

# NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY



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## HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PRACTICES

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### REPORT TO THE 2016 SESSION of the 2015 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

APRIL 21, 2016

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## TRANSMITTAL LETTER

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April 21, 2016

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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 2016 REGULAR SESSION  
OF THE 2015 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PRACTICES, respectfully submits the following report to the 2016 Regular Session of the 2015 General Assembly.

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Rep. Hugh Blackwell (Chair)

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# COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

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The House Select Committee on Education Strategy and Practices met 8 times after the 2015 Regular Session.

## **January 27, 2016**

- State Board/DPI Perspective on Teacher Compensation
  - June Atkinson, Superintendent of Public Instruction
  - Bill Cobey, Chair, State Board of Education
- Compensation and Strategic Staffing
  - Trip Stallings, Director of Policy Research, The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, NC State University
- Policy Perspectives on Teacher Compensation
  - Terry Stoops, Director of Education Studies , John Locke Foundation
  - Brenda Berg, President and CEO, BEST NC

## **January 28, 2016**

- Review of Past Committee Work: North Carolina Educator Effectiveness and Compensation Task Force
  - Kara McCraw, Staff Attorney, NCGA Legislative Analysis Division
- Current K-12 Teacher and Principal Salaries and NC Community College Faculty Salaries Overview
  - Lanier McRee, Fiscal Analyst, NCGA Fiscal Research Division
- Current Principal Compensation Schedules
  - Alexis Schauss, Director, School Business Administration, Department of Public Instruction
- Superintendent Discussion Panel
  - Superintendent Greg Little, Mt. Airy City Schools
  - Superintendent Sean Bulson, Wilson County Schools
  - Superintendent Beverly Emory, Winston-Salem/Forsyth Schools
  - Superintendent John Parker, Roanoke Rapids Grade School District
  - Superintendent Mark Garrett, McDowell County Schools
  - Superintendent Frank Till, Cumberland County Schools
  - Superintendent Barry Williams, Gates County Schools
  - Superintendent Jeff Booker, Gaston County Schools

**February 24, 2016**

***I. Principal Salaries – Follow-up***

- Follow-up Questions on Current Principal Compensation Schedules
  - Alexis Schauss, Director, School Business Administration, Department of Public Instruction

***II. Early Childhood***

- Current North Carolina Early Learning Programs
  - John Pruette, Director, Office of Early Learning, Department of Public Instruction.
- SREB Early Childhood Commission Final Report
  - Joan Lord, Vice-President, SREB
- Tennessee Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Effectiveness Study
  - Dr. Mark W. Lipsey, Principal Investigator and Director
  - Dr. Dale C. Farran, Co-Principal Investigator and Senior Associate Director
- NC DHHS Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program
  - Sydney Atkinson, Division of Public Health, Women’s Health Branch, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
- NC Partnership for Children
  - Cindy Watkins, President, NC Partnership for Children
- Panel Discussion – All presenters and Belinda Pettiford, Division of Public Health, Women’s Health Branch, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

**February 25, 2016**

***III. Principal Leadership***

- Betty Fry, Leadership Consultant, SREB
- Turnaround Principals
  - Dr. Pascal Mubenga, Superintendent, Franklin County Schools
  - Jan Wagner, Principal, South Creek Middle School, Martin County and Larry Hodgkins, Assistant Principal, Riverside Middle School, Martin County
- Dr. Steve Tozer, Professor University of Illinois – Chicago
- Dr. Shirley Prince, North Carolina Alliance for School Leadership Development



- Panel – All presenters and Dr. Bonnie Fusarelli, Professor, North Carolina State University

#### ***IV. ESSA, Rulemaking, and the Role of the States***

- Lee Posey, Federal Affairs Counsel, National Council of State Legislatures
- Claire Voorhees, Director, K-12 Reform, Foundation for Excellence in Education
- Panel Discussion – All presenters and Lou Fabrizio, Director, Data, Research and Federal Policy, Department of Public Instruction

#### **March 24, 2016**

- NC Academic Standards Review Commission Recommendations
  - Dr. James Ritter, Legislative Analysis Division, NCGA
- Cooperative Innovative High Schools
  - Sneha Shah-Coltrane, Director of Gifted Education and Advanced Programs, NC Department of Public Instruction
  - Dr. Lisa Eads, Program Director, NC Community College System
- Panel Discussion – All presenters, plus
  - Brandon Garland, Principal, Johnston Early College
  - Dr. Pamela J. Earp, Dean of Foundational Studies and Academic Support, Johnston Community College
  - Patrick Peed, Principal, Scotland Early College
- College and Career Ready Diploma Endorsements
  - Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction
  - Dr. Lisa Chapman, Chief Academic Officer, NC Community College System
  - Drew Moretz, Vice President of State Government Relations, UNC General Administration
  - Dr. Hope Williams, President, NC Independent College and Universities
- Measurability Assessment of College and Career Ready
  - John Turcotte, Director, Program Evaluation Division, NCGA
  - Dr. Carol Ripple, Associate Director for Education Research & Engagement, Education and Human Development Incubator, Duke University

## **April 13, 2016**

- Driver's Education
  - Report of Current Driver's Education Programs
    - Dr. Benjamin Matthews, Director, Safe and Healthy Schools Support, NC Department of Public Instruction
    - Karl Logan, Consultant, NC Department of Public Instruction
  - 2015 Report on NC Driver's Education Program
    - Don Nail, Director, NC Governor's Highway Safety Program
  - Program Evaluation Division Report on Driver's Education
    - John Turcotte, Director, Program Evaluation Division, NCGA
  - Driver Education Perspectives
    - Steve Phillips, Traffic Safety Manager, AAA Carolinas
    - Marvin Smith, President, NC Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association
    - Reginald Flythe, President - Elect, American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association
    - Dr. Charles McDaniel, Professor Emeritus, Driver Traffic and Safety Center, Appalachian State University
  - Panel Discussion – All presenters, plus:
    - Dr. George Griffin, Driver's Education Director, Moore County Schools
    - Eddie Jordan, Owner and Operator, Jordan Driving School of the Carolinas
- Funding of Cooperative Innovative High Schools
  - Brian Matteson, Fiscal Research Division, NCGA
- NC Community Colleges Update
  - Current Salary Schedules for Community College Faculty
    - Lanier McRee, Fiscal Research Division, NCGA
  - Allocation of Community College Faculty Salary Funding
    - Jennifer Haygood, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, NC Community College System
  - Tiered Funding for Community College Enrollment
    - Jennifer Haygood, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, NC Community College System
  - NC Works Career Coaches
    - Dr. Lisa Chapman, Chief Academic Officer, NC Community College System

## **April 20, 2016**

- Teacher Background Checks
  - State Board of Education Update
    - Katie Cornetto, State Board of Education Attorney, NC Department of Public Instruction

- State Ethics Expert and the Multistate Educator Lookup System (MELS)
  - Dr. Paul Shaw, Director of Educator Ethics, Georgia Professional Standards Commission
  
