

North Carolina Guide to Strengthening Our Public Schools



PreK-12 Public Education Strategic Plan

North Carolina School Superintendents Association

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*Creating North Carolina's future through
a stronger system of public education.*

Executive Summary

The North Carolina School Superintendents Association (NCSSA) is a professional organization dedicated to the mission of providing leadership and advocacy for public school education throughout North Carolina. The members of NCSSA are compelled by a common mission and a sense of urgency to educate each young person in North Carolina so that our communities, state, and nation will continue to thrive.

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North Carolina’s ability to compete for jobs, develop a stronger economy, and promote greater economic prosperity for all of its citizens is dependent on the quality of its public schools.

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Transportation, health and human services, safety, and a pro-business climate are also important, but our state’s greatest asset is its people. Our future depends on today’s public school graduates who must be prepared for success in a highly skilled workforce, committed to continuous learning, and able to participate as productive citizens. We need graduates who are effective communicators, critical thinkers, collaborative workers, and whose creativity will drive entrepreneurship and innovation.

As Superintendents of North Carolina’s Public Schools, we believe it is imperative that North Carolina develops and commits to a shared vision for public education. This vision includes outlining the knowledge and skills that students must know and be able to demonstrate upon graduation in order to be successful learners, employees, and citizens in the 21st century. It also includes the instructional delivery and learning support systems, human capital, and funding needed to provide our students with a world class education.

This *North Carolina Guide to Strengthening Our Public Schools* is a proactive education reform plan developed by NCSSA to:



Create a public education system that better prepares North Carolina’s students for success in globally competitive jobs and in higher education;



Frame the debate on education issues and the funding necessary to both sustain and increase the accomplishments that have been made;



Focus the attention of policymakers on what will make a difference in student achievement;



Establish and maintain a strategic direction for public education; and



Galvanize support of stakeholders who will enable continuous forward momentum for improvement in the quality of public education.

The *North Carolina Guide to Strengthening Our Public Schools* contains six key goals and areas of strategic focus:

Prepared Graduates | All North Carolina students will graduate prepared for college, careers, and citizenship.

Assessment | School districts will use multiple, balanced, and appropriate assessments to measure student growth and achievement.

Instructional Delivery | All North Carolina public school students will receive high quality instruction delivered by the nation’s best teachers.

Digital Learning | North Carolina will embrace digital learning to transform our public schools and communities.

Human Capital | Develop North Carolina’s human capital for the provision of high-quality public education.

Funding Public Education | North Carolina will rank 25th nationwide in public school funding by 2025.

Key strategies have been identified to achieve each of the six major goals:

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PREPARED GRADUATES

Goal 1: All North Carolina students will graduate prepared for college, careers, and citizenship.

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Key Strategies

-  Integrate rigorous content with internationally benchmarked performance competencies.
-  Use multiple measures to assess students’ performance on college and career readiness standards.
-  Create and implement an aligned instructional delivery system.
-  Ensure all students have grade-appropriate career development experiences.



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ASSESSMENT

Goal 2: School districts will use multiple, balanced, and appropriate assessments to measure student growth and achievement.

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Key Strategies

-  Use high quality, evidence-based formative assessments to monitor student learning.
-  Use authentic assessments such as problem-based projects, collaborative presentations, and community review of student work.
-  Provide a web-based portal for sharing assessments, rubrics, and curriculum materials.
-  Provide state-supported access to statistical analysis and reporting tools that can provide relevant information to manage improvement of student learning, instructional delivery, and school performance.
-  Limit the number of summative assessments needed for accountability, national or international comparisons, and to validate the ongoing formative assessment process.
-  Adopt and implement a robust assessment model that provides meaningful information for decision-making about college and career readiness.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

Goal 3: All North Carolina public school students will receive high quality instruction delivered by the nation's best teachers.

Key Strategies

-  Provide funding and access to rich content and instructional resources.
-  Provide funding and access to digital tools, resources, and support.
-  Establish a stable timeline for statewide review and revision of curriculum standards.
-  Assure curriculum is aligned to state standards and meets the needs of a diverse student population.
-  Develop and implement benchmark assessments aligned with standards.
-  Provide funding for professional development for teachers and school leaders.



