, utilizing innovative classroom teaching methods with an interactive environment among the students, faculty and staff.

Summary of Cohort III School Sites

Awarded Planning Grants to Develop Innovative High Schools In Northeastern North Carolina

The third round of grants from the N.C. New Schools Project to reform high schools and better prepare students for the workforce and college were awarded in three communities in northeastern North Carolina. The funding will be used to create new, smaller high schools that will focus learning and will motivate students to make connections with both their teachers and to the world beyond high school.

Beaufort County Schools: The Beacon School

Beaufort County Schools will spend a year of planning to transform the Beaufort County Educational Technical Center into a powerful and highly productive learning environment that prepares all students for college based on the Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound model. Expeditionary Learning is a model for comprehensive school reform that emphasizes high achievement through active learning, character growth, and teamwork. Expeditionary Learning emphasizes five Core Practices within its schools:

Learning Expeditions: These challenging, interdisciplinary, real-world projects and in-depth studies act as the primary curriculum units in Expeditionary Learning schools.

Active Pedagogy: In Expeditionary Learning schools, teachers use active pedagogy to help students become active and collaborative learners: to make connections, to find patterns, to see events from different perspectives, to experiment, to go beyond the information given, and to develop empathy and compassion for events, people, and subjects.

School Culture and Character: Expeditionary Learning builds shared beliefs, traditions, and rituals in order to create a school culture that is characterized by a climate of physical and emotional safety, a sense of adventure, an ethic of service and responsibility, and a commitment to high quality work.

Leadership and School Improvement: Leaders in Expeditionary Learning schools create a professional community that focuses on curriculum and instruction as the primary vehicles for improving student achievement and school culture.

For more information, contact:

Jeffrey Moss
Superintendent
(252) 946-6593

Michelle Oros
Grants Coordinator
(252) 946-6593

Camden County Schools: CamTech High School

Camden High School will be the first of seven redesigned Information Technology themed high schools in North Carolina. Development of Information Technology (IT) themed high schools is one step toward the new vision for high schools—schools that are small, autonomous, academically rigorous, and relevant to today's needs. IT high schools are not programs, and they do not lead to narrow “certification.” Rather, these schools utilize IT as a vehicle to support new schools rich in rigor, relevance, and relationships. The goal is not to add new courses in technology or to use technology in some novel approach within the same dated structure—efforts which have not proven successful with large numbers of students. Clearly, many schools currently offer courses and programs that provide “basic technology” to students, and many have programs leading to certification in various technical programs. Instead, IT High Schools will use technology as a tool which permeates daily life in school, a way to demonstrate proficiency, a means to support students, and a way to increase the productivity and future success of students. This grant is awarded in partnership with the New Technology Foundation in Napa, California.

For more information, contact:

John Dunn
Superintendent
(252) 335-0831

Ina Lane
Project Coordinator
(252) 338-0114

Dare County Schools: Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies

Dare County Schools will redesign Cape Hatteras Secondary School into Cape Hatteras Secondary School of Coastal Studies. The year of planning will involve teachers, administrators, and local partners in developing a school focused on the area's distinctive local resources to prepare all students for college. As extensive renovations to the school are already underway, the New Schools Project will support teachers' efforts to renovate what takes place for students and staff within the building. The coastal studies theme provides a framework around which teachers organize curriculum in a way that is meaningful for students and prepares them for college and the future needs of the region. The school will partner with numerous stakeholders, including the Coastal Studies Foundation to undertake research, offer educational opportunities and provide community outreach that embraces the unique history, culture and environment of the island.

For more information, contact:

Sue Burgess
Superintendent
(252) 473-1151

Tripp Hobbs
Principal, Cape Hatteras Secondary School
(252) 995-5730

New Schools Project and New Technology Foundation

Summary of Cohort IV School Sites

Awarded Planning Grants to Develop Information Technology-Themed Schools

Development of Information Technology (IT) themed high schools is one step toward the new vision for high schools—schools that are small, autonomous, academically rigorous, and relevant to today’s needs. IT high schools are not programs, and they do not lead to narrow “certification.” Rather, these schools utilize IT as a vehicle to support new schools rich in rigor, relevance, and relationships. The goal is not to add new courses in technology or to use technology in some novel approach within the same dated structure—efforts which have not proven successful with large numbers of students. Clearly, many schools currently offer courses and programs that provide “basic technology” to students, and many have programs leading to certification in various technical programs. Instead, IT High Schools will use technology as a tool which permeates daily life in school, a way to demonstrate proficiency, a means to support students, and a way to increase the productivity and future success of students.

Work by the New Technology High School of Napa, California, the New Schools Project, Bob Pearlman, Partnership for 21st Century Skills, the Buck Institute for Education, and others have provided a broad framework for North Carolina’s proposed IT high school model. The IT high school will incorporate the following design principles.

Size and Structure

The IT high school will be a small, autonomous school, comprising a maximum of 400 students, 100 per grade level. The philosophy which undergirds the academic structure of the school will focus on small group work, team work, student independence, and personal relationships. Small school size will allow students to develop relationships with teachers, who will serve as teacher-mentors to help students progress. This support will provide students help in academic, affective, and family needs.

Curriculum: Teaching and Learning

The IT high school curriculum will provide all courses required for graduation and entrance into post-secondary schooling. Instruction will be project/problem based, bringing together intellectual inquiry with rigorous real-world standards, and engaging students in relevant and meaningful work. While technology will be a cornerstone of curriculum presentation, its function will be as a means for students and teachers to gain and share knowledge, not a separate entity. Students will be given projects/problems and will use technology to reach conclusions and demonstrate proficiency. Teachers will work together to combine and coordinate core knowledge of individual disciplines into cohesive, rigorous projects/problems that require students to work together, reach consensus, and understand how to react to the world around them. Student and teacher

workstations, similar to those used in business and industry will replace the traditional classroom environment.

Assessment and Accountability

Students will be assessed both on skills and content understanding. Proficiency and growth will be demonstrated via the use of various technologies and media, projects, oral presentations and discussions of activities, use of traditional measurements, portfolios, and other performance based instruments. In this way, students will be confident both in their knowledge base and in differentiated means to demonstrate their proficiency.

Student Support

A keen focus on the success of all students is the primary mission of the IT high school. The rigorous curriculum, new methods of teaching and learning, and the different school atmosphere will be enhanced by the strong student support offered. Limiting both the size of the school and the size of classes will enable teachers both to know their students and to serve as mentor-counselors.

Professional Development

Faculty will have dedicated time to meet together to plan, evaluate, and support each other. The staff will form its own professional development through peer review of lessons, projects, and assessments. All faculty will participate in discussions regarding students and how to better serve them. Professional conferences and meetings will be attended, content shared with others, and discussions held with students. Innovation, continuous growth, and mutual respect will permeate the professional development of the staff.

The following school districts and partners have received planning grants to begin creating information technology-themed high schools by replicating the New Tech model:

Alamance-Burlington School System, Southern Alamance High School

Contacts:

Jim Merrill, Superintendent
(336) 570-6090, ext. 102
James_merrill@abss.k12.nc.us

Kent Byrd, Principal, Southern Alamance High School
(336) 570-6400

Kent_byrd@abss.k12.nc.us

Camden County Schools, CamTech High School

Contacts:

John Dunn
Superintendent, (252) 335-0831
jdunn@camden.k12.nc.us

Ina Lane
Project Coordinator
(252) 338-0114
ilane@camden.k12.nc.us

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Garinger High School

Contacts:

Lloyd Wimberley, Assistant Superintendent for High School Curriculum and Instruction
(980) 343-3000
l.wimberley@cms.k12.nc.us

Jo Ella Ferrell, Principal, Garinger High School
(980) 343-6450
Joella.ferrell@cms.k12.nc.us

Cherokee Central Schools, Ravensford School (tentative)

Contacts:

Henry Chiltoski, Director of Education
(828) 497-6370

Camaleta Monteith, Consultant
(828) 497-2717
carmaleta@msn.com

Frank Cooper, Finance
(828) 497-5232
francoop@nc-cherokee.com

Public Schools of Robeson County, Purnell Swett High School

Contacts:

Colin Armstrong, Superintendent
(910) 671-6000
Armstrongc.psrc@robeson.k12.nc.us

Dr. Marilyn Lee
(910) 671-6000
Leem.psrc@robeson.k12.nc.us

Scotland County Schools, Scotland High School

Contacts:

Dr. Shirley Prince, Superintendent
(910) 276-1138
sprince@scsnc.org

Roger Edwards, Principal, Scotland High School
(910) 276-7370
redwards@scsnc.org

Wake County Public School System, East Wake High School

Contacts:

William McNeal, Superintendent
(919) 850-1606
wmcneal@wcpss.net

Dr. Richard Murphy, Sr. Director of High School Programs
(919) 850-1793
rmurphy@wcpss.net

Dr. Herman Norman, Principal, East Wake High School
(919) 365-2628
hgnorman@wcpss.net

New Schools Project and Asia Society

Summary of Cohort IV School Sites Awarded Planning Grants to Develop International Studies Schools

The growth in international business and research across North Carolina and the nation demands a workforce that is aware of and connected to other regions of the world. In order to better meet this growing demand, the New Schools Project, in partnership with the Asia Society and the North Carolina Center for International Understanding, is developing a network of International Studies high schools across the state. These small, autonomous high schools will prepare all students for college or other post-secondary education through a default college preparatory curriculum that is rigorous and standards-based. The curriculum will also integrate world geography and cultures, global systems and relationships, and international perspectives across all academic areas. In addition, students will be expected to study at least one foreign language throughout the course of their high school career and will have the opportunity to develop a deep expertise in at least one world culture, world region, or international issue. Students will have access to internships or other learning opportunities outside of the school setting and will be required to complete a substantial community service project. The schools will serve no more than 400 students, all of whom will choose to attend. The student population at the school must also reflect the broader student population at the district level.

The following school districts and partners have received planning grants to begin creating International Studies high schools:

Alamance-Burlington School System, Southern Alamance High School

Contacts:

Jim Merrill, Superintendent
(336) 570-6090, ext. 102
James_merrill@abss.k12.nc.us

Kent Byrd, Principal

(336) 570-6400
Kent_byrd@abss.k12.nc.us

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Garinger High School

Contacts:

Lloyd Wimberley, Assistant Superintendent for High School Curriculum and Instruction
(980) 343-3000
l.wimberley@cms.k12.nc.us

Jo Ella Ferrell, Principal, Garinger High School

(980) 343-6450
Joella.ferrell@cms.k12.nc.us

Onslow County Schools, Onslow School of International and Global Networking Studies (SIGNS)

Contacts:

Ron Singletary, Superintendent

(910) 989-2021

Ron.singletary@onslow.k12.nc.us

Cleo Croom, Director of Secondary Schools and Accountability

(910) 989-2021, ext. 291

ccroom@onlsow.k12.nc.us

RTI International, Research Triangle International High School

(a collaboration among Durham, Wake, Chapel Hill-Carrboro, Orange and Johnston school districts and the High Five: Regional Partnership for High School Excellence)

Contacts:

Jean Williams, Director

RTI Center for Research in Education

(919) 316-3817

jwilliams@rti.org

Lary Maskel, Project Director

RTI Center for Research in Education

(919) 541-8763

lmaskel@rti.org

Vann Langston, Executive Director

High Five: Regional Partnership for High School Excellence

(919) 254-0241

vvlangston@aol.com

Summary of Cohort IV

School Sites Awarded Planning Grants for Schools of Local Design

Twelve school districts have received planning grants to develop high schools that will have a unique design that builds upon local strengths, interests and community or regional characteristics. Each of these new schools will be small, thematically-focused, autonomous high schools, and will provide all students with an academically rigorous curriculum that will ensure that every student graduates ready for college, work and citizenship. The unique designs being developed by these schools include schools focused on ecology, conservation, and construction; arts and humanities; health, human and public services; international finance, marketing, and entrepreneurship; and a school with a partnership with the NC Zoo. The new schools will be either start up schools, new schools created at a new or non-traditional setting (such as on college campuses or adjacent to medical centers) or conversion schools, which are schools created on the campus of an existing high school.