- Panel Discussion - all presenters, plus:
  - Dr. John Welmers, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, New Hanover County Schools
  - Supt. David Burleson, Avery County Schools
  - Allison Schafer, General Counsel and Director of Policy, NCSBA
  - Valerie Suessmith, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, Henry County Schools, GA
  
- Read to Achieve
  - Foundation for Excellence in Education
    - Cari Miller, Policy Director, K-3 Reading
  
  - State Board of Education Update
    - Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction
    - Carolyn Guthrie, Director of K-3 Literacy, NC Department of Public Instruction
  
  - Florida Center for Reading Research
    - Mr. Kevin Smith, Research Alliance Manager- FCRR, Florida State University
  
- Panel Discussion– All presenters

**April 21, 2016**

- Principal Preparation Programs
  - Dr. Shirley Prince, Program Director, North Carolina Alliance for School Leadership Development
  
- Advanced Placement/ International Baccalaureate (AP/IB)
  - Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction
  - Kathleen Koch, NCAPP Director, College Board
  - Dr. Eric Smith, former Florida Commissioner of Education
  
- Drop-out and Recovery Credits
  - Thomas Hanley, Principal, Stewart Creek High School
  - Angela Whitford-Narine, President, ALS Education, Inc.

- NAEP
  - James Ritter, Legislative Analysis Division, NCGA
  - Karen Hoeve, Accountability Section Chief, NC Department of Public Instruction
  - Andrea Faulkner, NAEP State Coordinator, NC Department of Public Instruction
  
- Review and Consideration of Final Report

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# SUMMARY OF COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

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This section of the report provides a brief summary of the Committee meetings. It is not intended to be a complete, official record of those meetings. However, there is an official record of the Committee's meetings, including minutes and handouts distributed to the Committee members, in the Legislative Library.

## January 27, 2016

Dr. June Atkinson, North Carolina State Superintendent of Public Instruction, presented information on how to improve NC teacher compensation that included the following components: (i) bonuses for schools, (ii) a dollar allotment for low-performing schools, (iii) local teacher leadership pay, and (iv) salary increases for all teachers. Dr. Atkinson cited information from the annual *State of the Teaching Profession Report* and data on the average local salary supplement to emphasize the need for improved teacher compensation. Last of all, Dr. Atkinson discussed her view that student growth be a greater factor in assessing teachers and schools.

Dr. Trip Stallings, Director of Policy Research, The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University, discussed State and local differentiated educator compensation plans across North Carolina and the current research on the impact of performance pay incentives. The research cited included the following:

- There is little evidence that traditional-model performance incentives increase student outcomes.
- In general, it does not appear to matter whether the bonus is individual or team/school-based; the results appear to be the same.
- There is little evidence that traditional-model performance incentives change teacher behavior.
- The size of the traditional bonus does not appear to make a difference.
- There is some evidence that “loss-aversion” bonuses—or bonuses that are given at the beginning of the year and then taken away if students do not meet expected test criteria—increase student achievement.
- There is preliminary evidence—though only from one study—that consequences connected to effectiveness labels may lead to improvement in the quality of the teacher workforce through voluntary attrition and increased teacher performance.

Dr. Stallings offered his conclusions on strategic staffing and compensation using Race to the Top performance studies and strategic staffing recommendations with incentive and differentiated pay. He recommended that the North Carolina General Assembly: (i) continue to fund across the board salary increases to approach regional parity and stem-based attrition, (ii) fund multiple strategic staffing, differentiated pay pilots that build on past state and local efforts, and (iii) develop a multi-year plan for sustainability.

Dr. Terry Stoops, Director of Research and Education Studies, John Locke Foundation, discussed teacher attrition rates (turnover and retention) and the correlation to teacher compensation in North Carolina. Dr. Stoops reported that there are higher attrition rates in some areas of the State than in others. He also emphasized that North Carolina should work on meeting the goal of retaining effective teachers by working on pay scales and performance pay and differential pay.

Brenda Berg, President and CEO, Best NC, discussed the best ways to attract and retain teachers, including enabling every teacher to earn a competitive wage, continuing to invest more in early-career teachers to improve recruitment & retention, recruiting teachers to hard-to-staff positions through loan repayment/scholarships, empowering districts with more hiring and compensation flexibility, rewarding experienced teachers for expanded roles, increased capacity and impact, and fostering great working conditions: instructional resources, strong leadership and coaching, time to plan and teach, and embedded professional development. Ms. Berg also noted the importance of increasing principal compensation through a financial and non-financial compensation strategy, including dramatically increasing salaries for principals and other school-based administrators and restructuring principal compensation to reward success and improve retention.

The Committee meeting concluded with additional questions and discussion by the members.

### **January 28, 2016**

Kara McCraw, Staff Attorney, NCGA Legislative Analysis Division, reviewed the recommendations issued by the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness and Compensation Task Force in 2014. The primary consideration of that report was that student learning can be improved by increasing the number of students with highly effective teacher. The report stated that the long term goal of the North Carolina General Assembly should be to increase salaries for all teachers, while modernizing North Carolina's educator compensation system to more closely align compensation with student outcomes and educator responsibilities.

Lanier McRee, Fiscal Analyst, NCGA Fiscal Research Division, presented on educator and community college faculty pay. Ms. McRee discussed State teacher and community college faculty pay rankings as compared to the following states: (i) Virginia, (ii) Tennessee, (iii) South Carolina, (iv) Georgia, and (v) Florida from 2007-2014. The level of North Carolina teachers' experience was compared to the national average. Cost scenarios demonstrated that for every 1% increase in instructional personnel pay, the cost to the State would be approximately \$53.6 million dollars.

Alexis Schauss, Director of the Division of School Business Administration, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, provided the 2015-2016 public school salary

schedules and explained various formulas used to set salaries of teachers and administrators in North Carolina public schools.

The Committee meeting continued with a panel discussion on teacher compensation that included the following LEA superintendents:

- Sean Bulson, Wilson County Schools
- Jeff Booker, Gaston County Schools
- Beverly Emory, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools
- Mark Garrett, McDowell County Schools
- Greg Little, Mt. Airy City Schools
- John Parker, Roanoke Rapids Graded School District
- Frank Till, Cumberland County Schools
- Barry Williams, Gates County Schools

Among other things, the superintendents offered the view that, to positively impact teacher morale and attitudes, multi-year goals for compensation adjustments would be highly desirable compared to one-time decisions made during each budget session. In addition, concern was expressed with regard to practices related to licensing delays and requirements that negatively impact experienced teachers moving to North Carolina from other states.

Rep. Blackwell facilitated Committee discussion and offered closing remarks.

### **February 24, 2016**

Alexis Schauss, Director of the Division of School Business Administration, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, offered a follow-up explanation of public school salary schedules and various formulas used to set salaries of teachers and administrators in North Carolina public schools.