DIGITAL LEARNING

Goal 4: North Carolina will embrace digital learning to transform our public schools and communities.

Key Strategies

- 🏠 Include digital learning as a core component of all educational plans for innovation and personalized learning.
- 🏠 Provide reliable and effective infrastructure for all stakeholders at school and at home.
- 🏠 Provide state funding to support infrastructure for each district.
- 🏠 Provide technical support that will be available rapidly enough that instructional and business operations are minimally impacted by technology problems.
- 🏠 Provide a mobile device and access to rich digital resources for every educator and student at home and school.
- 🏠 Provide a state funding stream for employing a technology facilitator at each school and professional development to support digital learning.
- 🏠 Develop and implement standards for digital citizenship at every grade level.



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HUMAN CAPITAL

Goal 5: Develop North Carolina’s human capital for the provision of high-quality public education.

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Key Strategies

-  Increase salaries and benefits of all teachers, principals, administrators, superintendents and classified staff so that North Carolina will be in the top of its competitive market and in the top 10% in the nation.
-  Maintain a strong North Carolina State Retirement System.
-  Provide programs/incentives to encourage high school students to become teachers.
-  Provide strong mentoring and induction programs for new teachers and principals.
-  Reform licensure to provide flexibility for reciprocity for teachers from other states.
-  Implement a fair and uniform evaluation system that provides for timely reporting of student achievement data and other performance indicators to be considered in teacher and principal evaluations. The data and indicators should be derived from a balanced system of assessments that are valid and reliable.
-  Pass legislation providing for two-year or four-year contracts for teachers.
-  Provide funding and resources for professional development for teachers, principals, administrators, and classified staff.

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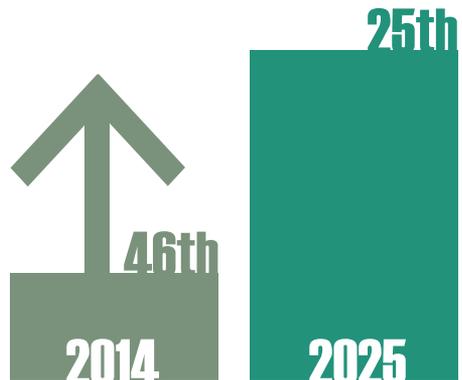
FUNDING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

Goal 6: North Carolina will rank 25th nationwide in public school funding by 2025.

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Key Strategies

-  Restore funding reductions and appropriate additional funding to assure that schools have adequate resources needed to deliver a world class instructional program, close the achievement gap, and ensure that all students are prepared for college, careers, and citizenship.
-  Expand pre-kindergarten programs by broadening eligibility requirements to serve more 3- and 4-year olds.
-  Assure that all new mandates are funded fully to include personnel required for implementation, materials and resources, professional development, monitoring and support, and evaluation.
-  Provide additional flexibility to school districts to allocate state resources to meet statewide accountability measures and student performance goals. All flexibility granted to charter schools should also apply to school districts.
-  Approve a statewide public school bond referendum to provide resources for facility additions, renovations, system upgrades, and new schools.



Closing

This *North Carolina Guide to Strengthening Our Public Schools* was developed by NCSSA as a proactive education reform plan to better prepare North Carolina’s students for a global job market, continued education, and productive citizenship.

Our intent was to frame the debate and focus attention on the education issues that we believe will make a difference in student achievement, and ultimately, in economic development and quality of life in North Carolina.

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We invite policymakers, elected officials, business and industry leaders, educators, parents, students, and all stakeholders to join this conversation, embrace a shared vision and strategic direction for public education, and provide the economic investment and funding needed to continue our forward momentum to improve our public schools and achieve success for our students.

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NCSSA members stand ready to work collaboratively with other entities across our state to achieve the goals, objectives, and strategies contained herein and **create North Carolina’s future through a stronger system of public education.** ■



Prepared Graduates

Goal: All North Carolina students will graduate prepared for college, careers, and citizenship.