The following districts have received planning grants to begin developing schools of local design:

Alamance-Burlington Schools, Southern Alamance High School

Contacts:

James Merrill, Superintendent

(336) 570-6060

james_merrill@abss.k12.nc.us

Denise Morton, Director of Secondary Education

(336) 570-6060

denise_morton@abss.k12.nc.us

Kent Byrd, Principal

(336) 570-6400

Kent_byrd@abss.k12.nc.us

Asheboro City Schools, Asheboro High School

Contacts:

Diane L. Frost, Superintendent

(336) 625-5104

dfrost@asheboro.k12.nc.us

Curt Lorimer, Director of Career-Technical Education

(336) 625-5104

clorimer@asheboro.k12.nc.us

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Garinger High School (creating 2 schools of local design)

Contacts:

Lloyd Wimberley, Assistant Superintendent for High School Curriculum and Instruction
(980) 343-3000
l.wimberley@cms.k12.nc.us

Jo Ella Ferrell, Principal, Garinger High School
(980) 343-6450
Joella.ferrell@cms.k12.nc.us

Davie County Schools

Contacts:

W. G. Potts, Superintendent
(336) 751-5921
pottsd@davie.k12.nc.us

Linda C. Bost, K-12 Program Coordinator
(336) 751-5921
bostl@davie.k12.nc.us

Moore County Schools

Contacts:

Susan Purser, Superintendent
(910) 947-2976
spurser@mcs.k12.nc.us

Sally Ward, Director of Accountability
(910) 947-2976
sward@mcs.k12.nc.us

Roanoke Rapids Graded School District, Roanoke Rapids High School

Contacts:

John Parker, Superintendent
(252) 535-3111
parkerj.co@rrgsd.org

Mike Hurst, Principal
(252) 537-8563
hurstm.rrhs@rrgsd.org

Roanoke River Consortium (a collaboration between Warren County, Halifax County, Northampton County, and Hertford County)

Contacts:

Dennis DeLoatch, Chair, Roanoke River Valley Education Consortium
(252) 358-1761
deloatchd@hertford.k12.nc.us

James Tabron, Executive Director, Roanoke River Valley Education Consortium
(919) 789-0052
rrvec@bellsouth.net

Scotland County Schools, Scotland High School (creating a School of Arts and Communications, a School of Business and Finance, and a School of Leadership and Public Service as a part of their whole school conversion)

Contacts:

Dr. Shirley Prince, Superintendent
(910) 276-1138
sprince@scsnc.org

Roger Edwards, Principal, Scotland High School
(910) 276-7370
redwards@scsnc.org

Swain County Schools, Swain County High School

Contacts:

Robert White, Superintendent
(828) 488-3129
robert.white@swaincountyschools.org

Janis Wright, Program Development Coordinator
(828) 488-3129
janis.wright@swaincountyschools.org

Surry County Schools

Contacts:

Ashley F. Hinson, Superintendent
(336) 386-8211
hinsona@surry.k12.nc.us

Terri E. Mosley, Director of Student Services
(336) 386-8211
mosleyt@surry.k12.nc.us

New Schools Project and NC Department of Public Instruction

Summary of Cohort V

Learn and Earn Early College High Schools Awarded Planning Grants

What are Learn and Earn Early College High Schools?

Governor Mike Easley launched the Learn and Earn Early College High School Initiative in response to a dire workforce development need in North Carolina. The Initiative is designed to improve high schools, to better prepare students for college and career, to create a seamless curriculum between high school and college and to provide work-based experiences to students. Learn and Earn Early College High Schools will meet these goals by establishing autonomous high schools on the campuses of colleges or universities and providing students the opportunity to earn associate's degrees or two years of transferable college credit while still in high school. In an era of dramatic economic change, Learn and Earn provides a high school experience that prepares students to meet the needs of a new economic reality.

What are the essential design elements of Learn and Earn Early College High Schools?

Learn and Earn early college high schools benefit from support partnerships with the NC Department of Public Instruction, University of North Carolina System, NC Community College System, and the New Schools Project to develop new high schools with the following design characteristics:

1. Be an autonomous high school located on the campus of a college or university;
2. Provide students the opportunity to complete high school with a high school diploma and an associate's degree or two years of transferable credit at no cost to the student;
3. Serve students in grades 9-12 or 13;
4. Create clear ties to the workplace, including a graduated series of work-based learning experiences for students;
5. Serve a student body that reflects the diversity of the district in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic status, academic ability, achievement level, and motivation;
6. Design and implement affective and academic systems of support to help students attain the high expectations presented by the early college model;
7. Redesign the ninth and tenth grades to build high levels of academic readiness; and
8. Partner with middle schools to prepare rising high school freshmen for the early college experience.

2005-06 Learn and Earn Early College High School Planning Sites

Brunswick County Early College Demonstration High School

Partners: Brunswick County Schools and Brunswick Community College

The school is expecting to enroll 100 ninth graders for the 2006-07 school year, and will add 100 students a year until a maximum of 400 students are enrolled. Students in Grade 7 and 8 will participate in a preparatory-Early College Demonstration School prior to selection into the Brunswick County Early College Demonstration High School. The two year program will be designed to enhance research and study skills, technology utilization, foreign language skill development, understanding the requirements of Early College Demonstration School, and in general preparation for the new high school and college experience.

Contacts:

Katie McGee, Superintendent, Brunswick County Schools

(910) 253-2982

kmcgee@bcswan.net

Michael Reaves, President, Brunswick Community College

(910) 754-6900

reavesm@brunswick.cc.nc.us

Les Tubb, Director

(910) 253-2954

ltubb@bcswan.net

Caldwell ACCEL-Assuring Caldwell County Excellence in Leadership

Partners: Caldwell County Schools, Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute, and Appalachian State University

Caldwell ACCEL-Assuring Caldwell County Excellence in Leadership- will be a five-year, early college high school situated on the Caldwell Community College & Technical Institute campus, within the Appalachian State University Center. Caldwell ACCEL will begin with 60 ninth graders in 2006-2007. Each successive year, 60 additional students will enroll with a maximum enrollment of 300 in the fifth year of operation (2010-2011).

Contacts:

Tom McNeel, Superintendent, Caldwell County Schools

(828) 728-8407

tmcneel@caa.k12.nc.us

Kenneth A. Boham, President, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute

(828) 726-2214

kboham@cccti.edu

Roxy Poovey, Director of Career and Technical Education
(828) 726-2606
rpoovey@cccti.edu

Carteret Early College High School

Partners: Carteret County Schools and Carteret Community College

The Carteret Early College High School will be a maritime-themed early college high school in order to better serve the economic needs of Carteret County, in which one-quarter of the county's largest employers are maritime-related businesses. Students will be involved in maritime-related internships and job shadowing experiences throughout their early college careers.

Contacts:

David K. Lenker, Superintendent, Carteret County Schools
(252) 728-4583
dlenker@co.carteret.k12.nc.us

Joseph T. Barwick, President, Carteret Community College
(252) 222-6000
jtb@carteret.edu

Pennylloyd Baldridge, Assistant Superintendent, Carteret County Schools
(252) 728-4583
pbaldridge@co.carteret.k12.nc.us

Cherokee County Early College Center

Partners: Cherokee County Schools and Tri County Community College Community College

The school is expecting to enroll 150 students or 10-15% of the LEA's total high school population. In addition to their course requirements, students will be expected to complete an internship, a job shadowing experience, or an apprenticeship.

Contacts:

Jeanette Hedrick, Superintendent, Cherokee County Schools
(828) 837-2722
Jeanette.hedrick@cherokee.k12.nc.us

Norman Oglesby, President, Tri-County Community College
(828) 837-6810
noglesby@tricountycc.edu

Ronald Ledford, Grant Administrator
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Early College High School of Columbus County

Partners: Columbus County Schools, Whiteville City Schools, and Southeastern Community College

The school is expecting a total enrollment of 300 students when fully implemented. The enrollment of the school will not exceed 75 students per grade level and will allow for real-world experiences integrated within the relevant curriculum. The partnership with Southeastern Community College will play an increased role as students begin the work component of their coursework.

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Craven Early College High School

Partners: Craven County Schools and Craven Community College

The school is expecting to enroll 9th through 11th grades initially. The 12th grade will be implemented in the second year. The total enrollment will be limited to 120 students. In addition to the course work, students will also participate in summer study, apprenticeships, and internships or clinical assignments.

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GCECHS-Greene County Early College High School

Partners: Greene County Schools, and Greene County Center of Lenoir Community College

During the first year GCECHS will enroll approximately 40 9th graders. A new grade will be added each year during implementation. Each student will have a personal Apple iBook laptop as part of Greene County's iTech (Information-age Technology Enhanced Instruction for Every Child), a program that provides laptops for all students in grades 6-12. In addition, each freshman will participate in a freshman seminar class designed to support students as they make the transition to high school.

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The Early College of Entertainment at GTCC

Partners: Guilford County Schools and Guilford Technical Community College

The school will enroll students in grades 8 – 12. The school is expecting a total enrollment of 225 students. During the 2006-07 school year, the school will enroll approximately 110 students in grades 8-12.

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Middle College High at NC A&T

Partners: Guilford County Schools and NC A&T University

The Middle College High at NC A&T University will be transitioning into an early college high school for the 2006-07 school year. The Middle College High at NC A&T seeks to provide a single-gender education that will establish a school culture that will raise educational achievement in an innovative, nurturing environment where young men are offered a new chance at success, a boost to their self-esteem, and an outlook toward a promising future.

Contacts:

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Russell Harper, Principal
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The Advanced Learning Institute at Haywood Community College (“ALI”)

Partners: Haywood County Schools and Haywood Community

The school anticipates full capacity at an enrollment of 400 students. The student-centered, thematically-focused (in high technology, communications, and the arts) high school provides an accelerated academic program for students. ALI will provide extensive student support services through daily academic advising, peer counseling, tutoring, mentoring, and regular family involvement activities.

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The Hertford County Early College High School

Partners: Hertford County Public Schools, and Roanoke-Chowan Community College
The school will provide a personalized learning environment with strong academic and individual support component. The curriculum design allows for the completion of the high school diploma and an associate degree for students enrolling in this 9-12th grade high school.

Contacts:

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Hoke County Early College

Partners: Hoke County Schools and Sandhills Community College

During the 2006-07 school year, the school expects to enroll 40 tenth graders. By year three the school expects enrollment to grow to 120. Hoke County Early College will produce graduates with the academic and personal skills necessary to succeed in the 21st century. World Keys assessment package will be used to evaluate student progress in work-related skills.