John Pruette, Director, Office of Early Learning, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, presented on the impact of North Carolina early learning programs. Mr. Pruette emphasized research indicating that access to early learning has been linked to the following outcomes: (i) higher achievement test scores, (ii) reduced special education identification and grade repetition, (iii) increased high school graduation, (iv) reduced behavior problems, delinquency, and crime, and (v) increased employment with higher earnings and reduced welfare dependency. However, included in the presentation was information from various studies that recognized a fadeout in student benefits from pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) by the end of third grade and how this fadeout might be diminished with a strong Pre-K through grade 3 continuum.

Joan Lord, Vice-President of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), presented on how to build State policy on early childhood education in North Carolina. SREB considerations on early childhood education include: (i) the need for high quality

programs, (ii) improving teacher quality, (iii) increasing expectations for accountability, (iv) increasing access to early childhood education, and (v) recognizing the importance of strategic state governance.

In regards to North Carolina's early childhood education program, Ms. Lord identified the State as a Pre-K leader in:

- Process quality related to benchmarking through the National Institute for Early Education Research.
- Emphasis on teacher quality requiring teachers to have at least a bachelor's degree with Birth through Kindergarten (B-K) credentials.
- Alignment of North Carolina's early learning standards by use of the following:
  - (i) a Pre-K through grade 3 office supporting kindergarten through grade 3 children at risk, (ii) North Carolina's early learning standards, spanning birth to age 5, aligned with kindergarten through 3rd grade standards, and (iii) developing an aligned system of formative assessment through the Office of Early Learning.

Dr. Mark Lipsey, Principal Director and Investigator, and Dr. Dale C. Farran, Co-Principal Investigator and Senior Associate Director of the Tennessee Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten Effectiveness Study, discussed Pre-K programs nationwide and noted that they are difficult to compare because they often have different characteristics and program requirements. The researchers further provided information on Pre-K programs that have been implemented statewide in Tennessee. From the evidence presented, the researchers note the following:

- Supporting the positive development of disadvantaged children is an important goal with implications for their social and economic well-being of the communities in which they will live as adults.
- They do not see early childhood education as a question of being for or against public Pre-K but, rather, a question of what best accomplishes that goal.
- To date, their Tennessee findings raise definite concerns as to the sustainability of any gains made during the actual early childhood programs.

Sydney Atkinson, Division of Public Health, Women's Health Branch, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, discussed the state of teen pregnancy in North Carolina evidencing that teenage pregnancies have declined in the State and southeastern United States since 2010. As part of the presentation, Ms. Atkinson cited teen pregnancy prevention initiatives currently being used in North Carolina. She gave a brief overview of the Abecedarian Project and Perry Preschool Study research pointing out teen pregnancy prevention efforts that either delayed parenthood, or encouraged participants to be less likely to have a birth outside of marriage.

Cindy Watkins, President, North Carolina Partnership for Children (Partnership), discussed setting a strong foundation for optimal development for children in early education. Ms. Watkins provided information on the 75 local partnerships that form Smart Start, a public/private partnership created in 1993 to help children who were



coming to school unprepared to learn. She emphasized that the Partnership places emphasis on educating the whole child and that that means there should be a strong foundation in: (i) children's early care and education, (ii) family support, (iii) health and development, and (iv) early literacy. Ms. Watkins gave a brief overview of Duke University and Upjohn Institute research noting the positive impacts of Smart Start. Finally, she noted her view that the academic success of children in later years depends heavily upon their kindergarten readiness.

The Committee meeting continued with a panel discussion that included presenters on early childhood education and Belinda Pettiford, Division of Public Health, Women's Branch, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

Rep. Blackwell facilitated Committee discussion and offered closing remarks.

### **February 25, 2016**

Betty Fry, Senior Leadership Consultant with the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), presented on how to improve the performance of turnaround schools using the SREB Turnaround Leaders Program (TLP). Ms. Fry explained that turnaround schools are schools in the bottom five to ten percent of schools that are chronically low-performing. She noted the goal of the TLP was to ensure that educators who desire to become leaders in turnaround schools are equipped with the special skills needed to plan and implement a dramatic and comprehensive intervention that produces significant gains in student achievement within two academic years. In addition, Ms. Fry compared the TLP to North Carolina's new principal preparation competitive grant program which was enacted by the North Carolina General Assembly in Sec. 11.9 of S.L. 2015-241 and provides grants for entities that prepare school leaders. In conclusion, Ms. Fry shared that the following are necessary to have an effective principal preparation program: (i) a shared vision for senior leadership in school districts and the principal preparation program, (ii) selecting people with the right characteristics to become principals, and (iii) a culture where program leadership and partners can challenge one another to think deeply about program implementation to achieve maximum results.

Dr. Pascal Mubenga, Superintendent, Franklin County Schools, shared his experience of turning around the performance of Jones Senior High School in Jones County. He noted that the following actions caused positive change within the school: (i) establishment of high expectations, (ii) involvement of all stakeholders, (iii) promotion of a data culture to measure success, (iv) implementation of best practices through professional learning communities and professional development, (v) expectations of accountability and student success, (vi) celebrating success continually, (vii) locally-initiated reduction in class size, and (viii) the inception of a local salary supplement. Dr. Mubenga also added that research says that recruiting and retaining quality principals is the key to success in a school, second only to good teachers, in positively effecting student achievement.

Jan Wagoner, Principal, South Creek Middle School, Martin County, and Larry Hopkins, Assistant Principal, Riverside Middle School, Martin County, presented on their experiences to put principal preparation into practice at a turnaround school. The presenters stated that effective principals: (i) have the approach of an executive with the mindset that what they do is more than a job, (ii) are passionately committed to the success of the school, (iii) seek continuous improvement, and (iv) aim to have more effective and happy teachers, reducing teacher turnover.

Dr. Steve Tozer, Professor, University of Illinois- Chicago (UIC), presented on the Center for Urban Education Leadership's (CUEL) efforts to develop school leaders. As part of the presentation, Dr. Tozer offered the program success rates and program job placement results over the last ten years. Dr. Tozer noted that of the 148 program completers, more than 100 principals had been placed in urban schools and 80% had been retained. Other program completers are assistant principals and system level leaders. Dr. Tozer stated that the program had a 99% placement rate in administrative positions for 11 years, and the highest principal eligibility pass rate in Chicago Public School (CPS) assessments. Principals trained through the program also demonstrated an impact on student learning. At mostly Black/mostly low-income schools, 1st-year UIC principals were 4 times more likely to make gains in the top 10% of 184 comparable schools. UIC principals in high schools out-performed CPS comparison schools in attendance, "freshman on-track", annual dropout rates, and graduation rates. In addition, Dr. Tozer noted that the following program components have helped CUEL achieve the desired positive results in principal preparation: (i) clear partner district standards and assessments, (ii) district paid full-year residencies, (iii) a district strategy to influence the "pipeline" of administrators, (iv) high selectivity for principal participants, (v) continuous improvement orientation, K-12, (vi) clinical intensity, (vii) residency and post residency coaching, and (viii) assignment rigor.

Dr. Shirley Prince, Program Director, NC Alliance for School Leadership Development (NCASLD), was recognized because NCASLD is the recipient of the State's grant to transform principal preparation across the State. This grant is funded through S.L. 2015-241, Section 11.9, *Transforming Principal Preparation*, and also described above.