Rationale

Since the early 1990's, the hyper-development of technology, increased world-wide focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics integration (STEM), the developing markets of Europe and the emerging markets of Asia and South America, the outsourcings of U.S. services, and the relocation of American businesses have combined to change the focus of American public education. It is no longer sufficient for students to demonstrate competence on standardized tests that measure their ability to succeed in a local economy; it has become paramount for American students to acquire the knowledge and skills that will enable them to ultimately succeed in the workforce, in institutions of higher education, and to compete globally.

The continually changing needs of the 21st century workplace require that skills such as adaptability, flexibility, critical thinking, problem finding, problem-solving, communication, collaboration, creativity, and information technology application must be emphasized in K-12 education.

As school superintendents, we are compelled by our common mission and a sense of urgency to educate all students in the state of North Carolina so that our communities, state, and nation can continue to thrive.

As Superintendents of North Carolina, we believe:

🎓 All students are capable of learning.

🎓 All learners in our schools must graduate *prepared* for careers, college, and citizenship to ensure that they can work successfully in a global market and live as productive citizens.

🎓 The economic vitality, democratic health, and future success of our communities, state, and nation depend upon the capacity of today's students to become tomorrow's extraordinary leaders, high performance workforce, and contributing citizens.

🎓 The curriculum for North Carolina schools must provide a strong foundation for setting challenging expectations of what all students should know and be able to demonstrate.

🎓 To move our students forward from content competence to performance excellence, we must embrace a curriculum that incorporates 21st century skills and international benchmarks and surpasses the expectations of current standards.

Objectives and Strategies

Standards, assessments, curriculum, instruction, and professional development must be integrated into an aligned system that will ensure college and career readiness outcomes for today's high school graduates.

Objective 1

College and career readiness standards that align with 21st century learning standards are essential for all students in North Carolina Public Schools. An accountability system that assesses learners' performance and growth in meeting these standards will be required.

Strategy 1A: Define and develop an integrated model of rigorous content and core performance competencies that combines state standards and 21st century/international performance skills.

Strategy 1B: Implement an accountability system that uses multiple measures to assess learners' performance and growth on college and career readiness standards that benchmark to 21st century learning/international standards.

Objective 2

An integrated and aligned instructional system is essential to ensure college and career readiness outcomes for today's graduates.

Strategy 2A: Create and implement an instructional system to develop curriculum, pedagogies, formative assessments, and teacher and leader professional development programs that support implementation of 21st century/international performance standards for learners.

Strategy 2B: Create and implement an integrated approach to expose all K-12 students to grade-appropriate career development experiences in partnership with local business, industry, and educational institutions.



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Goal: School districts will use multiple, balanced, and appropriate assessments to measure student growth and achievement.

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Rationale

We value assessment and recognize the critical role of assessment in the learning process. There are two major types of assessments, formative and summative, and each has a different purpose.

The purpose of formative assessment is to monitor student learning. The goal is to gather feedback about students' learning that can be used by both teachers and students to guide improvement.

The purpose of summative assessment is to evaluate student learning. The goal is to measure the proficiency of students at the end of an instructional unit, course, or school year. The summative measure is used to compare the students' proficiency to a standard or benchmark and to compare schools and school districts.

While each type of assessment is useful for one purpose, each has its limitations and may not be useful at all for other important instructional purposes. We believe that North Carolina's dependence on summative assessments to describe student achievement in our schools leaves an

incomplete picture of student learning and perpetuates the achievement gap. The summative assessment results are available *after* learning rather than *during* learning and do not meet the day-to-day needs of students and teachers in the learning process. We support the development of a more balanced system that addresses the informational needs of learners, instructors, and decision-makers.

A balanced assessment system assures access for teachers to evidence-based and reliable assessments that are student-centered, developmentally appropriate, and provide continuous meaningful feedback to inform the learning process. Improving the quality of formative classroom assessments is needed in North Carolina if we are to succeed in closing the achievement gap. Furthermore, the formative assessment process should include the use of multiple assessments including but not limited to student portfolios, problem-based projects, collaborative presentations, pre- and post-assessments to measure growth, benchmark assessments, and teacher and student generated self-assessments of learning. We must grow our repertoire of assessments to include authentic performance assessments that can help determine what students are able to *do* with their learning.