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Rick Swanson

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Lee County Early College High School

Partners: Lee County Schools and Central Carolina Community College

The school expects to begin with approximately 100 students. The school will have an open enrollment policy that allows eighth grade and high school students to attend. In addition, students will have the opportunity to participate in complementary learning activities through internships, co-ops, mentoring activities, and job shadowing experiences.

Contacts:

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John Kirkman

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Franklin Public Service Early College High School

Partners: Macon County Schools and Southwestern Community College

The school will open with a maximum of 50 ninth and tenth grade students, adding a new ninth grade class each year. Grades will include 9th grade through 12th or 13th grades and their maximum student population will be 100 students. In addition, students will participate in internships and apprenticeships.

Contacts:

Rodney Shotwell, Superintendent, Macon County Schools

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McDowell Early College School

Partners: McDowell County Schools and McDowell Technical Community College

The school will serve a maximum of 100 students from the existing two junior high schools. The high school and community college faculty will use innovative teaching strategies that include experiential learning, and experimental and problem based learning.

Contacts:

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Shirley Brown, VP for Learning and Student Services, McDowell, Technical Community

College

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New Hanover County University High School

Partners: New Hanover County Schools and the University of North Carolina

Wilmington

The school will provide a five year program for 400 students. The program will build on successes with programs to promote early college awareness by creating a logical next option for a cross section of diverse and differently capable students.

Contacts:

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Rick Holliday, Executive Director, Instructional Services, New Hanover County Schools

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Pamlico County Early College High School

Partners: Pamlico County Schools and Pamlico Community College

The school expects to serve a maximum of 100 students out of the existing 620 high school students in Pamlico County. Students at the school will have the opportunity for real world situations through job shadowing experiences, internships, apprenticeships, and service learning projects. In addition students will participate in an AVID (Advancement via individual Determination) course that will focus on student success.

Contacts:

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College Bound Central High School

Partners: Pender County Schools and Cape Fear Community College

College Bound Central High School will serve approximately 80 students in grades 9-12. Students will participate in work based learning experiences to enhance their coursework. In addition, high school and community college faculty will participate together in embedded professional development that focuses on student success.

Contacts:

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Pitt County Early College High School for Leadership, Literacy, and Technology

Partners: Pitt County Schools, East Carolina University, and Pitt Community College
The school is expecting a total enrollment of 400 students when fully implemented. The initial enrollment of 50 students will include both juniors and seniors. The high school faculty will integrate literacy in all content areas. In the fourth year students will participate in a capstone seminar, which will include an internship and a final portfolio presentation based on research and practical application of the student's internship experiences.

Contacts:

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Randolph County Schools Early College

Partners: Randolph County Schools and Randolph Community College
The school is expecting a total enrollment of 400 students when fully implemented. During the 2006-07 school year, the school will enroll approximately 40-60 ninth graders. Randolph County has a well established Student Support Services (SSS) program aimed at helping students be successful in secondary and post-secondary institutions. The SSS staff will serve as advisors to the Early College High School staff.

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Stanly Early College High School

Partners: Stanly County Schools and Stanly Community College

The school is expecting a total enrollment of 150 students when fully implemented. Initial enrollment will consist of a small student body of approximately 75-100 students. Each ninth grader will have an individual curriculum which outlines their steps to completion of an Associate Degree or two years of transferable college credit. Students will participate in project-based learning assessments, work based learning, and community service experiences.

Contacts:

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The Early College High School of Union County

Partners: Union County Public Schools and South Piedmont Community College

During the 2006-07 school year, the school will enroll both ninth and tenth grade students. The total enrollment level for each grade level will not exceed 100 students. Community partners will play an important role in students completing work-based learning in the form of job shadowing, internships, co-op work experiences, apprenticeships, and senior projects.

Contacts:

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Wake Learn and Earn Early College High School

Partners: Wake County Public Schools, Wake Technical Community College, and WakeMed

The school is expecting a total enrollment of 100-200 students when fully implemented. In addition, each year students will be enrolled in an “ACA” course designed to support study skills development for the secondary and post-secondary environments. The instructional staff will employ research-based student centered strategies daily in their instructional along with active learning (case studies, problem-based).

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RIGOR | RELEVANCE | RELATIONSHIPS

A VISION FOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA
THAT SUCCEED FOR ALL STUDENTS



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED

Life in the 21st century is very different than life 50 or even 25 years ago. Workers today need to be more educated and more skilled to earn enough to support a family. In 1950, only 40% of jobs required education or training beyond high school; now, more than 85% of our workforce needs to be educated beyond high school. Our economy depends on a labor force able to apply reasoning and problem-solving skills and able to adapt to different uses of technology.

HIGH SCHOOLS HAVE NOT KEPT PACE

High schools were designed for the world of a century ago. Today, they are not working as well as they must. North Carolina does not have the number of skilled graduates it needs. Only 6 out of every 10 North Carolina students graduate from high school within four years. Even graduates are not as prepared as they need to be. Half of those who enter college do not graduate. Sixty percent of employers rate students' basic skills as "fair" or "poor." Our high achieving students are not challenged. Fewer than one-quarter of college prep students say school work is "interesting" and only 19 of every 100 North Carolina students graduate with a bachelor's or associate's degree within 10 years of entering ninth grade.

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW APPROACH

High schools of today are obsolete. Making teachers and administrators work harder in the current structure will not prepare our students for realities of life in the 21st century. If we are going to help young people access the knowledge economy, our high schools must be able to respond to change. It is time for new approaches to high school. It is time to innovate.

Sponsors:

CISCO SYSTEMS | DUKE POWER | GLAXOSMITHKLINE | HENRY WURST, INC. | STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION | WACHOVIA

Collaborators:

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
NC Community College System
NC Department of Public Instruction
NC Education Cabinet
NC General Assembly
NC Independent Colleges and Universities
NC Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center

New Schools Project
Office of Governor Mike Easley
Public School Forum of North Carolina
SERVE
State Board of Education
The University of North Carolina System
Public and private agencies

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: THE URGENCY FOR CHANGE

pages 1-5

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES FOR INNOVATION

pages 6-11

CHAPTER 3: TAKING ACTION

pages 12-15



CHAPTER 1: THE URGENCY FOR CHANGE

WHAT DO STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEIR CURRENT HIGH SCHOOL?

HOW IS YOUR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL AFFECTING THE COMMUNITY?

WHAT HAPPENS TO CHILDREN WHO FAIL IN YOUR HIGH SCHOOL?

High schools have made real progress in the last century, moving from an institution serving very few to one striving to serve all students. In fact, high schools in North Carolina have many things of which we can be proud.

- North Carolina is ranked first in the country in the percentage of high school students taking advanced math—61%.¹
- 93% of our public high schools offer at least one Advanced Placement course.²
- North Carolina had the largest 10-year gain in SAT scores among states with over 50% of the population taking the SAT.³
- The achievement gap is narrowing in all areas.⁴

**A rapidly changing economy
requires more out
of our graduates and demands
more out of our public
schools.**

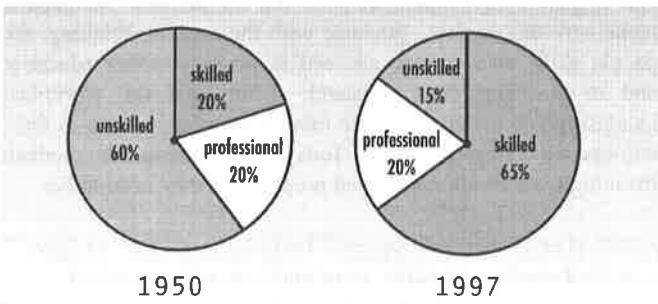
—Governor Mike Easley

WHY CHANGE

THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGING EXPECTATIONS

Consider this: the schools we have now were designed to prepare most students for a manufacturing or farming-based economy that relied on unskilled labor. Today, many of these jobs have gone overseas and will not return. In the past ten years alone, North Carolina has lost over a quarter of its manufacturing jobs.⁵ Even workers who remain in these jobs find it difficult to support a family.

THE CHANGING WORKFORCE



We are continuing to prepare some students for jobs that no longer exist and will not provide a family-supporting wage. Our high schools must adapt to the realities of a knowledge-based economy that requires more complex thinking and a higher level of skills than ever before.

In addition, high schools must prepare students to receive the post-secondary training they will need to compete. Six out of ten of the fastest growing occupations require post-secondary education or training.⁶

Our high schools must also equip students to operate in and make sense of a world where information can travel around the globe in seconds—a world where cultural and geographic barriers are becoming ever smaller. North Carolina itself is becoming much more diverse.

North Carolina is currently facing a shortage of high quality teachers and administrators. To attract and retain quality people, we must create an environment that values and supports what they do. The environment must support ongoing learning and treat teachers and administrators as the professionals they are. This is particularly necessary and challenging at the high school level where teachers are less satisfied than their counterparts in elementary and middle schools.⁷

THE CHALLENGES OF MEETING ALL STUDENTS' NEEDS

Despite North Carolina's successes, our high schools face many challenges today: too few students are graduating; too many students graduate unprepared for college or work; too many students are not engaged in and excited about learning; and too many educators leave for work settings that are more satisfying.

North Carolina is committed to ensuring that 100% of its students graduate from high school.

4-year Graduation Rates in North Carolina:¹

African-American-55%
Hispanic/Latino-38%
White-68%



HIGH SCHOOL WAS ABOUT BEING ABLE TO BUBBLE IN THE RIGHT ANSWER ON THE END OF GRADE TESTS AND I WAS FRUSTRATED WITH THAT BECAUSE I LIKE TO LEARN. I HAVEN'T BEEN TAUGHT TO EXCEL AS MUCH AS I KNOW I CAN...

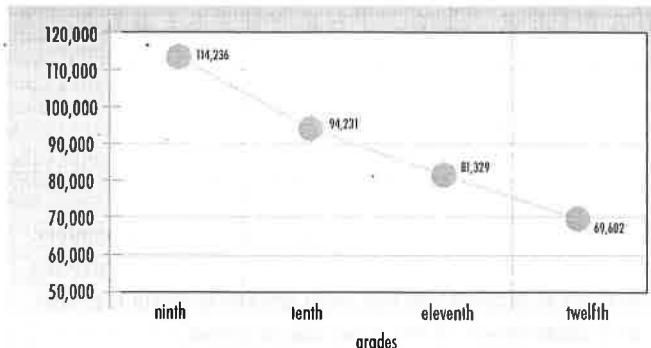
I wish high school had been more about learning how to think.

IT SEEMS TO ME THAT LEARNING SHOULD BE MORE ABOUT HOW TO THINK ABOUT CRITICAL PROBLEMS AND HOW TO SOLVE THINGS IN LIFE THAN LEARNING HOW TO MEMORIZE AND HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE ON THE TEST.

-MARJORIE

“ ”

HIGH SCHOOL: ATTRITION IN NORTH CAROLINA²



Too many students do not complete high school.

This chart shows the decrease in enrollment at each grade level from 9th grade to 12th in North Carolina. Alarmingly, some 45,000 students drop out over the course of four years. That is the size of the entire student population of the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools.

Too many students are not engaged in school.