Through oversight of the principal preparation grant program, the NCASLD seeks to do the following:

- Facilitate the transformation of school leader preparation in the State by identifying grantee providers with models of evidenced-based principal preparation.
- Analyze and identify best practices for school leaders.
- Share best practices to build capacity among principal preparation providers and principal supervisors.
- Recommend the best models for preparing and supporting school leaders in North Carolina based on outcome data.

The Committee meeting continued with a panel discussion on principal preparation that included Dr. Bonnie Fusarelli, Professor, North Carolina State University.

Lee Posey, Federal Affairs Counsel, National Conference of State Legislatures, briefed the Committee on the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the changes it will facilitate in regards to the following: (i) State accountability systems, (ii) school interventions, (iii) student support and academic enrichment, (iv) Title I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and (v) early education. Ms. Posey emphasized that states must continue to disaggregate data by student subgroup at the state, LEA, and school level. Key components of the timeline for implementation of ESSA emphasized by Ms. Posey include the following:

- ESEA flexibility waivers end as of August 1, 2016.
- New state plans will be developed during the 2016-2017 school year.
- There will continue to be regulation by the U.S. Department of Education but with substantially greater flexibility for states in many key areas.
- Funding for fiscal year 2017-2018 will flow through ESSA provisions.

Claire Voorhees, Director, K-12 Reform, Foundation for Excellence in Education, presented on the State's role in effectively implementing ESSA. As part of this presentation, a chart showing the shifts in responsibility between the State and federal government was offered to the Committee. Ms. Voorhees explained highlights of ESSA that include: (i) states will now set their own goals, (ii) questions remain about subgroup accountability, (iii) states must choose an additional indicator for student success, (iv) states must select their own escalating set of school supports and interventions, and (v) new accountability provisions will not take effect until the 2017-2018 school year.

The Committee meeting continued with a panel discussion on ESSA that included Dr. Lou Fabrizio, Director, Data, Research, and Federal Policy at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Rep. Blackwell facilitated Committee discussion and offered closing remarks.

### **March 24, 2016**

Dr. James Ritter, Legislative Analyst, NCGA Legislative Analysis Division, presented the recommendations of the North Carolina Academic Standards Review Commission (Commission). The Commission was established as part of Section 2.(a) of S.L. 2014-278 to study the Common Core standards and develop alternative standards for North Carolina in Math and English Language Arts. Commission recommendations include:

- Revising the current standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics (K-12).
- Providing a variety of professional development opportunities to help school districts strengthen curriculum development policies and practices.
- Establishing a definition of high-quality North Carolina education standards.
- Aligning future tests and assessments to the revised standards.

Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, offered timeline updates on the new North Carolina standards development and possible implementation dates.

Sneha Shah-Coltrane, Director of Gifted Education and Advanced Programs, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, presented on Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHS). Ms. Shah-Coltrane explained that CIHS are partnerships between public high schools and local postsecondary educational institutions. They offer accelerated learning opportunities to targeted students to allow them to complete an associate degree program or earn up to two years of college credit, in addition to completing high school graduation requirements. She also emphasized the following criteria used to determine the success of CIHS: (i) high school retention rates, (ii) high school completion rates, (iii) certification and associate degree completion rates, (iv) student admission rates to four-year institutions, (v) student post-graduation employment in career and study-related fields, and (vi) employer satisfaction rates for employees who graduated from CIHS.

Dr. Lisa Eads, Program Director, NC Community College System, presented information on the fall 2015 dual enrollment trends of CIHS with the community college system, as well as enrollment by: (i) gender, (ii) subject, and (iii) ethnicity. Dr. Eads noted that there is an increased interest in personalized learning in North Carolina in part because of the CIHS model.

The Committee meeting continued with a panel discussion that included all presenters, including:

- Dr. Pamela J. Earp, Dean of Foundational Studies and Academic Support, Johnston Community College
- Brandon Garland, Principal, Johnston Early College
- Patrick Peed, Principal, Scotland Early College

Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, presented on high school diploma endorsements. These endorsements on a high school diploma are intended to indicate if a student is prepared for college, ready to enter the workforce in a particular area, or both. Dr. Garland explained that students may earn one or more of the following endorsements: (i) Career Endorsement, (ii) College Endorsement, (iii) College/UNC Endorsement, (iv) North Carolina Academic Scholars Endorsement, and (v) Global Languages Endorsement. She offered data on the number and type of endorsements earned by students in each of the local school administrative units for the 2014-2015 school year.

Dr. Lisa Chapman, Chief Academic Officer, NC Community College System (NCCCS), presented on the high school diploma endorsements and how the endorsements specifically impact remediation efforts among students in community colleges. Dr. Chapman stressed that the NCCCS has made efforts to impact remediation efforts from 2010 to 2014 and has:

- Developed more reliable and valid assessments, placement instruments, and strategies to help students.

- Improved the delivery of instructional courses to students.
- Improved developmental education rates from 13.8% in 2011 to 5.6% in 2015.

Dr. Hope Williams, President, NC Independent Colleges and Universities, discussed College and Career Ready Endorsements with regards to North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities. Dr. Williams expressed the increased importance of high school diploma endorsements to the independent institutions of higher education in North Carolina.

John Turcotte, Director of Program Evaluation, NCGA Program Evaluation Division, presented an overview of the Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) for House Bill 805, *North Carolina Measurability Assessment Act*, from the 2015 Session of the General Assembly. Mr. Turcotte clarified that a measurability assessment is an independent evaluation conducted on a new or existing State program to determine whether the program is, or will be capable of, reporting performance and return on investment. The PCS to HB 805 would:

- Provide that the General Assembly may require measurability assessments of proposed or existing State programs.
- Require the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) to establish a system for administering and contracting with pre-qualified independent assessors.
- Specify measurability assessment criteria.
- Require the costs of assessment and OSBM overhead be charged to the entity housing the program that is being assessed.

Dr. Carol Ripple, Associate Director for Education Research and Engagement, Education and Human Development Incubator, Duke University, presented on assessing program measurability. Dr. Ripple emphasized that: (i) measurability assessments discern the existence of, or the capacity to provide, program information, (ii) a framework must be developed to guide assessments, and (iii) the process reasonably assumes a supply of qualified external assessors.

Rep. Blackwell facilitated Committee discussion and offered closing remarks.

### **April 13, 2016**

Karl Logan, Consultant, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI), presented on the North Carolina Driver Education Program and the May 2015 Driver Education Assessment. Mr. Logan noted that the assessment involved peer reviews and the evaluation of elements that are part of North Carolina's Strategic Plan for driver's education.

Mr. Logan explained that the North Carolina Driver Education Strategic Plan includes the following elements of implementation performance: (i) program administration, (ii) program oversight, (iii) a standardized curriculum, (iv) other program recommendations,

(v) instructor qualifications, (vi) coordination with driver licensing, and (vii) parental involvement.