We share deep concerns about the disproportionate attention given to summative assessments in North Carolina. Currently more than 100 assessments are administered each year solely for the purpose of assigning a teacher effectiveness rating in compliance with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It is imperative that we re-think the appropriate touch points for mass assessment of every student required for accountability and find a more

optimal approach that reduces the number of summative assessments.

Another important assessment issue is our ability to determine our students' preparedness for college and careers. A balanced assessment system should provide meaningful information toward those exit outcomes for our graduates. The North Carolina Superintendents recommend that our state make available, at no cost to local school districts, a nationally recognized norm-referenced formative assessment product that can be used for the long-term as well as the short-term to measure student progress toward college and career readiness. An example of assessments designed to measure such progress is the Explore, Plan, and ACT suite of assessments.

Overall, a balanced assessment system should emphasize formative processes that provide real time, continuous data and information to teachers and students so that educators and parents can be proactive rather than reactive in the adjustment of their instructional and academic strategies in helping students grow academically. The summative component should be limited to those necessary only to provide meaningful information for accountability, national or international comparisons, and to validate the ongoing formative assessment process.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1

Classroom teachers will use high quality formative assessments to make informed decisions about student learning and instruction throughout the year.

Strategy 1A: Develop and implement classroom use of high quality, evidence-based formative assessments aligned with standards.

Strategy 1B: Identify and promote the use of authentic performance assessments such as student portfolios, problem-based projects, collaborative presentations, and community review of student work. Encourage use of digital portfolios to house performance assessments.

Strategy 1C: Provide a state-developed and supported web-based portal so that North Carolina educators can share assessments, rubrics, and curriculum materials.

Strategy 1D: Provide state-supported access to statistical analysis and reporting tools that provide relevant information to manage improvement of student learning, instructional delivery, and school performance.

Objective 2

North Carolina will identify the optimal use of summative assessments as required for accountability and national or international benchmarking.

Strategy 2A: Develop and implement a plan for limiting the number of summative assessments to specific grades or courses needed for accountability, national or international comparisons, and to validate the ongoing formative assessment process.

Objective 3

An assessment model to ensure that high school graduates are prepared for post-secondary college and/or career experiences is essential.

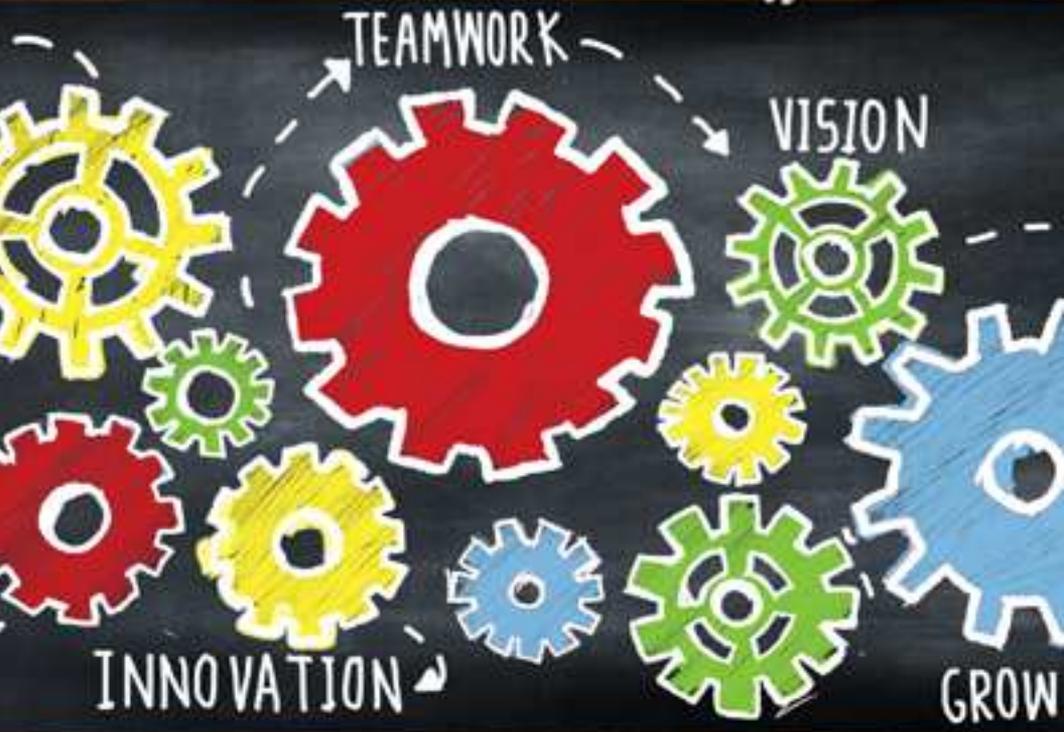
Strategy 3A: Adopt and implement a robust assessment model that provides meaningful formation for decision-making about college and career readiness. Consider using the ACT Aspire, Explore, Plan, and ACT suite of assessments.