High schools appear to work for many students. Talk to many of your successful students, however, and they describe “doing school,” not engaging in learning.³ **Successful students know how to play by the rules and they do it well; however, the high school experience could be so much more meaningful for these students.**

- Fewer than one-third of high school students enrolled in college prep programs said that school work is often or always meaningful.
- Only 23% of college-prep students said that most courses were “quite interesting” or “very interesting.”⁴

Too many students who graduate are not prepared for the next step.

Just improving graduation rates is not the answer. We need to make sure that students graduate with the content, thinking, and people skills necessary to succeed in post-secondary education and in the workforce. Research shows that the workplace increasingly demands the same minimum competencies as those required for college admission. Today, even students who graduate from high school are not as well prepared as they need to be:

- 60% of employers rate students’ basic skills as “fair” or “poor”¹²
- 36% of students graduate from high school unqualified or marginally qualified to go to college¹³
- 53% of students took at least one remedial course during their college careers.¹⁴
- Only 58% of UNC System students complete a bachelor’s degree within six years of their freshman year.¹⁵
- Remedial training in reading, writing and mathematics to a single state’s employers costs an estimated \$40 million a year.¹⁶

WHY EVERYONE SHOULD CARE

"Public education supports a more vital commonwealth by ensuring not only a healthy supply of smart entrepreneurs and productive workers, but also knowledgeable voters and active community members who have worked and learned with a variety of people. Strong public education is an essential asset for both individuals and communities."²³

- **Economic Development:** Research shows that education enhances economic productivity. Quality public schools can help make states and localities more economically competitive.²⁴
- **Crime and Prison Costs:** Dropouts are much more likely to go to prison. Sixty eight percent of state prison inmates had not completed high school.²⁵ Sixteen percent of all male high school dropouts aged 18-24 are in prison, in jail or on parole. For African-American males, the percentage is 30%.²⁶
- **Lost Income:** College graduates earn over twice as much as high school dropouts. This means over a productive working lifetime, the average college graduate earns an estimated \$800,000²⁷ more and contributes an estimated \$74,000²⁸ more in taxes to North Carolina coffers.
- **Higher Costs for Health Care:** The lower the level of education, the sicker people are, regardless of their race or income level.²⁹

Too many students do not continue on to graduate from college—the new minimum credential for many careers.³⁰

NORTH CAROLINA EDUCATION PIPELINE

	In North Carolina, for every 100 ninth grade students...
	...60 students graduate from high school four years later.
	...41 students immediately enter college.
	...29 students are still enrolled in their second year.
	...19 students graduate with either an associate's degree within three years or a bachelor's degree within six years.

MEETING THESE CHALLENGES – LESSONS LEARNED FROM RESEARCH

National studies and high school reform efforts have examined how to improve the preparation and learning experiences of high school students. Many of these efforts center on the ideas of "Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships." For example, the National Research Council found that schools help students learn by:

- Rigor: providing "challenging instruction and support for meeting high standards;"
- Relevance: providing "choices for students and making curriculum and instruction relevant to adolescents' experiences, cultures, and long-term goals;" and
- Relationships: promoting "a sense of belonging by personalizing instruction, showing an interest in students' lives, and creating a supportive, caring social environment."³¹



STANDARDS

Participation in a rigorous curriculum is one of the best indicators of success in college and the workplace. Many of our high schools provide too many students with a watered-down curriculum that is not challenging or meaningful. A rigorous high school experience ensures that every student is well-prepared for college and work. In fact, a strong, rigorous academic experience can substantially reduce the gap that currently exists in college graduation rates between white and minority students.²⁹ Increasing standards by itself, however, is not enough. Students must also get the support necessary to reach those standards.³⁰

North Carolina is committed to creating high schools that support Rigor: ensuring that **all** students—not some—are expected to attain high standards for learning that provide them with the preparation they need to succeed in college, career, and community.

RELEVANCE

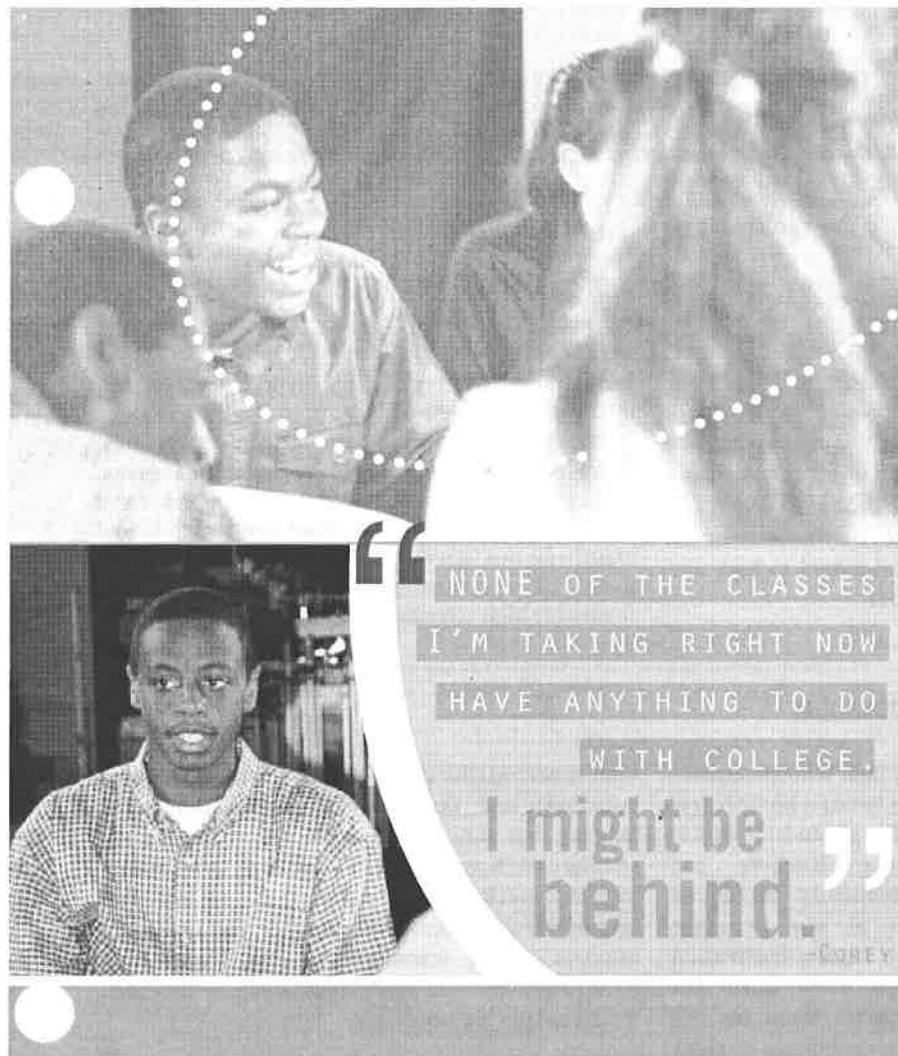
The American Diploma Project (2004), a national effort to reconsider standards for high school graduation, found that the high school curriculum must be tied to “the standards of the real world: to the knowledge and skills that colleges and employers actually expect if young people are to succeed in their institutions.” When students are able to see the future and understand how their school work links to what they will do, they perform better.³¹

North Carolina is committed to creating high schools that build in Relevance: ensuring that every student participates in and masters meaningful learning that is tied to their personal experiences, connected to the world of adult work, and linked across subject-areas.

RELATIONSHIPS

Students perform better when they are in schools where they have a personal relationship with a caring adult. The Breaking Ranks report of the National Association of Secondary School Principals highlights the key role of personalized school settings: “These supportive relationships personalize the educational experience and help identify early warning signs of student trouble—both academic and personal.”³²

North Carolina is committed to creating high schools that are intentionally designed to strengthen Relationships: ensuring that every student is known, valued, and able to contribute.



NONE OF THE CLASSES
I'M TAKING RIGHT NOW
HAVE ANYTHING TO DO
WITH COLLEGE.

I might be
behind. —CORY

SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES

for Teachers and Principals and Students

Ask successful schools what they have done to improve student learning and the key responses are "Teachers have been empowered" and "Parents are meaningfully involved."³⁰ Everyone is involved in examining how the school is doing, developing plans, testing them out, and revising them if needed. Teachers and administrators also have opportunities to continue learning.

Our teachers and administrators need help to make things better. They don't need to work longer hours implementing more programs. The key is also putting structures in place that make it easier for teachers to implement their ideas. Teachers need structures that provide time for professional development — time for teachers and administrators to learn and improve their practice. Schools must reduce the number of students each teacher sees, making it easier for teachers to know their students. Effective school structures provide time for planning and professional learning, helping teachers focus on the key issues of instruction. Schools need structures that provide resources and technical assistance to teachers and principals to support them in making these changes.

North Carolina is committed to creating high schools
that support and encourage teachers and
principals in this important work.

WHAT THE STATE IS DOING

The proposed changes listed on pages xx are changes for the district and school level. These changes need to be supported by state policies and procedures. The State Board of Education is committed to developing and implementing policies that support the actions of schools and districts. In addition, for the first time, our state is adopting a consensus approach toward the need for high school reform and innovation.

• Governor Easley's Education First Task Force

Established in May, 2001, the Task Force was given two charges: first, ensuring that all North Carolina students graduate with the skills and education necessary to succeed at a 2- or 4-year college or university, in the job market, or the military; and second, creating a school system that is not just "sound and basic" but superior and innovative.

• Senate Bill 656, Innovative Education Initiatives Act

Adopted in June 2003, this act authorized the NC Education Cabinet, a committee of the Governor that includes the chief executives of the major education sectors in the state, to support innovative programs at the high school level. It also authorized local school boards and community colleges to establish cooperative, innovative programs such as early and middle college high schools.

• New Schools Project

Created in part by an \$11 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the New Schools Project is supporting bold new high school designs by assisting with the planning and implementation of small, autonomous, focused high schools with support structures for students and improved curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

• Learn and Earn Initiative

Launched in September 2004 by Governor Mike Easley, Learn and Earn supports the creation of early and middle college high schools which are typically located on college or university campuses. Students in early college high schools earn both a high school diploma and an associate's degree or two years of credit transferable toward a four year degree. These schools serve a diverse population of learners from students below grade level to those who may be academically advanced.

• State Board Policy Revisions

The State Board of Education has established a subcommittee to advance high school innovation in North Carolina. Another new ad hoc committee established by the Board is addressing policies on academic rigor.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES FOR INNOVATION

WHAT IMMEDIATE CHANGES CAN BE MADE IN HIGH SCHOOLS TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS?

WHAT LONGER-TERM STRATEGIES ARE AVAILABLE TO REDESIGN HIGH SCHOOLS?

Even with major economic shifts and calls for change by students, teachers and the business community, redesigning the high school experience so that it serves all students well is difficult. In many communities high schools are central to social and civic life. The smallest changes may be an issue for those who count on their local school to look and feel much the way it always has.

Increasing and improving the rigor, relevance, and relationships in high school for all students requires strategies suited to the local school and its community. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach that works. Some schools have already begun comprehensive redesign work to provide students with a high school experience that is a dramatic break from the past. In many other communities, the discussion about improving high schools is just beginning.