Dr. Benjamin Matthews, Director, Safe and Healthy Schools Support, DPI, explained that driver education is the responsibility of DPI and that they currently work with local school administrative units (LEAs) to provide funding and support for the program. Dr. Matthews also stated that LEAs often contract with private driving schools that provide a portion, or all, of driver education (instruction, materials, motor fleet usage) for that LEA.

Don Nail, Director, North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program (NCGHSP), explained that a technical assessment of the driver education program by the NCGHSP was completed at the request of DPI. Mr. Nail indicated that the assessment conclusion cited deficiencies or incompleteness on most of the standards assessed. Mr. Nail stated his understanding that the recommendations of the assessment had become the elements for implementation of changes by DPI as referenced earlier by Mr. Logan.

John Turcotte, Director, Program Evaluation Division, North Carolina General Assembly, summarized the 2014 report, *Performance Measurement and Monitoring Would Strengthen Accountability of North Carolina's Driver Education Program*. Mr. Turcotte emphasized the following recommendations to the General Assembly:

- Require statewide performance measures to assess driver education efficiency and effectiveness.
- Direct DPI and the Department of Motor Vehicles to jointly develop and implement a system for monitoring citations and crashes of student drivers completing driver education.
- Direct the Department of Transportation (DOT), in consultation with DPI, to study the feasibility of offering uniform online classroom driver education.
- Require State agencies initiating pilot projects at the direction of the General Assembly to adhere to standards established by the UNC School of Government.

Steve Phillips, Traffic Safety Manager, AAA Carolinas, presented on the past, present challenges, and future of driver education in North Carolina. Mr. Phillips recommended the following for the future of driver education:

- Use of benchmarks and incentive funding.
- Funding driver education at 100%, and tied to positive program results.
- Prioritizing the cost saving in terms of the maintenance of vehicles and purchasing of materials for driver education.
- Creating a better system for driving schools to bid on LEA contracts.

Marvin Smith, President, North Carolina Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association, discussed the role of driver safety in driver education programs in North Carolina. He emphasized the continued role of the State in providing driver education to keep drivers safe.

Reginald Flythe, President-Elect, American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA), presented on standards and best practices for today's novice teen

drivers. Mr. Flythe explained that the Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administration Standards were revised in 2016 and includes: (i) delivery standards, (ii) online delivery standards, (iii) teacher training standards, and (iv) revised content standards. Mr. Flythe explained that these standards for driver education serve as a guide for all beginning teen drivers and that driver training programs should consider them when revising State standards. Mr. Flythe emphasized that ADTSEA provides consultative services and develops educational materials for driver education.

Dr. Charles McDaniel, Professor Emeritus, Driver Traffic and Safety Center, Appalachian State University, offered three areas of concern he has about driver education. Dr. McDaniel noted that these areas include: (i) the high school instructional program in driver education, (ii) the teacher training of driver education instructors and current options for this training, and (iii) the first time traffic offenses that beginning drivers may incur that can be a predictor of future traffic crashes. Dr. McDaniel provided additional information on online driver education training and how this type of instruction could help ensure that students meet State standards.

The Committee meeting continued with a panel discussion on driver education that included all presenters, as well as Dr. George Griffin, Driver Education Director, Moore County Schools and Eddie Jordan, Owner and Operator, Jordan Driving School of the Carolinas. Mr. Griffin noted that one way the State could increase scores on the driver exam administered by the DOT is to require students in driver education programs to score at least 80% on a driver education program pre-test (aligned to the DOT exam) before students take the DOT exam for a driver's license. Mr. Jordan explained the importance of having high quality requirements for driver education schools and the instructors that work for them. He emphasized that all driver education schools should: (i) have proper oversight, (ii) be well regulated, (iii) have consistent instruction, (iv) meet statewide requirements, and (v) have valid assessments to evaluate performance. Mr. Logan indicated that it would take DPI 5 to 7 years to implement recommendations from the assessment of the driver education program by the NCGHSP.

Brian Matteson, Fiscal Research Division, North Carolina General Assembly, summarized information on the funding of Cooperative Innovative High Schools (CIHSs). Mr. Matteson emphasized: (i) CIHS students generate State public schools allotment funding just as the same non-CIHS attending peers, (ii) additional financial support is provided to augment the operation of CIHSs, and (iii) postsecondary education partners generate State funding based on actual course enrollment by CIHS students.

Lanier McRee, Fiscal Research Division, North Carolina General Assembly, presented on current salary schedules for community college faculty. She provided charts comparing salary rankings of North Carolina community college faculty to other Southern Regional Education Board states. In addition, Ms. McRee gave a history of legislative actions related to salaries of North Carolina community college faculty from 2009-2016.

Jennifer Haygood, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, North Carolina Community College System, presented on the distribution of community college faculty salary funding provided in Section 30.5 of S.L. 2015-241. Fifty-four percent of the \$10 million in compensation funds were used for increases to instructional staff, and 46% to non-instructional staff. Fifty-three percent of the adjustments were made across the board (\$5.28 million), 28% were made for retention/market reasons (\$2.82 million), 7% were based on merit, and 12% were for other reasons (\$1.89 million). Ms. Haygood explained that the allocated money was distributed by community colleges and that it was used for both faculty and staff salaries. The distribution of funds was made using the following strategies: (i) across the board salary increases for faculty and staff, (ii) for market and retention purposes, and (iii) for merit pay/other. Ms. Haygood also explained that many colleges used a combination of strategies for compensation distribution and that some colleges used salary studies to determine which employees received pay increases. Interim President George Fouts advised the committee that he had strongly encouraged college presidents to distribute additional compensation on the basis of factors other than “across the board” raises.

Ms. Haygood also presented on the Tiered Funding Model used by North Carolina community colleges. She explained that the Tiered Funding Model allocates instructional funds on weighted Full-time Equivalent (FTE) enrollment statistics that are reported to the North Carolina Community College System to determine the community college's operating budget. Ms. Haygood provided data on how much FTE is generated based on courses found within the three tiers of the funding model.

Dr. Lisa Chapman, Chief Academic Officer, North Carolina Community College System, presented information on the NC Works Career Coaches Program (Program) established by Section 10.14(a) of S.L. 2015-241. The Program places community college career coaches in high schools to assist students with determining career goals and identifying community college programs that help them meet those goals. Dr. Chapman then noted the following about the Program:

- After reviewing applications submitted by 28 partnerships, the advisory committee recommended, and the State Board of Community Colleges awarded, funding to 15 community colleges on February 19, 2016.
- State professional development has been created to help for the support and guidance of Coaches.
- Career development facilitator training will be offered through the NC Works Training Center.
- Network connections will be made among all Coaches and the NC Works Career Pathway Director and regional facilitators.

Rep. Blackwell facilitated Committee discussion and offered closing remarks.



April 20, 2016

Katie Cornetto, General Counsel for the State Board of Education, explained the current process for criminal background checks for teachers, and concerns identified by recent media reports on criminal background checks. Some of the concerns raised include a lack of fingerprint criminal background checks in all school districts, variance in how criminal background checks are conducted by different school districts, and limited sharing of licensure discipline actions with other states. Ms. Cornetto explained that the current licensure process in North Carolina requires self-reporting by applicants of past criminal history. Suggestions have been made to the State Board of Education to require fingerprint checks for all applicants for licensure, which would require legislative changes to the General Statutes.