References

Huebner, T. (2009). What Research Says about Balanced Assessment. *Educational Leadership*, 67 (3), 85-86.

Stiggins, R. (2008). Assessment FOR Learning, the Achievement Gap, and Truly Effective Schools. *Presentation at the Educational Testing Service and College Board Conference, Washington, DC, September 8, 2008.*





Instructional Delivery

Goal: All North Carolina public school students will receive high quality instruction delivered by the nation’s best teachers.

Rationale

North Carolina’s students are entitled to high quality educational services that develop core academic skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, communication, creativity, and digital skills. We expect our graduates to be prepared for further education (including technical education) and employment. We also expect our students to become learners for a lifetime who are capable of a successful transition into post-secondary education, an evolving 21st century workforce, and responsible, productive citizenship. In order to accomplish these goals for students, North Carolina must focus on supporting evidence-based practices pertaining to instructional delivery. To meet the diverse needs of today’s students, educators must have access to a broad range of differentiated learning resources, a wide repertoire of effective instructional practices, and the cultural intelligence to provide instruction across cultures in an inclusive learning environment. Infusing literacy strategies across the curriculum, engaging students in collaborative problem-based projects, promoting creativity and entrepreneurial processes, designing instruction to promote critical thinking, differentiating instruction for diverse learners, designing and analyzing quality assessments, and effectively using digital resources are just a few of the expectations of all teachers in the 21st century.

At a time when expectations of our educators are at an all-time high, both with regards to their professional expertise and our students’ achievement, our state has chosen to end

or reduce funding for critical functions needed to support educators in the professional improvement process. Funding for professional development, textbooks and instructional resources, instructional technology and support, and teacher professional development days have been significantly reduced or not funded at all in the past several years.

Salary schedules do not provide incentives for experienced master teachers to enter the field of school administration. Furthermore, the need for technology and digital resources continues to grow as we strive to provide a relevant and engaging educational experience for North Carolina's students.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1

Students learn best when all students have access to rich content and resources.

Strategy 1A: Develop and implement a reliable statewide Instructional Management System to house rich instructional content and resources.

Strategy 1B: Provide a dedicated funding stream for instructional materials, including textbooks, digital materials and content, and content-specific manipulatives and hands-on materials.

Strategy 1C: Provide a dedicated funding stream for technology tools to access digital content, robust and reliable infrastructure, and instructional technology support.

Objective 2

Students learn best when standards, instructional delivery and assessments are aligned.

Strategy 2A: Establish a stable timeline for statewide review, revision, and implementation of curriculum standards.

Strategy 2B: Support local school districts in selecting curriculum aligned to state standards that meets the needs of a diverse student population, including but not limited to racial, cultural, and socioeconomic diversity.

Strategy 2C: Develop and implement high quality evidence-based formative and benchmark assessments that are aligned with standards, can be used to guide instruction, and are part of a statewide Instructional Management System.

Objective 3

Students learn best when educators are engaged in meaningful learning experiences.

Strategy 3A: Provide a dedicated funding stream for professional development for teachers and principals to support implementation of evidence-based instructional practices and effective use of digital media and technology.

Strategy 3B: Create a pipeline for future school-based leadership that includes professional development and incentives/salary to attract excellent instructional leaders.

Strategy 3C: Provide additional dedicated professional development days for teachers to engage in meaningful learning experiences that will enhance and improve instructional delivery and student outcomes.



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Goal: North Carolina will embrace digital learning to transform our public schools and communities.