IMPROVING YOUR HIGH SCHOOL TODAY

The urgency for change in our high schools requires that short-term strategies be undertaken immediately to improve academic results for all students and to improve satisfaction among teachers and administrators. **Even academically advanced students, who often serve as our proudest examples of success, too often express frustration that the high school experience does not adequately challenge or prepare them for the world of adult work or the independence or rigor of college.** Changes at every level will be required to make high school a successful experience for all students.

As schools begin thinking about changes they can make, it is important to realize that changes must be

both structural (the size of the school, its governance structure) and instructional (the teaching and learning that goes on in the classroom). Changes in structure, such as changes in scheduling, are unlikely to make much difference if they do not result in improvement in instruction. In order to dramatically improve student learning, changes in instruction need to be supported by changes in school structure. Both changes are necessary.

Schools, districts and communities across the country are finding structural and instructional ways to make high schools better for their students. Pages 7 - 9 in sections titled Rigor, Relevance, Relationships, and Supportive Structures, list some of the strategies they are using.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES ADVANCE HIGH SCHOOL REDESIGN

- The culture of the school supports collaboration among all teachers.
- Teachers provide significant leadership in reform efforts.
- Teachers regularly work in teams to ensure that all students learn by asking these critical questions: *What do we want each student to learn? How will we know when each student has learned it? How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning?*¹⁹
- Teams of teachers regularly examine student work and refine assignments.
- School schedules support time each week for teachers to work together to plan integrated lessons, to evaluate student needs and to reflect on successes and areas for improvement.
- The focus of collaboration is results. Teachers judge the effectiveness of their work by student achievement. Working together to improve student learning is the regular work of everyone in the school.²⁰

R I G O R

Creating a high school where all students are expected to attain high standards for learning that provide them with the preparation they need to succeed in college, career, and community.

- **Examine Student Work:** Look at the actual work students do in school and for homework. Are they asked to engage in critical thinking or are they just asked to memorize facts? Do they work with and make sense of information or just remember it? Structure assignments that require students to demonstrate a depth of understanding and an ability to use information.
- **End Tracking:** Examine the courses in your school. Are there any that enroll mostly poor children? Consider getting rid of these courses. Do students in your school have to opt into a college bound curriculum? Some schools require that all their students take honors or Advanced Placement courses. Eliminating lower level courses, such as general math, requires changes in the middle school and additional instructional time and academic supports for students who have been traditionally directed toward less demanding courses. For example, high school and middle school teachers should meet to identify decisions that sort children into lower level courses and develop strategies to eliminate this option.
- **Enhance Advanced Placement Courses:** Consider students enrolled in Advanced Placement courses. What student groups are underrepresented in these courses? How many of them actually pass the AP examination? Consider professional development for teachers in these courses and gauge the success of these classes by student performance.
- **Differentiate Instruction:** Students in high school have a wide range of learning needs and styles and are at varied levels of readiness. The elimination of patterns of tracking and sorting students requires schools to vary instruction, the learning environment, and the assessments to ensure that every child can learn.
- **Increase Graduation Requirements:** Examine your graduation requirements. The state requires a minimum set of standards but local districts can add to those. What should students know and be able to do when they graduate from high school? How many of our students are prepared for college? How many of them are successful when they get there?
- **Expand Dual Enrollment:** More than one quarter of high school students enroll in at least one college course during high school. How many opportunities do students in your school have to do college level work? Which students take advantage of these opportunities? Encourage students to enroll in courses that will provide them with high school credits as well as college credit toward a two-or-four year degree.
- **Ensure Rigor in all Courses:** Many successful schools implement intensive writing programs in every course, especially those technical and vocational courses that provide rich connections to the world of work. These efforts serve to develop connections between curricula and prepare students to undertake the types of projects and research they would do in the world of work.
- **Support Teacher Learning:** The research is clear: teachers who know their content areas have students with higher achievement. Some districts provide financial incentives for teachers who enroll in master's degree programs to deepen understanding of their content area. Others support teachers who pursue dual certification because it provides flexibility for integrated instruction. North Carolina pays for teachers to apply for National Board certification. Investigate how many teachers have advanced certifications or degrees. Consider how these strategies support teacher flexibility in providing instruction in non-traditional ways.
- **Ask your students:**
 - Do you feel challenged in all of your classes?
 - Do you know what standards you are expected to meet?
 - Do you receive the support you need to meet high standards?
 - Are you required to use critical thinking and problem-solving in all of your classes?

R E L E V A N C E

Creating high schools where every student participates in and masters meaningful learning tied to their personal experiences, connected to the world of adult work, and linked across subject areas.

- **Encourage Active Learning:** Give students an opportunity to apply what they have learned to a large, comprehensive integrated project such as a senior project. Many high schools begin requiring that students complete multiple projects that build upon course content in the core subject areas beginning with the ninth grade.
- **Integrate Curriculum:** Break away from the delivery of separate courses in ways that are disconnected and ask that teachers use themes, projects or collaborative learning to engage students in ways that build upon or connect core academic subjects. This requires that teachers in the core subjects begin to collaborate in the development of curriculum and lesson plans. In some schools, schedules are modified to allow time for teachers to collaborate on integrated lessons. Others provide stipends for teachers to collaborate over the summer.



- **Make Connections:** Strengthen the connection between career and technical courses and the core academic courses. For example, ask the physics teacher and the engineering teacher to work together to design a shared assignment building rockets to test principles of acceleration and trajectory.
- **Link Academics to Life:** Revisit the instruction in academic courses and ensure students have the opportunity to apply and create meaning to the world of adult work. How do algebra teachers, for example, show the importance of algebra in the real world? Provide students the opportunity to learn and share in student conferences and panel discussions. Students asked to work in a team and apply content knowledge and skill in order to create something new or solve a problem are more likely to become engaged in meaningful learning.
- **Provide Work-Based Experience:** Consider opportunities for students at all levels to participate in job shadowing and other work-based experiences that will illustrate the application of learning to the world of adult work. Teachers that tie these experiences directly to classroom instruction are able to help students make relevant connections to the curriculum.

EDUCATION

Creating a high school where every student is known, valued, and able to contribute.

- **Enhance Student Support:** Raising standards without changing instruction and support for students will likely result in greater frustration and higher dropout rates. Consider creating special “advisories” that will provide adult mentors for small groups of students to serve as academic coaches and mentors. Other strategies include tutoring and specific programs that help students learn skills to succeed in school.
- **Engineer Personalization:** Form a workgroup in your school to create structural conditions that promote formal and informal opportunities for teacher-student interaction and contact. One creative school placed student lockers in the teacher workroom so that day-to-day interaction would complement other strategies. Another school puts its study lab in the teacher’s office so that students have access to extra help.
- **Adopt Looping:** Have teachers teach the same class of students for multiple years (a process known as “looping”). In this way, relationships can build over time and teachers are given the opportunity to more fully understand the learning styles and needs of each student.

- **Deepen Assessment:** Assessment is a key part of instruction. When used appropriately, it can help teachers understand how and what to teach their students. Consider adding a variety of approaches to assess student knowledge and to foster stronger communication skills, problem solving ability and self confidence. For example, ask students to create presentations as individuals or in teams to demonstrate mastery of a unit.

- **Use Technology:** Incorporate computers and the use of the internet as tools for student research, communication, organization, and presentation.

- **Ask your students:**

- Do you understand why you are learning what you are learning?
- Do your courses help prepare you for your future life?
- Do you feel that what you are learning and doing in school is important?
- Do you understand how the knowledge and skills you are learning in school are used by adults in the community?

PS

- **Create Advisories:** Every staff member advises a group of students for their entire tenure at the school. Incorporate time in the schedule and create opportunities for every student to develop a strong relationship with an adult in the school.

- **Create Academies:** Create smaller learning communities within your school. Some schools are choosing to implement “academies” centered on specific populations such as freshmen or on specific interests, such as technology. These academies minimize the number of transitions a student experiences during high school by designing smaller learning communities without repeating the sorting and selecting patterns found in the traditional high school. Some schools have created academies as an intermediary step to the creation of small, autonomous schools that operate on the same campus.

- **Ask your students:**

- Do you have a good relationship with at least one adult in this school?
- Do your teachers know who you are and care about you?
- If you have concerns or problems, is there an adult you can turn to?
- Is it possible for students to be anonymous in this setting?

SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES

Creating a high school that supports teachers and administrators in this important and challenging work.

- **Build in Professional Development:** Quality professional development responds to the needs of teachers, is focused on student learning, and is not a one-shot deal. Make professional development a part of the weekly routine for the school. Identify time in the schedule devoted to collaborative planning, examination of student work, setting standards, and group study. This routine helps create powerful professional learning communities that support improved practice and student achievement.
- **Create Flexible Scheduling:** The ability of teachers to incorporate many of these recommendations requires a more creative use of time. For example, time for teachers to collaborate may require common planning periods.
- **Center on Students:** Make decisions based on whether they are good for students. How will this activity/policy/procedure help students? Rethink decisions based upon the answer to this question.
- **Share Governance:** Establish a governance committee composed of teachers, students, and parents. Use this governance committee to determine priorities of the

school based on real data—attendance rates, suspension rates, achievement, course enrollment data.

- **Free Teachers:** As a school and as a district, examine the paperwork you require teachers to do or the extra assignments you ask them to complete. Are there any that can be eliminated? Are there tasks (such as lunch or bus duty) that could be given to volunteers or paid individuals?
- **Improve Student Contacts:** Reduce the number of students a teacher sees in a day. This can be done by reducing class sizes or implementing block scheduling. Consider how many adults in the building carry no teaching loads. Can any positions be converted to teaching positions? Reducing the number of students a teacher sees is not easy and will require some tough choices about allocation of resources.
- **Ask both your students and school staff:**
 - Are you involved in making school decisions?
 - Does the design of the school support professional growth?
 - Do you feel ownership in this school?
 - Are you able to do the learning and teaching you want to do?

RETHINKING HIGH SCHOOL

The strategies listed in the previous section allow for changes within the current high school system that will get better results for many students. Some high schools across North Carolina and the country already use these strategies and they are seeing gains in test scores and student satisfaction. At some point, however, the very design of a comprehensive high school gets in the way of real innovation.

The current system of high school was not designed to serve students as individuals; it was designed to serve large groups of students who moved through the same courses at the same time. Consider, for example, a teacher who assesses students by asking them to create portfolios that incorporate in-class and work-based learning experiences every quarter. How will that teacher be able to conference individually with each student, make suggestions on drafts, push the student's thinking and grade their work if the school schedule means that she must teach 150 students a day? In a system that makes it possible for a student to have more than thirty different teachers in his high school career, is it realistic to expect that any of those teachers will know that student well? Attempts to make high school more rigorous, relevant and relationship-based run into barriers that are presented by the very structure of the institution itself.

Beyond Academics

With the leadership of the State Board of Education and the NC Education Cabinet, North Carolina has embarked on a bold attempt to rethink the meaning of high school with the ultimate goal of creating meaningful options for students, teachers and communities. They are seeking to create safer and more welcoming schools for students.

Many administrators in traditional high schools are working longer hours than ever before to get better results with students. The same is true for teachers. Educators across the state are working hard only to find that their efforts to improve student learning are blocked by many of the obsolete structures of high school. For example, an English and History teacher who want to work together to coordinate instruction and comprehensive research projects may find their way hampered by antiquated notions of scheduling. Some North Carolina schools recognize that the current comprehensive high school model is a barrier and they are working creatively to redesign their own schools.