Dr. Paul Shaw, Director of Educator Ethics, Georgia Professional Standards Commission, explained the current process used by that Commission to investigate teacher ethics complaints. He also explained the Georgia Code of Conduct and ethics examination required for Georgia teachers. Dr. Shaw also provided information on the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education that maintains a clearinghouse known as the Multistate Educator Lookup System (MELS). Participation in the MELS allows Georgia to know if applications have been reported for disciplinary action in other states that may require additional investigation by Georgia.

The Committee next questioned a panel on teacher background checks including Ms. Cornetto, Dr. Shaw, Dr. John Welmars, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, New Hanover County Schools, Allison Schafer, General Counsel and Director of Policy, North Carolina School Boards Association, and Valerie Suessmith, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources, Henry County Schools, Georgia. Panel members discussed current processes in school districts, including frequent updating of background checks, cost factors, and breadth of coverage of background checks, including volunteers.

Cari Miller, Policy Director for K-3 Reading, Foundation for Excellence in Education, provided an overview of the fundamental principles for K-3 Reading. Ms. Miller indicated that NC is considered to have a comprehensive K-3 reading policy. She also provided information on how states, including NC have performed on nationally normed tests and other metrics since implementation of such policies. Ms. Miller recommended increasing coaching, raising expectations for teacher preparation, including raising the cut score for passage on the Foundations of Reading test, reinstatement of personal education plans for some students, and increasing supports for retained third graders to improve the Read to Achieve program. She also recommended, for continued growth beyond 3rd grade, extended professional development for 4th and 5th grade teachers, extended coaching services for 4th and 5th grade students, continued personal education plans for students retained or granted a good cause exemption in 3rd grade, continued parent involvement, and reporting through 5th grade on outcomes of students retained or promoted from 3rd grade through a good cause exemption.

Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction, provided information about the NC Read to Achieve program and how it has been implemented. Carolyn Guthrie, Director of K-3 Literacy, NC Department of Public Instruction, presented information on proficiency and retention rates beginning with the 2013-2014 school year, as well as improvement in performance on the 2015 NAEP scores. Ms. Guthrie closed with information on next steps, including support for students with good cause exemptions, support for non-proficient 5th graders, expanding master literacy trainers in districts, continued support from DPI regional consultants, and instructional coaches in all elementary schools.

Kevin Smith, Florida Center for Reading Research, Florida State University, presented the Committee with research on how to continue reading improvement after third grade. Mr. Smith noted the importance of birth-3 programs with highly literate teachers to close the oral language gap and the need for continued focused efforts on evidence-based practices in K-3 literacy instruction and transition into later grades. Mr. Smith explained that acquisition of skilled reading begins in K-3 with emergent reading and word recognition. However as students move into 4th and later grades, the focus needs to shift to different skills of comprehension through strategic processing of text and conceptual knowledge and vocabulary, as well as fluency, speed and ease of reading with comprehension. Thus, to maintain proficiency in 4th grade and later, schools cannot rely just on proficient reading skills gained by most students coming out of 3rd grade. For those students with exceptions who move to 4th without reading proficiency, schools must continue to offer the early grades reading skills focus before transitioning them to the upper grades reading focus. He recommended screening and progress monitoring be continued for students with reading difficulties in 4th grade and higher, and stated that continued intervention may be needed for some students, as well as content area literacy strategies encouraged for all students. Finally, Mr. Smith recommended reciprocal accountability at the state, local, and school building level.

#### April 21, 2016

Dr. Shirley Prince, Program Director, North Carolina Alliance for School Leadership Development (NCASLD), provided the Committee with information on the Principal Preparation Grants. Dr. Prince indicated that strong principals are important to accomplishing turnaround efforts and that it takes about 5 years for a principal to significantly change the school's consistent performance. Dr. Prince noted some challenges include high turnover among principals, citing the statistics of turnover at a rate of 27% for high poverty schools and 20% for affluent schools nationally. Dr. Prince noted that North Carolina, along with Rhode Island, Alaska, California, Oregon, New Mexico, Delaware, Nevada, and Idaho, have some of the highest principal turnover rates, averaging 2.7 to 3.5 years at the same school, and that at least half of NC school principals are at or approaching retirement. Dr. Prince explained how the NCASLD will oversee the principal preparation grant program enacted by the General Assembly in 2015, including receiving and evaluating proposals, collecting and reporting program

data, evaluating programs, and establishing a statewide professional learning network. The first awards are anticipated to be announced by August 2016.

Dr. Rebecca Garland, Deputy State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction, provided information on implementation of past legislation that established 2 major initiatives: 1) establishing the North Carolina AP Partnership with the College Board, and 2) funding all test fees for AP and IB course examinations. Dr. Garland provided data showing a consistent 4% growth in course enrollment across the State, and current funding of approximately \$12 million to cover the costs of all AP and IB examination fees. She also provided information on the initial success of the North Carolina AP Partnership, with increases from 2014 to 2015 of 18.7% in AP exam takers as compared to 6% nationally, an increase of 22.8% of Black AP exam takers as compared to 3.6% nationally, and 21.3% of Hispanic AP exam takers as compared to 8.2% nationally.

Kathleen Koch, North Carolina AP Partnership Director, College Board, presented on the Partnership's mission and initiatives, including statewide scholarships for teacher professional development and target districts that are rural and lower-performing. Ms. Koch provided data on North Carolina's growth in percentage of exam takers, percentage of exams taken, and increase in scores of 3 or above, as well as increases in minority student participation. Ms. Koch identified the PSAT, which provides AP Potential data to assist in identifying students for AP courses, as a critical tool, but noted that current legislation may prove a barrier to use of the PSAT.

Dr. Eric Smith, former Florida Commissioner of Education and former Superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, spoke about the Advanced Placement program and its potential to provide greater preparation and access to college for students using the AP Potential program. Dr. Smith discussed his experiences with the Florida AP Partnership providing a financial incentive for every student that scores at a certain level on an AP or IB examination. The incentive funding paid for the course and examination fees, as well as bonuses for AP teachers. Since implementation of the AP Incentive in Florida, exam participation has increased 423% and the number of students scoring at 3 or higher has increased 381%. Dr. Smith also discussed Florida's work in incentivizing industry certification, by providing a financial incentive to schools for each student earning a qualifying industry certification approved by the local workforce board.

Angela Whitford-Narine, President, ALS Education, Inc., presented on Commonwealth High School, a charter school established under a pilot program authorized in 2013. Ms. Whitford-Narine provided information on the typical student enrolling at Commonwealth, who are typically 17 and older, behind in credits towards graduation, and often in need of remediation. She also provided information that many of the students are responsible for childcare and more than half work full or part-time.