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Rationale

“Digital learning is any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student’s learning experience. It emphasizes high-quality instruction and provides access to challenging content, feedback through formative assessment, opportunities for learning anytime and anywhere, and individualized instruction to ensure all students reach their full potential to succeed in college and a career.

Digital learning encompasses many different facets, tools, and applications to support and empower teachers and students, including online courses, blended or hybrid learning, or digital content and resources. Additionally, digital learning can be used for professional learning opportunities for teachers and to provide personalized learning experiences for students. Digital learning advances school reform by increasing equity and access to educational opportunities, improving effectiveness and productivity of teachers and administrators, providing student-centered learning to ensure college and career readiness for all students, and recognizing teachers as education designers.”

From Alliance for Excellent Education, all4ed.org/issues/digital-learning

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1: Leadership

Strategy 1A: Develop a shared vision across North Carolina public school districts for innovation and personalized learning.

Strategy 1B: Model and value digital learning and include digital learning as a core component of all educational plans.

Strategy 1C: Realign human resources to support digital learning.

Strategy 1D: Provide flexible funding to support infrastructure, devices and digital content.

Objective 2: Connectivity and Digital Infrastructure

Strategy 2A: Provide reliable and effective infrastructure for all stakeholders at school and at home.

Strategy 2B: Provide sufficient network and internet connection bandwidth to support all school district access needs.

Strategy 2C: Provide technical support that will be available rapidly enough that instructional and business operations are minimally impacted by technology problems.

Objective 3: Tools and Hardware

Strategy 3A: Provide a mobile device for every educator and student that can be used at home and at school.

Strategy 3B: Assure that all mobile devices have sufficient offline capabilities to meet the needs of the students and school instructional programs.

Objective 4: Learning Management, Instruction and Digital Content

Strategy 4A: Provide students access to digital resources with a rich variety of media types for consumption and creation of information.

Strategy 4B: Provide educators access to high quality digital content.

Strategy 4C: Align digital tools and resources to advance student achievement.

Objective 5: Professional Learning and Support

Strategy 5A: Provide a state funding stream for employing a technology facilitator at each school.

Strategy 5B: Provide professional development to appropriate educators to facilitate training for all types of learners.

Strategy 5C: Provide differentiated, ongoing, sustainable professional development for educators that will meet their individual needs.

Objective 6: Digital Citizenship and Monitoring Safety

Strategy 6A: Develop and implement standards for digital citizenship at every grade level.

Human Capital

Goal: Develop North Carolina’s human capital for the provision of high-quality public education.

Rationale

According to a human capital management study out of Aspen Institute¹, research indicates that principals’ and teachers’ performance has more effect on student achievement than any other factor^{2,3}, and that teachers’ effectiveness in increasing student performance varies widely. The variance in teacher effectiveness is largely predicated on poor recruitment systems and an overly-broad application of professional development.

The core of education is teaching and learning, and the teaching-learning connection works best when schools have effective teachers working with every student every day. The quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers. Teachers have the challenging task of meeting the educational needs of a diverse student population, and compensation, support, professional development and first-rate evaluation systems are necessary to sustain and improve their efforts. In order to provide the highest quality public education that prepares North Carolina’s students for success in their careers and post-secondary education, schools must have the highest quality staff available.

Reform efforts should strive to increase the quantity, quality and capacity of educators and administrators as a means to improve student achievement and enhance professional growth. According to a survey of principals across North

Carolina, there is strong support for well-educated and experienced teachers for increased student achievement.

In order to develop North Carolina’s human capital for this task, professional development, support systems and policies should be developed to encourage and maintain high performance among teachers, administrators and classified staff. Immediate and long-term objectives should be to improve recruitment, retention, performance and professional development so that current and future North Carolina educators and support staff attain their greatest potentials.

References

1. Wurtzel, J. & Curtis, R. (2008). Human Capital Framework for K-12 Urban Education: Organizing for Success. *The Aspen Institute*. 1.
2. Chavez, S. (2006). An audit of human capital. *School Administrator*, 63(4), 42-44.
3. Darling-Hammond, L. & Friedlaender, D. (2008). Creating excellent and equitable schools. *Educational Leadership*, 65(8), 14-21.