Below are some schools that represent a rethinking and a redesign of the traditional structural and instructional aspects of high school. Remember: the goal of redesigning high schools is to create environments that support high quality learning for everyone. Therefore, schools should use the structural changes to make comprehensive improvement in instruction.

START UP HIGH SCHOOLS

Start up schools are new, autonomous high schools that often open in non-traditional locations such as college campuses and that often have a specific focus.

Clement Early College High School (Durham, NC)

Key redesign features include:

- Location on a university campus.
- Groups mixed by ability level, grade level, and age.
- Extensive outreach to middle grades to prepare students for high-level work.
- Intensive support to meet high standards.
- Enrollment in both high school and college-level courses.
- High school students will graduate with a high school diploma and two years of university credit at no cost to the students.

New Tech High (Napa, CA)

New Technology High School started as a small school in California that is now replicating its model across the country, including North Carolina. New Tech High is a “high-tech, high-touch learning environment.” Key instructional and structural features include:

- A focus on technology, which is integrated into every class.
- A personalized learning environment, including an individual learning plan, and a structured advisor relationship.
- Learning centered around the creation of large-scale projects.
- Performance assessments: Students create digital portfolios to display their work. They also hold public exhibitions to demonstrate what they have learned.
- Internships that provide real-world experiences for the students.

Other Examples

For more examples of innovative start up schools from around the country, see the following resources:

- **Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Schools**
<http://www.elob.org/>
- **Minnesota EdVisions Schools**
http://www.edvisions.com/html/edvisions_schools.html
- **The Big Picture Company**
<http://www.bigspicture.org>

CONVERSION HIGH SCHOOLS

Conversion high schools are those that currently exist as traditional comprehensive high schools, but then undergo an intense planning process that breaks the large school down into several small, fully autonomous schools in the same space. Below are a few examples of schools planning or implementing full conversions.

Scotland High School (Laurinburg, NC)

Scotland High School's conversion started with the plan for one new small health science themed school within the existing high school. That health science school will open in the fall of 2005. While planning the health science school, educators recognized that they wanted to provide a more engaging, supportive environment for all Scotland High students. Now, Scotland High School is planning to convert the entire building to a series of small schools over the next three years. Recently, the Scotland County School Board approved the high school's conversion plan.

Julia Richman Education Complex (New York, NY)

Originally a large, failing high school in New York City that served 3,000 students and had a 33% graduation rate, Julia Richman High School was transformed into six autonomous small schools—four high schools, an elementary school, and a middle school for autistic youngsters—and a day care center, now called the Julia Richman Education Complex. All of those schools now exist in the same building that originally housed the large, failing high school and the high schools serve the same students who would have been assigned to the old school. Graduation rates almost doubled and student achievement dramatically increased.

With examples like the Julia Richman Education Complex, New York City has committed to large-scale redesign of its high schools. More than 200 new small high schools are being planned and opened in the next few years, many of which are conversion schools (many small schools in one formerly large school building) like Julia Richman. For more information about one of the schools, Urban Academy, see: <http://whatkidsando.org/portfoliosmallschools/urban/urbanintro.html>

Examples in other sites include:

- **Chicago:** There are now 21 fully autonomous small high schools in Chicago, with more being planned. See: <http://smallschools.cps.k12.il.us>
- **Sacramento:** In 2001, Sacramento Unified School District began work to create dramatic change in all of its high schools. Now, all 13,000 high school students in that district attend small, redesigned high schools. See: <http://www.studentsfirst.info/>

KEY FEATURES OF REDESIGNED HIGH SCHOOLS

RIGOR

- All educators have high standards and expectations for all students.
- Every student masters demanding academics.
- With few exceptions, all students are on-track for college-level work.
- Clear systems of support are designed to help all students meet those high standards.

RELEVANCE

- A student's academic experiences have strong connections to the world outside of school.
- Instruction varies according to student interests and needs.
- Courses in different subject areas are tied together in new ways to help students make sense of learning.

RELATIONSHIPS

- Structures are designed to support strong, positive teacher-student and student-student relationships.
- Every teacher in the school knows every student and each teacher knows some students very well.

SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURES

- Learning community. Ongoing professional development for teachers focuses on improving student learning.
- Small size. Schools are no more than 400 students.
- Autonomy. Schools have the authority to make decisions over vision, budget, instructional practices, staffing, space, and scheduling.
- Decision-Making. Democratic governance structures empower teachers, students, and parents.

RIGOR • RELEVANCE • RELATIONSHIPS





CHAPTER 3: TAKING ACTION

WHAT STEPS CAN EDUCATORS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TAKE TO ADDRESS THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN HIGH SCHOOLS?

HOW CAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS IDENTIFY CONSENSUS FOR CHANGE?

Most teachers and parents graduated from high schools that look just like the schools that students attend today. Therefore, creating high schools that serve all students and teachers well requires more than mandates or programs. Trust, confidence, and shared understanding are essential ingredients toward making immediate changes as well as laying the foundation for new types of schools, schools that—by design—support rigor, relevance and relationships for all students and teachers.

The North Carolina Action Plan for High School Innovation calls for teachers, administrators, parents, community members, and students to take immediate steps to: 1) Understand the urgency for change; 2) Identify promising short-and-long-term strategies; and 3) Create a local action plan that will broadly engage the community and their schools.

Below are suggested steps. However, each community is unique and these suggestions may serve as guidelines for an approach that suits local needs and interests:

STEP ONE: CONVENE

Identify a group of friends, colleagues, neighbors, or partners to work together. The group can be as small as a few teachers within a school or as broad as an entire community. For larger school-community partnerships, review the guiding principles included here about "Authentic Community Engagement". Consider including school administrators, teachers,

parents, students, local school board members, local government officials, local businesses, churches, and other organizations that are affected by the current high school. Larger school-community partnerships may wish to conduct hearings and discussion groups throughout the community to create a local Action Plan.

STEP TWO: LEARN

Begin with studying this workbook including reviewing the companion DVD/video. (A link to the video can also be found at www.NewSchoolsProject.org). Complete the "School Data Profile" below to compare results from your local high school with the state. Most of this information can be found on your school's report card at www.ncreportcards.org. Discuss the meaning of these findings. Secure copies of the reports and documents included in the "Resource Guide" that follows. Many of these materials are available on the Internet and the addresses are included. Ask students, recent graduates, dropouts,

teachers and parents to respond to important questions such as:

- What is your experience in high school?
- How did high school prepare you for college? For work? For adulthood?
- How does the school facilitate teaching? In your high school, can teachers realistically meet the needs of each student?
- How does the school support connections with parents? With businesses?
- What changes would you suggest?



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Listen to Students/Graduates:

Bring together a group of current and former students. Ask these questions:

- Are you challenged in school?
- Do people care about you at school?
- What you are learning and why?
- What do you need in order to learn and meet your goals?
- How does high school prepare you for college or a job?

Listen to Business/Community:

Repeat the process with a group of business owners and community members. Ask them these questions:

- What skills do your employees need?
- How many of our high school or college graduates have these skills?
- What does high school need to do to prepare students for life?

Listen to Parents/Guardians:

Bring together a group of parents and guardians of students of different ages. Ask them these questions:

- What do you want for your child?
- What should we expect from young people when they leave high school?
- Are high schools preparing students to meet those expectations? If not, what do they need to do?
- When you think about the high schools in your community, what are your impressions? What's going well? What challenges do they face?

Listen to Teachers/Staff:

Bring together a group of teachers/staff. Ask them these questions:

- When you entered the profession, why did you want to work in high schools?
- How does this school meet your needs?

- What gets in the way of your doing your best work with students?

Review Data:

Looking at data provides one important way to understand a school's successes and needs for improvement. Convene a group interested in looking at available data from the schools in the district. Common measures to consider: percentage of fully licensed teachers, percentage of teachers with advanced degrees, teacher turnover rate, percentage of students scoring at or above grade level on EOCs, graduation rate by cohort. Much of this information can be found at: www.nereportcards.org.

Look at the Yearbook:

Take a high school yearbook from this year and one from four years ago. Try to match the pictures of students in ninth grade four years ago with the pictures of this year's graduating class. For every ninth grade student not present in this year's senior class, mark a red X. What happened to these students?

Consider Who is Known:

Take a list of names of all the students in the school. Ask teachers to stick a dot next to the names of the students they know well. Look for patterns. How many students are not known by any adult in the school? How can that be changed?

Shadow Students:

Ask adults to follow a student through an entire school day. Stay with that student during every class, passing period, lunch and after-school activity. Make notes about how coherent or fragmented the day feels. How is time used? How engaged are students in learning? What works and what doesn't?

STEP THREE: PLAN

Discuss the need for changes in your high school including: 1) short-term strategies that can be put in place immediately and; 2) longer term changes that may require more thought. Create a vision for your high school. Consider how the new vision can serve to align public and private funds and leadership with new approaches.

Consider what ongoing feedback and data will be used to refine the Plan in the future. In general, schools find it most useful to engage in this process using an established framework. Examples of these frameworks include: High Schools That Work, Coalition for Essential Schools, and Talent Development High Schools.

STEP FOUR: ACT

Move the plan forward. Continue to assess how well participants understand the need for change and the proposed direction. Continue to solicit input from teachers, administrators and the community. Fostering greater understanding and ownership never ends, especially when

a plan is moved toward implementation. Expect that some people will step forward and resist the very change for which they advocated because high school reform ultimately rests with changing the roles and expectations of adults. Change is often inconvenient and frustrating.

STEP FIVE: SOLICIT FEEDBACK AND REFINEMENT

In complex organizations like high schools, few changes will be entirely perfect at the beginning. Ongoing monitoring of results and feedback from students, teachers, parents and community members will be required. Ensure

that "Step Three: Plan" includes a strategy for how changes will be monitored and refined. What school and student data will be collected and reviewed?

10 PRINCIPLES OF AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- 1. Involve all sectors of the community.** Important stakeholders come from all segments of the community, including parents, teachers, students, neighbors, businesses, community-based and faith-based organizations, and others. Schools perform best when all stakeholders are involved.
- 2. Asks the community to engage on important questions and acknowledges their views and contributions.** Authentic community engagement is not about getting a community to "buy-in" to a decision that has already been made. It is about soliciting community input to inform local decision-making.
- 3. Involves the community early in the process.** In order for community members to provide input and become educated on the subject of hand, they should be involved early in the planning process.
- 4. Connects with and influences official decisions.** Authentic community engagement is not about making community members feel that they are part of the decision making process; it actually involves them.
- 5. Offers opportunities for people to gather at convenient and comfortable locations and at a variety of convenient times.** Community meetings should not be held solely at schools. There are numerous places where community members are already accustomed to gathering. Potential spaces include a favorite local restaurant, church, or community member's home.
- 6. Consists of more than one meeting.** While opinions can be developed quickly, it takes time over multiple meetings to form judgments that are based on a community's values system and a solid understanding of the relevant information.
- 7. It is not agenda driven and is instead driven by aspirations communities have for their future.** Rather than centering on other's ideas about what will be important to the community, the planning process should be informed by a community's values and aspirations.
- 8. Has a learning component that helps build community awareness and knowledge around the subject at hand.** Communities can make better decisions if they have access to current research and local information.
- 9. Allows time in the process to make informed judgments.** Time between meetings is critical to digesting previous discussions and information in order to inform future discussions and decisions.
- 10. Allows for sustained involvement by community stakeholders.** Authentic community engagement encourages stakeholders to remain involved in the implementation of decisions and in future school issues.

