



# *From The Center Out*

*The Newsletter of the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research ... A voice for good government  
August-September-October 2004*

## **CENTER SAYS SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS AN IMPENDING CRISIS – STATE ACTION NEEDED**

North Carolina faces a chronic and growing shortage of public school teachers and must act now to increase the supply of new teachers and retain more of the existing pool of teachers, said the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research in a new study released in August in *North Carolina Insight* magazine. The Center said the state's rapidly increasing school-age population, efforts to reduce class size, and a 20 percent or more annual teacher turnover rate in some school districts will take the teacher shortage to crisis proportions if the state does not act quickly to get more teachers in the pipeline now.

The Center's research showed turnover rates for each of the 115 city and county school systems in North Carolina for the last five years and the number of teachers produced by every public and private college or university in North Carolina. The Center also made specific recommendations to increase the number of teachers produced and to help local systems better retain the teachers they have.

"On the supply side of the problem, North Carolina's public and private colleges and universities and community colleges need to produce more teachers," said Mike McLaughlin, editor of *North Carolina Insight*. "And, on the retention side of the problem, local school systems need to do more to nurture beginning teachers to prevent an early exit from the profession."

### **The Impending Crisis**

Currently, there are 86,000 teachers in North Carolina's public schools. And, the state must hire about 10,000 teachers each year just to staff existing classrooms. Yet, all the state's public and private universities *combined* produce only about 3,100 teachers a year. Only 2,200 of these graduates end up teaching in North Carolina, and only about 1,400 are still teaching three years later. Thus, the Center said local school systems are increasingly relying on hiring out-of-state teachers and teachers entering the profession through lateral entry programs to bridge the shortfall. Lateral entry allows professionals with at least a four-year college degree to enter the teaching field and take up to three years to become fully-licensed teachers.

However, the Center says these stopgap measures will not be able to avert an impending crisis, caused by three factors. First, the State Data Center estimates that North Carolina's school-age population will increase from 1.4 million in 2000 to 1.6 million by 2010, adding demand for about 1,000 teachers a year. Second, Gov. Mike Easley has successfully pushed for reductions in class size in kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> grades, creating demand for still more teachers. Third, the federal "No Child Left Behind" Act raises the bar by requiring "a highly qualified teacher in every classroom."

In addition to these factors, the Center says there already are acute shortages in particular subjects and geographic areas of the state. The subject areas of greatest shortage are math, science, special education, and foreign languages. Geographically, the 10 highest rates of teacher turnover the last five years were, in order, in the Hoke, Warren, Weldon City, Franklin, Edgecombe, Vance, Charlotte/Mecklenburg, Tyrrell, Hertford, and Person county school systems.

### **Teacher Turnover**

Nearly one in three new teachers leaves the profession after three years on the job, and about 40 percent leave after five years. Half of the new teachers in urban districts leave in the first five years.

For example, the Hoke County School System had the highest teacher turnover in the state over the last five years, losing 25.5 percent of its total teaching work force. That school system is the lead plaintiff in *Leandro v. The State of North Carolina*, a lawsuit the state lost that is forcing the state to provide more resources to help financially strapped poor school systems. Four other school systems – Warren (22.5 percent), Franklin (20.8 percent), and Edgecombe (20.6 percent) county systems, as well as Weldon City Schools (21.5 percent) – had average turnover above 20 percent over the last five years (1998-2003).

## **Center Recommendations To Address the Teacher Shortage**

The Center recommends that the Governor ask the Education Cabinet to take on the teacher shortage as its #1 priority. Created by statute in 1993, the Education Cabinet includes the Governor, the President of the University of North Carolina system (which is responsible for preparing the majority of the state's practicing teachers), the President of the N.C. Independent Colleges and Universities (32 of the 37 private colleges and universities have teacher education programs), the Chairman of the State Board of Education (the board that sets policy for public schools in North Carolina), and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Center says the Education Cabinet should set specific targets for increasing production of new teachers, to reach 11,000 annually by 2010. Additionally, the Center says the Cabinet and the General Assembly should adopt a plan and specific targets to address teacher shortages in subjects such as math and science and in certain geographic areas of the state.