Thomas Hanley, current Principal of Stewart Creek High School, and former principal of Commonwealth High School, provided information on the unique characteristics of the program, including flexible scheduling, basic skills testing and remediation, a self-paced mastery based curriculum, on-site student services, and transition planning for post-

secondary opportunities. Mr. Hanley provided growth measures for Commonwealth for the 2014-2015 school year, including graduation of 17 students.

Dr. James Ritter, Legislative Analysis Division, North Carolina General Assembly, provided a historical context for NAEP, which was first administered in 1969, is Congressionally mandated, and has become known as the "Nation's Report Card". Dr. Ritter explained that NAEP allows achievement comparisons between states based on student sampling. NAEP assesses students in grades 4 and 8 biannually in reading and mathematics, and periodically assesses other subjects in grades 4, 8, and 12. Dr. Ritter also explained the process for representative sampling and conduct of NAEP testing. Karen Hoeve, Accountability Section Chief, Department of Public Instruction and Andrea Faulkner, NAEP State Coordinator, Department of Public Instruction, provided an overview of NAEP and student achievement results in North Carolina in reading and mathematics in grades 4 and 8. Ms. Hoeve also explained how the North Carolina end of course and end of grade results compare with NAEP results, and the recognition that North Carolina standards have a positive correlation with NAEP.

Finally, the Committee considered the report to the 2016 Session of the 2015 General Assembly. Following discussion and adoption of amendments to recommendations, the Committee adopted the report.

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## FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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**1. Teacher Compensation.** The Committee finds that most witnesses who testified to the Committee believe that teachers would respond most favorably, from an overall morale perspective, to having state-level goals over time for compensation advancement, rather than one-time bonuses. They also felt that any goals could be effectively communicated as subject to unexpected, significantly adverse economic developments impacting overall state revenues or expenditures. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly develop a multi-year plan for sustained compensation improvements for teachers subject to such adverse economic developments.

**2. School Administrator Salaries.** The Committee finds that the current school administrator salary schedule has been modified multiple times since its creation, leading to a difficult to administer schedule that lacks transparency that fails to adequately compensate such administrators so as to attract and retain those needed, especially in low-performing schools. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly revise the school administrator salary schedule to improve administration, transparency, and better support student achievement.

**3. Principal Leadership and Preparation.** The Committee finds that strong principal leadership is key to student success, and that high-quality principal preparation programs can develop strong principals. The Committee finds that it is beneficial to facilitate the transformation of school leader preparation by identifying effective evidence-based models. The Committee finds that the North Carolina Alliance for School Leadership Development was selected as the private, nonprofit corporation to administer the principal preparation grant program to award grants for the preparation and support of highly effective future school principals in North Carolina through a cooperative agreement with the State Education Assistance Authority. The Committee recommends that this program and its grant awards be both fully funded and closely monitored through independent assessment to ensure that selections are rigorous and ensure high-quality recipients who will develop principal preparation models that best prepare and support future school leaders.

**4. Early Childhood Education and Teenage Pregnancy Prevention.** The Committee finds high-quality early childhood education may be beneficial in providing a basic foundation for children's learning and development. However, the Committee finds that there remain substantial issues regarding whether early childhood education gains are sustainable throughout a student's educational progression and whether there are sufficient high-quality early childhood education resources and staffing available to have

a significant, sustained statewide effect. Additionally, the Committee finds that pregnancy prevention efforts can both delay parenthood until completion of education and decrease the chance that a child will be born outside of marriage, increasing the chances that the child will not be at-risk and will also have access to greater resources through his or her parents. The Committee therefore recommends continued, well-designed use of resources and possible expansion to the extent that high quality programming can be made available, and that the General Assembly actively consider pregnancy prevention and other efforts designed to encourage teenagers to complete schooling and become employed before having children and to avoid single parenting so as to give themselves and their children the best chance for success in school and after. The Committee finds that this program, and others like it, would benefit from a measurability assessment to independently evaluate the program's performance and return on investment and, therefore, recommends such an assessment be made. Finally, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly move all early childhood education programs in the State from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Public Instruction to be administered and supported by the State Board of Education in order to implement a Statewide vision and comprehensive approach in this area.

**5. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).** The Committee finds that a primary purpose of the recently enacted federal law, ESSA, is to provide greater control and flexibility for states in establishing elementary and secondary education policies. The Committee finds that the requirements for states under ESSA will continue to be impacted through the federal rulemaking process. The Committee recommends that the State Board of Education and the General Assembly remain actively and meaningfully engaged in the regulatory effort to maximize the greatest amount of flexibility for state action and decision-making. Further, the Committee recommends that the State Board of Education and General Assembly embrace the flexibility provided by ESSA to create state, rather than federally, driven policies and initiatives, and urges the General Assembly to work with the State Board of Education in creation of new policies as they are being developed.

**6. Academic Standards Review Commission.** The Committee finds that establishing high-quality North Carolina education standards can ensure curricular consistency and alignment with State assessments. The Committee therefore recommends that the North Carolina General Assembly receive standards updates on a regular basis from the State Board of Education to provide feedback during the standards development and implementation process.

**7. Measurability Assessments.** The Committee finds that measurability assessments that evaluate new or existing State program for performance and return on investment would be beneficial to the General Assembly in providing independent, evidence-based

information for making determinations on the continuation or expansion of programs and future funding allocations. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly enact House Bill 805, Measurability Assessments during the 2016 Short Session of the 2015 General Assembly.

**8. Career and College Ready Diploma Endorsements.** The Committee finds that the Career and College Ready Diploma Endorsements have been implemented statewide, but that no independent assessments have been completed on the impact of these endorsements. The Committee finds that this program, and others like it, would benefit from a measurability assessment to independently evaluate the program's performance and return on investment. The Committee recommends increased involvement by the Department of Commerce and Department of Public Instruction in identifying job skills to indicate career readiness and to further connect workforce development with education in an ongoing, meaningful, and sustained manner.

**9. Driver's Education:** The Committee finds that there are well-documented deficiencies and inadequacies in the current driver education program in the State when compared to national standards. As demonstrated by the technical assessment by the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly consider alternatives to the current model for delivery of driver education which may include administration by a different agency, better alignment between the driver education standards adopted by State Board of Education and the actual assessment for a driver's license administered by the Division of Motor Vehicles. The Committee also recommends continued improvement in data sharing between agencies in order to facilitate stronger alignments and evaluation of student drivers education in achieving desired outcomes.

**10. Teacher Background Checks:** The Committee finds that there are inconsistencies in how background checks are conducted for teachers in North Carolina and that non-performance of routine fingerprint checks for school employees statewide has resulted at least partly in the state's poor rating in certain national rankings on best ensuring that education hires are done in a manner to avoid employees with unacceptable backgrounds. The Committee recommends consideration of what additional standards may need to be implemented for thorough, complete, and consistent background checks to be conducted for all local school administrative units when licensing and employing education employees so as to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students. The Committee recommends that the State Board of Education promptly advise the General Assembly of any needed statutory changes to enable the most appropriate background checks for school system employees statewide. The Committee also recommends that the State Board advise the General Assembly of particulars that would be involved if statewide fingerprint checks for all such employees were to be required.