Funding Public Education

Goal: North Carolina will rank 25th nationwide in public school funding by 2025.

Rationale

The State Constitution guarantees to each and every North Carolina child the right to an equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education with competent personnel and the resources necessary to support an effective instructional program. The recent Leandro case decision affirmed that all North Carolina children, regardless of where they are born or the wealth of their community, have a fundamental state constitutional right to the “opportunity to obtain a sound basic education.” Therefore, local school districts are entitled to sufficient state funding to provide this opportunity for all students.

State funding for K-12 education in North Carolina hit its apex in 2008-09. A deep recession caused state revenues to decrease drastically, and public education was not immune to the severe cuts needed to balance the budget. Funding per average daily membership has been reduced from \$5779 in 2008-09 to \$5486 in 2013-14. (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/fbs/budget/fundingchanges.pdf>)

The 2014-15 public schools budget exceeds the 2008-09 budget by over \$60 million. However, if you deduct the cost increases for salary and benefit adjustments since 2008-09, the funding available for classroom instruction has been reduced over \$1 billion and the number of students has increased by over 43,000 pupils.

An October, 2014, report by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (<http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=4213>)

showed that North Carolina's percent change in spending per student from 2008-2015 was -14.5% (inflation-adjusted).

This ranks North Carolina 41st out of the 47 states that were included in the study, worse than all other states in the report except Oklahoma, Alabama, Arizona, Idaho, Wisconsin, and Kansas. The dollar impact over this period of time is \$855 less per student. And in fiscal year 2014-15, when many other states were increasing per pupil funding, North Carolina's per pupil funding decreased by 4.7%, the worst one year change in the country except Nevada.

Almost 90% of a school district's budget is used for salaries and related benefits. The primary strategy that districts have available to reduce expenditures in times of budget reductions is to eliminate personnel positions. As a result, North Carolina school districts are being forced to shed personnel and increase class sizes at a time when expectations for prepared graduates and accountability for high academic achievement are at an all-time high.

Since 1970, the Public School's share of the State's General Fund has decreased 15.2%. If our Public Schools were still funded at the same percentage as in 1969-70 (52.5% of the General Fund), we would currently have an additional \$3.05 billion for our students. It is imperative that the General Assembly develop a strategy to increase funding for public education to ensure that the state meets its responsibility to provide public education as a core function of state government and to promote economic development and prosperity throughout North Carolina.

School facility needs continue to loom as well. In the 2010-11 Facility Needs Survey conducted by the Department of Public Instruction, over \$8 billion in facility needs were identified over the ensuing five-year period across North Carolina by local school districts. Needs identified included new schools, school additions and renovations, furnishings and equipment, and land. With the additional pressure faced by local school districts to make up for losses in state funding with local

resources, the local capacity to fund facility improvements is severely jeopardized. Just as a statewide bond referendum was put to the vote of the people and successfully passed in 1996, we believe that today's immense backlog of school facility projects merits the General Assembly's action to approve a public school facility bond referendum.

Objectives and Strategies

Objective 1

Increase state funding for public education.

Strategy 1A: Restore funding reductions and appropriate additional funding to assure that schools have adequate resources needed to deliver a world class instructional program, close the achievement gap, and ensure that all students are prepared for college, careers, and citizenship.

Strategy 1B: Expand pre-kindergarten programs by broadening eligibility requirements to serve more 3- and 4-year olds.

Strategy 1C: Assure that all new mandates are fully funded to include personnel required for implementation, materials and resources, professional development, monitoring and support, and evaluation.

Strategy 1D: Provide additional flexibility to school districts to allocate state resources to meet statewide accountability measures and student performance goals. All flexibility granted to charter schools should also apply to school districts.

Strategy 1E: Approve a statewide public school bond referendum to provide resources for facility additions, renovations, system upgrades, and new schools. ■

For more information

Detailed information is provided in each of the six areas of strategic focus, including the primary goal, rationale, objectives, and key strategies. This expanded version of the North Carolina Guide to Strengthening Our Public Schools can be accessed on the website of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators at www.ncasa.net.

This guide is supported by the superintendents of North Carolina's 115 public school districts and was created through their collaboration, with leadership from the following Co-Chairs:

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