Used by permission, Knowledge Works Foundation, 2003.

SCHOOL DATA PROFILE

Discussing the results being realized by your high school is one way of understanding the need for change. Consider meeting with groups of teachers and community members to discuss these measures and others. Most of this information can be found on your school's report card at www.ncreportcards.org.

MEASURE	OUR HIGH SCHOOL	OUR DISTRICT	NORTH CAROLINA (2002-2003)
Students enrolled in 9th grade			262 (average)
Students enrolled in 12th grade			162 (average)
4-Year Graduation Rate*			63%
Pass rates on End-of-Course Tests by Group			
White			80.1%
Black			51.0%
Hispanic			59.9%
Amer. Indian			59.9%
Asian			77.3%
Students with disabilities			41.8%
Limited English Proficient			46.5%
Number of Out-of-School Suspensions and Expulsions*			288,191 or 11%
Average Daily Attendance*			95%
Percentage of classes taught by "Highly Qualified" Teachers*			87%
Teacher Turnover Rate			16%
Percentage of entering students taking one or more remedial courses in a UNC System school ^b			9.5%
Percentage of entering students taking one or more remedial courses in a NC community college ^c			49%
Other data of interest to your school			

^a Take the number of graduating seniors from this year and divide it by the number of entering freshman four years ago. This will give you a more accurate graduation rate than the one on the report card.

^b Greene, Jay P. (2002). *High School Graduation Rates in the United States*. New York: Manhattan Institute for Policy Research.

^c These are totals for all levels of schools in North Carolina. State-level data show that one out of every nine public school students is suspended at least once during the school year, resulting in over a million days of lost time.

<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/evaluation/legislative/FinalReport2002-03.pdf>

* As you begin investigating your school in more depth, you will likely want to examine this information by different sub-groups. You will also want to consider enrollment in different classes by sub-group. Are certain students being tracked into certain classes?

^d University of North Carolina System, 2002.

^e North Carolina College Tech Prep Data Summary, 2001.

ENDNOTES

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¹⁸ Weiss, J.D. (2004). *Public Schools and the Economic Development: What the Research Shows*. Cincinnati, OH: KnowledgeWorks Foundation.

¹⁹ Bureau of Justice (2003). Education and Correctional Populations. <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/ecp.htm>

²⁰ MDC, 2004.

²¹ Weiss, 2004.

²² This was calculated based on a single filer with an average salary of \$18,900 compared to a single filer with an average of \$45,400 over a 40-year period. No deductions were included.

²³ NCESh, 2004.

²⁴ National Information Center for Higher Education Policymaking and Analysis. (2004). *Policy Alert Supplement: North Carolina's Educational Pipeline*. <http://www.higheredinfo.org/reports/pipeline/> Please note: research studies use slightly different approaches, which result in numbers that may be different by a couple of percentage points. The overall conclusions, however, remain the same.

²⁵ National Research Council, 2004.

²⁶ American Diploma Project, 2004.

²⁷ National Research Council, 2004.

²⁸ National Association of Secondary School Principals. (2004). *Breaking Ranks II: Strategies for Leading High School Reform*. Reston, VA: Author.

²⁹ National Association of Secondary School Principals. (2002). *What the Research Shows: Breaking Ranks in Action*. Reston, VA: Author.

³⁰ National Association of Secondary School Principals. (2004). *Breakthrough High Schools*. Reston, VA: Author.

³¹ DuFour, Richard (2004). What Is a "Professional Learning Community"? *Educational Leadership* 61(8), 6-11.

³² DuFour, 2004.

RESOURCES

American Diploma Project has established standards for high school students that are tied to the world of work and the world of college. <http://www.achieve.org/>

Breaking Ranks I and II: The National Association of Secondary School Principals undertook a comprehensive effort to reform secondary schools. Their recommendations are based in three key areas: (1) collaborative leadership, professional learning communities, and the strategic use of data; (2) personalizing the school environment; and (3) creating rigorous student-centered curriculum, instruction, and assessment. www.principals.org

Education Trust is particularly concerned with closing the achievement gap. <http://www2.edtrust.org>

Jobs for the Future supports research and projects concerned with ensuring that all young people have a quality high school and post-secondary education and that all adults have skills necessary to support a family: www.jff.org

National Middle College Consortium provides resources and support to Early and Middle College Programs, programs that are located on college campuses and provide college credit (Early College programs provide an Associate's degree or two years of transferable credit) to high school students. <http://www.laguardia.edu/nmcnc/default.htm>

The National High School Alliance: A partnership of over 40 organizations concerned with excellence, equity, and development of high-school aged youth, this group offers a good collection of resources and research. www.hsalliance.org

NC Consortium for Early College High Schools: Founded in 2004, this North Carolina-based organization provides support to Early College High Schools throughout the state. (www.newschoolsproject.org)

North Carolina New Schools Project: This statewide initiative, supported by Governor's Education Cabinet and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, supports the creation of small, autonomous, innovative high schools. www.newschoolsproject.org. Click on "resources."

Pathways to College Network is a national alliance of organizations committed to using research-based knowledge to improve postsecondary education access and success for the nation's many underserved students. See: <http://www.pathwaystocollege.net>

Rethinking High School is a book that describes the efforts of group in Chicago's public schools to create a new high school based on best practices in teaching and learning. Published by Heinemann.

To support the creation of small schools: The Small Schools Workshop www.smallschoolsworkshop.org and the Small Schools Project <http://smallschoolsproject.org/> both do research on and provide support to small schools initiatives.

The School Redesign Network has produced a study kit to support the redesign of large schools into small schools. There is a nominal fee for most of the kit but some of it can be accessed free of charge at: http://www.schoolredesign.net/srn/study_kit.php

For More Information:

North Carolina School Boards Association (www.ncsba.org) has a list of all local school boards with contact information. Your local school board sets the policy for your school district.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (www.ncpublicschools.org) offers an education directory listing all of the schools in North Carolina as well as the superintendents for every district. This is also the site for the State Board of Education.

School Report Cards: Every school has a report card that contains information on student achievement, discipline, dropouts, teachers, etc. These report cards can be found at www.ncreportcards.org.

WWW.NEWSCHOOLSPROJECT.ORG

*An initiative of the North Carolina Education Cabinet and the Public School Forum
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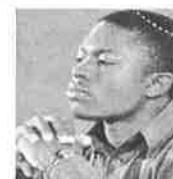
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Principals' Executive Program



A Report on NC 21st Century High Schools

September 9, 2005

Welcome to INNOVATOR, the bi-monthly report on 21st Century High Schools in NC from the NC 21st Century High School Initiative and the NC New Schools Project. INNOVATOR is designed to regularly inform practitioners, policy makers, and friends of public education about high school redesign in NC as well as success stories from across the nation.

J.F. Webb School of Health and Life Sciences Takes Shape



For Principal Julie Finch, the new school year brings with it the excitement and challenge of opening one of the state's first small, autonomous, and academically rigorous high schools on the campus of a conventional, large high school.

"We've come a long from where we started," said Finch. "This is not a career pathway school. We're committed to preparing every student for college."

Finch and a team of faculty from Granville County's J. F. Webb High School began work over a year ago to create the School of Health and Life Science that is currently serving 229 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. A similar school has also opened at South Granville High School, the district's other large conventional high school. "At first when we talked to our parents about whole school conversion at Webb, our parents thought it was just about preparations for careers. Now they love it. They know its about high standards for their children."

Finch attributes the early success of the new school to the support and guidance of Webb principal Roy Winslow and to the involvement of faculty at the school. Over the next five years, Principal Finch and her faculty will be involved with the NC New Schools Project in professional development focused on innovative approaches to teaching that engage students and in creating new supports for student success. For more information, contact Finch at finchj@gcs.k12.nc.us. For information about the South Granville School of Health and Life Sciences, contact Principal Catherine Brooks at brooksc@gcs.k12.nc.us.

NC Students Continue to Post Strong Gains on SAT Scores

During the 2004-05 school year, North Carolina's average SAT score continued to climb to 1010, an increase of 4 points from the previous year. North Carolina's SAT participation rate among high school seniors also continued to rise to 74.0%, an increase of 4 percentage points from the previous year. North Carolina students have always taken the SAT in impressively high numbers, and this year North Carolina had the 9th highest SAT participation rate among the 50 states (North Carolina is tied with Delaware). The national participation rate was 49.0%. The results were released last week by the College Board and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Some other results include

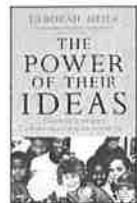
- NC has increased its average SAT score every year since 1990 with the exception of 1994 when the score remained the same.
- Since 1989, NC has had an average yearly SAT gain of 3.6 points, compared to a national average yearly gain of 1.3 points.
- Among states that have SAT participation rates of 50% or greater, NC had the 3rd largest 5-year gain in average SAT scores, and the 2nd largest (tied with Massachusetts) 10-year gain.
- Over one-third (36%) of NC students who took the SAT during the 2004-05 school year were what the College Board classifies as "first generation college-bound seniors" (neither parent has completed a degree higher than a high school diploma).

Rigorous High School Coursework Crucial for Postsecondary Success

A recent study by ACT confirmed that students who take rigorous high school coursework are much better prepared for postsecondary education. The report stated that nationally nearly one-third (28%) of freshmen entering a postsecondary institution enroll in one or more remedial courses in reading, writing or math, indicating that too many students are leaving high school unprepared for postsecondary education coursework. The study looked at why students who took the ACT were graduating unprepared. The study found that

- ACT test takers who took or planned to take all of the typical college preparatory course sequences (English 9 through 12; Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, and at least one other upper-level math course; and Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) were much better prepared for postsecondary coursework. Yet, only 35% of ACT test takers take all of these college preparatory course sequences.
- Some courses have "cross-disciplinary benefits." For instance, taking a foreign language increased achievement and the chance of success in college English.
- The study also stated that just taking the courses is not enough. The courses must be rigorous, with more in-depth study on key content areas and more alignment between the high school and college curriculums.

Recommended Read: *The Power of Their Ideas* by Deborah Meier



Deborah Meier lays out a clear defense of public education and why it is crucial to the future of our democratic way of life in *The Power of Their Ideas*. Meier founded and led the Central Park East Secondary School, a small school in East Harlem. The book “tells the story of this school and the vision of education behind it” so that the readers may see “a model in the sense of what is possible.” Meier writes

My own experiences over the past three decades have reinforced my optimism regarding the possibilities of making dramatic changes in the ways schools operate, changes that can transform the lives of children. All kids are indeed capable of generating powerful ideas; they can rise to the occasion. It turns out that ideas are not luxuries gained at the expense of the 3 R's [reading, writing, and arithmetic], but instead enhance them. And it turns out that public schools, in new and different forms, are the best vehicle for nourishing the extraordinary untapped capacities of all our children. The question is not, Is it possible to educate all children well? but rather, Do we want to do it badly enough?

The book is available at most online book stores. The ISBN number is 0807031135.