**11. Read to Achieve:** The Committee finds that recent NAEP scores show progress in literacy following the State's investment in Read to Achieve. However, the Committee also finds that students not achieving literacy proficiency may need more intensive services. Furthermore, well-qualified reading coaches may be instrumental in improving student outcomes. The Committee recommends that the General Assembly consider funding reading coaches and developing other literacy supports, such as extended school days, to provide intensive services to students not achieving proficiency.

In addition, the Committee finds that some experts believe that a decline in literacy proficiency may occur post-3<sup>rd</sup> grade as reading becomes more difficult and content based. As a result, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly study expansion of programs to ensure literacy proficiency is achieved and/or maintained in fourth grade and all the way through high school by identification of those not proficient and by considering interventions needed.

The Committee finds that high quality early childhood education may better prepare students to reach proficiency in literacy during the K-3 grades with proper maintenance of literacy efforts in all succeeding school years to maintain proficiency. Therefore, the Committee notes again the importance of Recommendation 4 on early childhood education.

**12. Dropout Recovery Pilots.** The Committee finds that Commonwealth High School was selected by the State Board of Education to participate in a two-year Dropout Prevention and Recovery Pilot Program created in 2014. The Committee finds that the principal of Commonwealth High School reports success in working with the high needs population served by the school. However, the Committee finds that the final report from the State Board on the pilot is not yet available. The Committee finds that this pilot, and others like it, would benefit from a measurability assessment to independently evaluate the program's performance and return on investment. The Committee recommends that the Committee review the final report on the Dropout Prevention and Recovery Pilot following the adjournment of the 2016 Short Session of the 2015 General Assembly and that an independent assessment be made.

**13. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).** The Committee finds North Carolina's rankings on NAEP for 2015 are higher than the national average for students in reading and mathematics and were 8<sup>th</sup> in the nation for 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading. Additionally, the Committee finds that a recent national report emphasizes that North Carolina was one of only a few states in the nation with standards and assessments that are closely aligned so as to eliminate an "honesty gap" in testing. The honesty gap is the discrepancy between NAEP testing results, and a state's testing results on student assessments. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the State Board of Education



continue to work to increase NAEP scores and align standards and assessments to eliminate any "honesty gap" that may exist between State and NAEP test results.

**14. Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB).** The Committee finds that AP and IB courses and exams can help North Carolina's students acquire skills and habits needed to be successful in college and to receive pre-college credits that can reduce to time and debt required to obtain a degree. Additionally, more than half of the AP exams taken by students in North Carolina's Class of 2015 received passing grades of 3 or higher, making them more likely to graduate in the standard college completion time. For 2015, North Carolina had the highest percentage increase in the nation in students taking AP exams, particularly among minority students who have historically been significantly underrepresented among the test takers. This dramatic improvement immediately follows the state's decision to pay for AP/IB students to take the test for the courses they complete in high school. Therefore, the Committee recommends continued support of the North Carolina Advanced Placement Partnership that pays for students' AP exam fees, that the General Assembly appropriate funds for teacher bonuses for their students scoring 3 or higher on the AP exams, and that the AP Partnership being expanded with additional funding to support additional training for local AP teachers and building administrators, especially in lower performing schools.

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## COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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2015-2016

**Speaker of the House of Representatives Appointments:**

Rep. Hugh Blackwell (Chair)

Rep. Rob Bryan

Rep. Ken Goodman

Rep. Kyle Hall

Rep. D. Craig Horn

Rep. Linda P. Johnson

Rep. Jonathan C. Jordan

Rep. Robert T. Reives, II

Rep. Paul Stam

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## COMMITTEE CHARGE/STATUTORY AUTHORITY

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Office of Speaker Tim Moore  
North Carolina House of Representatives  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-1096

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### HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PRACTICES

#### TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE NORTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**Section 1.** The House Select Committee on Education Strategy and Practices (hereinafter "Committee") is established by the Speaker of the House of Representatives pursuant to G.S. 120-19.6(a1) and Rule 26(a) of the Rules of the House of Representatives of the 2015 General Assembly.

**Section 2.** The Committee consists of seven members and one non-voting advisory member appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, as specified below. Members and advisory members serve at the pleasure of the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Speaker of the House of Representatives may dissolve the Committee at any time. Vacancies are filled by the Speaker of the House of Representatives. A Chair, other member, or advisory member of the Committee continues to serve until a successor is appointed.

Representative Hugh Blackwell, Chair
Representative Rob Bryan
Representative Ken Goodman
Representative D. Craig Horn
Representative Linda P. Johnson
Representative Jonathan C. Jordan
Representative Robert T. Reives, II
Representative Paul Stam – Advisory Member

**Section 3.** The Committee may study any of the following:

- (1) Pre-kindergarten through higher education policy.
- (2) Existing and potential educational programs.
- (3) Recruiting, retaining, and paying quality teachers and administrators.
- (4) Student academic remediation in higher education.

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PRACTICES

- (5) LEA funding flexibility.
- (6) School calendar flexibility.
- (7) Any other issue the committee deems relevant to this study.

Section 4. The Committee shall meet upon the call of the Chair. A quorum of the Committee shall be a majority of its members. No action may be taken except by a majority vote at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

Section 5. The Committee, while in the discharge of its official duties, may exercise all powers provided for under G.S. 120-19 and Article 5A of Chapter 120 of the General Statutes. The Committee may contract for professional, clerical, or consultant services, as provided by G.S. 120-32.02.

Section 6. Members and advisory members of the Committee shall receive per diem, subsistence, and travel allowance as provided in G.S. 120-3.1.

Section 7. The expenses of the Committee including per diem, subsistence, travel allowances for Committee members and advisory members and contracts for professional or consultant services shall be paid upon the written approval of the Speaker of the House of Representatives pursuant to G.S. 120-32.02(c) and G.S. 120-35 from funds available to the House of Representatives for its operations. Individual expenses of \$5,000 or less, including per diem, travel, and subsistence expenses of members and advisory members of the Committee, and clerical expenses shall be paid upon the authorization of the Chair of the Committee. Individual expenses in excess of \$5,000 shall be paid upon the written approval of the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Section 8. The Legislative Services Officer shall assign professional and clerical staff to assist the Committee in its work. The Director of Legislative Assistants of the House of Representatives shall assign clerical support staff to the Committee.

Section 9. The Committee may meet at various locations around the State in order to promote greater public participation in its deliberations.

Section 10. The Committee may submit an interim report on the results of the study, including any proposed legislation, to the members of the House of Representatives at any time. The Committee may submit a final report on the results of its study, including any proposed legislation, to the members of the House of Representatives prior to the convening of the 2017 General Assembly. Reports shall be submitted by filing a copy of the report with the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the House Principal Clerk, and the

HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION STRATEGY AND PRACTICES

Legislative Library. The Committee terminates upon the convening of the 2017 General Assembly or upon the filing of its final report, whichever occurs first.

Effective this the 11th day of January, 2016.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Moore", written over a horizontal line.

Tim Moore  
Speaker