The Center's research on the teacher shortage was funded in part by grants from Progress Energy of Raleigh and The Hillsdale Fund of Greensboro. Copies of the issue of *North Carolina Insight* containing the Center's research on the teacher shortage are available for \$10, which includes tax, postage, and handling. To order, write the Center at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, call (919) 832-2839, fax (919) 832-2847, or email [tbromley@nccppr.org](mailto:tbromley@nccppr.org).

## **New Generation of Influential Lobbyists Emerges in Center's Rankings**

The latest rankings of the most influential lobbyists in the N.C. General Assembly by the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research show a new generation of lobbyists emerging. The rankings include the first African American ever in the Top 10, ten new faces among the 50 most influential, and a new face at the top of the rankings. The Center's biennial rankings are based on surveys of all state legislators, registered lobbyists based in North Carolina, and the capital news media.

Kevin Howell, legislative liaison for Governor Mike Easley, is the highest-ranked African American lobbyist ever at 10<sup>th</sup>, moving up 30 spots from 40<sup>th</sup> in the 2002 rankings. Topping the rankings for the first time is Don Beason of Raleigh, who lobbies on contract for corporate clients such as AT&T, BB&T, IBM, Progress Energy, and Dale Earnhardt Inc., as well as local government entities such as Catawba County, the City of Hickory, and Albemarle Mental Health Centers. Zebulon D. Alley of Raleigh, who lobbies for more than a dozen corporate clients, had held the top spot since 1987 and finished 2<sup>nd</sup> this year. The 10 new lobbyists ranked among the 50 most influential represent, among other clients, Bank of America, the N.C. Bankers Association, BellSouth, the N.C. Home Builders Association, the N.C. Biosciences Organization, the State Board of Education, and the University of North Carolina.

## **The 10 Lobbyists New to the Ranks of the Most Influential**

Making their debut in the rankings of the most influential lobbyists in the N.C. General Assembly are Paul H. Stock at 24<sup>th</sup> representing the N.C. Bankers Association, Betty Turner at 28<sup>th</sup> representing Bank of America, R. Paul Wilms at 29<sup>th</sup> for the N.C. Home Builders Association, and Samuel M. Taylor, a contract lobbyist representing the N.C. Biosciences Organization, among others, at 33<sup>rd</sup>. They are followed by contract lobbyist Ken Melton (then with Alley & Associates and now at the N.C. Department of Revenue) at 35<sup>th</sup>, Robert Lammé of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services at 38<sup>th</sup>, R. Mark Fleming of the University of North Carolina system at 40<sup>th</sup>, contract lobbyist Richard H. Carlton at 42<sup>nd</sup>, Debra L. Derr of BellSouth at 43<sup>rd</sup>, and Linda S. Suggs of the State Board of Education at 49<sup>th</sup>.

## **How and Why the Rankings Are Done**

This is the twelfth time the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research has released its lobbyist rankings. "The rankings of the most influential lobbyists help citizens understand which key interests and organizations have clout with legislators in North Carolina. They also let citizens know who is *not* represented in the legislature," said Ran Coble, the Center's Executive Director. "The rankings shed light on what is often an invisible process. They show changes in the lobbying profession and which issues are hot," he added.

The new rankings of the *Most Influential Lobbyists in the 2003 N.C. General Assembly* are available from the Center for \$10. To order, write the Center at P.O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, call (919) 832-2839, fax (919) 832-2847, or email [tbromley@nccppr.org](mailto:tbromley@nccppr.org).

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**One of the benefits of Center membership is the opportunity to nominate yourself or others to our governing Board of Directors.** Board nominees should be willing to work hard, attend quarterly Board meetings, and assist with fundraising and increasing the Center's membership. The Board sets overall policy and direction for the Center's work and suggests ideas for *Insight* topics and other research reports. Depending on their backgrounds and expertise, Board members also review drafts of articles and major reports for accuracy and clarity. The 25-member Board is balanced by race, gender, and geographic location in North Carolina, as well as by political party affiliation. To nominate yourself or someone else willing to serve a three-year (2005-2007) term, please submit the name(s) and background information (including information on race, gender, political affiliation, and city of residence) to the Chair of the Board's Nominating Committee, Linda McGee, or to Center Executive Director Ran Coble. You may mail nominations c/o N.C. Center, P. O. Box 430, Raleigh, NC 27602, or FAX the information to the Center at (919) 832-2847, **no later than Thursday, November 4, 2004.** Please make sure that the person you nominate has agreed to serve if elected. You may use this form.

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