INNOVATOR Archive Now Online

Past issues of the INNOVATOR are now available on the [New Schools Project](#) website. Click on “Resources” and scroll down the page to “INNOVATOR Archive.”

Backtalk!

Tell INNOVATOR what you think. Comments and recommendations should be sent to the address below.

INNOVATOR is produced by the NC 21st Century High School Initiative and the NC New Schools Project, an initiative of the NC Education Cabinet and the Public School Forum of NC with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

To opt out from receiving this electronic report, please send an email to innovator@newschoolsproject.org or call Geoff Coltrane at (919) 781-6833 ext. 129.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2003

SESSION LAW 2003-277
SENATE BILL 656

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE INNOVATIVE EDUCATION INITIATIVES ACT.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. Chapter 116C of the General Statutes is amended by adding the following new section to read:

"§ 116C-4. First in America Innovative Education Initiatives Act.

(a) The General Assembly strongly endorses the Governor's goal of making North Carolina's system of education first in America by 2010. With that as the goal, the Education Cabinet shall set as a priority cooperative efforts between secondary schools and institutions of higher education so as to reduce the high school dropout rate, increase high school and college graduation rates, decrease the need for remediation in institutions of higher education, and raise certificate, associate, and bachelor degree completion rates. The Cabinet shall identify and support efforts that achieve the following purposes:

- (1) Support cooperative innovative high school programs developed under Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes.
- (2) Improve high school completion rates and reduce high school dropout rates.
- (3) Close the achievement gap.
- (4) Create redesigned middle schools or high schools.
- (5) Provide flexible, customized programs of learning for high school students who would benefit from accelerated, higher level coursework or early graduation.
- (6) Establish high quality alternative learning programs.
- (7) Establish a virtual high school.
- (8) Implement other innovative education initiatives designed to advance the State's system of education.

(b) The Education Cabinet shall identify federal, State, and local funds that may be used to support these initiatives. In addition, the Cabinet is strongly encouraged to pursue private funds that could be used to support these initiatives.

(c) The Cabinet shall report by January 15, 2004, and annually thereafter, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on its activities under this section. The annual reports may include recommendations for statutory changes needed to support cooperative innovative initiatives, including programs approved under Part 9 of Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes."

SECTION 2. Article 16 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding the following new Part to read:

"Part 9. Cooperative Innovative High School Programs.

"§ 115C-238.50. Purpose.

(a) The purpose of this Part is to authorize boards of trustees of community colleges and local boards of education to jointly establish cooperative innovative programs in high schools and community colleges that will expand students' opportunities for educational success through high quality instructional programming. These cooperative innovative high school programs shall target:

- (1) High school students who are at risk of dropping out of school before attaining a high school diploma; or
- (2) High school students who would benefit from accelerated academic instruction.

(b) All the cooperative innovative high school programs established under this Part shall:

- (1) Prepare students adequately for future learning in the workforce or in an institution of higher education.
- (2) Expand students' educational opportunities within the public school system.
- (3) Be centered on the core academic standards represented by the college preparatory or tech prep program of study as defined by the State Board of Education.
- (4) Encourage the cooperative or shared use of resources, personnel, and facilities between public schools and community colleges.
- (5) Integrate and emphasize both academic and technical skills necessary for students to be successful in a more demanding and changing workplace.
- (6) Emphasize parental involvement and provide consistent counseling, advising, and parent conferencing so that parents and students can make responsible decisions regarding course taking and can track the students' academic progress and success.
- (7) Be held accountable for meeting measurable student achievement results.
- (8) Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods.
- (9) Establish joint institutional responsibility and accountability for support of students and their success.
- (10) Effectively utilize existing funding sources for high school, community college, and vocational programs and actively pursue new funding from other sources.
- (11) Develop methods for early identification of potential participating students in the middle grades and through high school.
- (12) Reduce the percentage of students needing remedial courses upon their initial entry from high school into a college or university.

(c) Programs developed under this Part that target students who are at risk of dropping out of high school before attaining a high school diploma shall:

- (1) Provide these students with the opportunity to graduate from high school possessing the core academic skills needed for postsecondary education and high-skilled employment.

- (2) Enable students to complete a technical or academic program in a field that is in high demand and has high wages.
- (3) Set and achieve goals that significantly reduce dropout rates and raise high school and community college retention, certification, and degree completion rates.
- (4) Enable students who complete these programs to pass employer exams, if applicable.

(d) Cooperative innovative high school programs that offer accelerated learning programs shall:

- (1) Provide a flexible, customized program of instruction for students who would benefit from accelerated, higher level coursework or early graduation from high school.
- (2) Enable students to obtain a high school diploma in less than four years and begin or complete an associate degree program or to master a certificate or vocational program.
- (3) Offer a college preparatory academic core and in-depth studies in a career or technical field that will lead to advanced programs or employment opportunities in engineering, health sciences, or teaching.

(e) Cooperative innovative high school programs may include the creation of a school within a school, a technical high school, or a high school or technical center located on the campus of a community college.

(f) Students are eligible to attend these programs as early as ninth grade.

§ 115C-238.51. Application process.

(a) A local board of education and a local board of trustees of a community college shall jointly apply to establish a cooperative innovative high school program under this Part.

(b) The application shall contain at least the following information:

- (1) A description of a program that implements the purposes in G.S. 115C-238.50.
- (2) A statement of how the program relates to the Economic Vision Plan adopted for the economic development region in which the program is to be located.
- (3) The facilities to be used by the program and the manner in which administrative services of the program are to be provided.
- (4) A description of student academic and vocational achievement goals and the method of demonstrating that students have attained the skills and knowledge specified for those goals.
- (5) A description of how the program will be operated, including budgeting, curriculum, transportation, and operating procedures.
- (6) The process to be followed by the program to ensure parental involvement.
- (7) The process by which students will be selected for and admitted to the program.
- (8) A description of the funds that will be used and a proposed budget for the program. This description shall identify how the average daily membership (ADM) and full-time equivalent (FTE) students are counted.
- (9) The qualifications required for individuals employed in the program.
- (10) The number of students to be served.

(11) A description of how the program's effectiveness in meeting the purposes in G.S. 115C-238.50 will be measured.

(c) The application shall be submitted to the State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges by November 1 of each year. The State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges shall appoint a joint advisory committee to review the applications and to recommend to the State Boards those programs that meet the requirements of this Part and that achieve the purposes set out in G.S. 115C-238.50.

(d) The State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges shall approve two cooperative innovative high school programs in each of the State's economic development regions. The State Boards may approve programs recommended by the joint advisory committee or may approve other programs that were not recommended. The State Boards shall approve all applications by March 15 of each year. No application shall be approved unless the State Boards find that the application meets the requirements set out in this Part and that granting the application would achieve the purposes set out in G.S. 115C-238.50. Priority shall be given to applications that are most likely to further State education policies, to address the economic development needs of the economic development regions in which they are located, and to strengthen the educational programs offered in the local school administrative units in which they are located.

"§ 115C-238.52. Participation by other education partners.

(a) Any or all of the following education partners may participate in the development of a cooperative innovative program under this Part that is targeted to high school students who would benefit from accelerated academic instruction:

- (1) A constituent institution of The University of North Carolina.
- (2) A private college or university located in North Carolina.
- (3) A private business or organization.
- (4) The county board of commissioners in the county in which the program is located.

(b) Any or all of the education partners listed in subsection (a) of this section that participate shall:

- (1) Jointly apply with the local board of education and the local board of trustees of the community college to establish a cooperative innovative program under this Part.
- (2) Be identified in the application.
- (3) Sign the written agreement under G.S. 115C-238.53(b).

"§ 115C-238.53. Program operation.

(a) A program approved by the State shall be accountable to the local board of education.

(b) A program approved under this Part shall operate under the terms of a written agreement signed by the local board of education, local board of trustees of the community college, State Board of Education, and State Board of Community Colleges. The agreement shall incorporate the information provided in the application, as modified during the approval process, and any terms and conditions imposed on the program by the State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges. The agreement may be for a term of no longer than five school years.

(c) A program may be operated in a facility owned or leased by the local board of education, the local board of trustees of the community college, or the education partner, if any.

(d) A program approved under this Part shall provide instruction each school year for at least 180 days during nine calendar months, shall comply with laws and policies relating to the education of students with disabilities, and shall comply with Article 27 of this Chapter.

(e) A program approved under this Part may use State, federal, and local funds allocated to the local school administrative unit, to the State Board of Community Colleges, and to the community college to implement the program. If there is an education partner and if it is a public body, the program may use State, federal, and local funds allocated to that body.

(f) Except as provided in this Part and pursuant to the terms of the agreement, a program is exempt from laws and rules applicable to a local board of education, a local school administrative unit, a community college, or a local board of trustees of a community college.

"§ 115C-238.54. Funds for programs.

(a) The Department of Public Instruction shall assign a school code for each program that is approved under this Part. All positions and other State and federal allotments that are generated for this program shall be assigned to that school code. Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-105.25, once funds are assigned to that school code, the local board of education may use these funds for the program and may transfer these funds between funding allotment categories.

(b) The local board of trustees of a community college may allocate State and federal funds for a program that is approved under this Part.

(c) An education partner under G.S. 115C-238.52 that is a public body may allocate State, federal, and local funds for a program that is approved under this Part.

(d) If not an education partner under G.S. 115C-238.52, a county board of commissioners in a county where a program is located may nevertheless appropriate funds to a program approved under this Part.

(e) The local board of education and the local board of trustees of the community college are strongly encouraged to seek funds from sources other than State, federal, and local appropriations. They are strongly encouraged to seek funds the Education Cabinet identifies or obtains under G.S. 116C-4.

"§ 115C-238.55. Evaluation of programs.

The State Board of Education and the State Board of Community Colleges shall evaluate the success of students in programs approved under this Part. Success shall be measured by high school retention rates, high school completion rates, high school dropout rates, certification and associate degree completion, admission to four-year institutions, postgraduation employment in career or study-related fields, and employer satisfaction of employees who participated in and graduated from the programs. Beginning October 15, 2005, and annually thereafter, the Boards shall jointly report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the evaluation of these programs. If, by October 15, 2006, the Boards determine any or all of these programs have been successful, they shall jointly develop a prototype plan for similar programs that could be expanded across the State. This plan shall be included in their report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee that is due by October 15, 2007.

"§§ 115C-238.56 through 115C-238.59: Reserved for future codification purposes."

SECTION 3. Local school administrative units and the State Board of Education shall identify, strengthen, and adopt policies and procedures that encourage students to

remain in high school rather than to drop out and that encourage all students to pursue a rigorous academic course of study. As part of this process, the State Board and the local school administrative units are encouraged to eliminate or revise any policies or procedures that discourage some students from completing high school or that discourage any student from pursuing a rigorous academic course of study. No later than March 1, 2004, local school administrative units shall report to the State Board of Education the policies they have identified, strengthened, adopted, and eliminated under this section. No later than April 15, 2004, the State Board shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on these policies as well as on the policies the Board has identified, strengthened, adopted, and eliminated under this section.

SECTION 4. Nothing in this act shall be construed to obligate the General Assembly to make appropriations to implement this act.

SECTION 5. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 18th day of June, 2003.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

s/ Richard T. Morgan
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 12:30 p.m. this 27th day of June, 2003

