LEGISLATIVE & POLICY AGENDA

NCASA
NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION
OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

2019 - 2021

PRESENTED BY THE NCASA ADVOCACY TEAM

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ADVOCATING FOR THE FUTURE OF NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Association of School Administrators (NCASA) is the only professional organization in the state that represents the entire leadership team of both North Carolina's individual schools and school systems. We seek to ensure quality learning experiences for all students through visionary and effective leadership. Our team and members look forward to working alongside you as we serve the more than 1.5 million children that are the future of our great state.

- Refine the A-F school performance grading system.
- Increase funding for school mental health and security personnel and for facility safety enhancements.
- Continue to increase the state's investment in improving educator pay and benefits.
- Align the public school calendar with the community college calendar.
- Approve a statewide school facility bond referendum.

NCASA respectfully asks our state's leaders to consider the following goals and focused initiatives to attract and retain the highest quality personnel for public schools statewide and support enhanced achievement and future readiness for all North Carolina students.

Effective Measurement of School and Student Success

– **Make the 15-point grading scale for the A-F school performance grades permanent** to ensure a fair comparison of annual grades, providing stability in accountability measures governing school operations.

– **Give student growth a greater impact in A-F grading.** Show the true work and progress of our schools by increasing the current 20% weighting of student growth.

– **Exclude schools that "meet growth" standards from the definition of and penalties for low-performing status** to reward academic improvement in struggling schools.

– **Provide a dedicated state funding stream** and additional resources to low-performing schools and districts to help them implement new approaches to mitigate the unique challenges that make it more difficult for their students to excel.

– **Provide incentives for high performing schools** to encourage student growth and reward continued school success.

– **Reduce student testing** through better alignment of federal, state and local accountability requirements for measuring performance and growth in all grade levels.

– **Ensure a rigorous learning environment** for all students by measuring all directly or indirectly state-funded educational entities by the same high standards of accountability governing traditional public schools.

Excellent Educators for Every Student

– **Increase pay for all North Carolina educators** – teachers, principals, instructional support professionals, non-certified personnel and central office staff – to ensure attraction and retention of quality employees essential for student success.

– **Reinstate retiree health coverage** for school employees who begin work on or after January 1, 2021 (and under current law would not have that benefit).

– **Maintain current retirement and health benefits** for school employees due to their positive impact on recruiting and retaining excellent educators.

– **Reinstate advanced degree supplements** for teachers and principals to reflect the value higher education attainment holds for school leadership and classroom success.

– **Invest in educator training to improve student achievement and instruction** by offering enhanced support for teacher and principal preparation programs, in-service professional development and mentorships.

– **Build on recent progress in improving school leader compensation and continue refinement of the principal pay plan** to make it more competitive among Southeastern states and to create a salary structure that teachers and assistant principals will view as an attractive career progression.

– **Help school districts address staffing shortages** by providing reciprocity in accepting educator licenses from other states without additional NC tests; allowing non-educators with significant experience to teach in their specialty; and enhancing the teacher pipeline by establishing career pathways for military veterans, teacher assistants and high school students.

Adequate and Equitable Resources For ALL Schools and Students

– **Approve hardship waivers from the K-3 class size mandate** for districts that cannot hire enough teachers and/or provide adequate space to open additional classrooms as required.

– **Allow North Carolinians to vote on a significant statewide bond** to assist local counties with addressing the $8.1 billion in school facility construction and renovation needs identified through 2021.

– **Provide public schools with a sales tax refund or exemption** similar to what is provided for cities, counties, public universities, charter schools, private schools, and nonprofit organizations, thereby restoring a funding source eliminated for districts under a 2005 state budget provision.

– **Develop a plan to repay the $730 million in fine and forfeiture collections** that NC courts have ruled the state must constitutionally provide to school districts and traditionally are designated for technology funding.

– **Increase technology funding for school districts** so all students, teachers and administrators have access to modern technology, equipment and software.

– **Align pre-K regulations with the K-12 education system** and continue increasing availability to allow all children to reach their full potential.

– **Increase the state's per-student investment** to ensure each district can provide the personnel and tools (including textbooks, classroom supplies, digital resources, career-technical education equipment, modern buses, and other resources) needed to give every student a high-quality education in preparation for college and/or a career.

– **Maintain fair funding of both district and charter schools** by preventing changes that would require districts to share funds with charters for programs they do not offer or for grants and reimbursements that charters may seek for themselves.

– **Place a moratorium on state expansion of private school vouchers,** the Innovative School District pilot, virtual charter schools and any other initiative sending public tax dollars to private, for-profit entities.

Local Flexibility for Enhanced Innovation and Transformation

– **Provide local boards of education the same flexibility granted to charter schools** in setting a school calendar that best meets needs of local students and allows alignment with nearby colleges and universities to facilitate dual enrollment and advanced course offerings for high schoolers.

Efficient Operations & Safe Learning Environment for All Schools and Districts

– **Prevent additional cuts to school personnel in all aspects of school operations**, including the central office allotment, which is now only 0.9% of the state's K-12 education budget due to cuts the last two years that have reduced this critical district-level administrative oversight and support back to 1995-1996 levels at a time when central offices oversee 33% more students, implement scores of new programs, and ensure compliance with a growing number of data and reporting requirements.

– **Expand the 2018 investment in school safety enhancements by providing recurring funds** for those grant initiatives that received only one-time funding, particularly for adding school resource officers and student support personnel (nurses, psychologists, counselors and social workers.)

OUR MISSION

NCASA was established in 1976 and is a nonprofit umbrella organization uniting 12 facets of school leadership and more than 7,000 individuals across the state with the common mission of ensuring student success through visionary leadership. NCASA and two core affiliates funded through our organization, the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association and the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association, provide services in communications, professional development and advocacy to help school leaders excel in providing quality learning experiences for all students.

OUR AFFILIATES

North Carolina Association for Career & Technical Education
North Carolina Association of Compensatory Educators
North Carolina Association of School Business Officials
North Carolina Council of Administrators of Special Education
North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association
North Carolina Professors of Educational Leadership

North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association
North Carolina School Public Relations Association
North Carolina School Superintendents' Association
North Carolina Technology in Education Society
Personnel Administrators of North Carolina
School Nutrition Association of North Carolina

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In the absence of NCASA member feedback on a specific issue affecting North Carolina's public schools, NCASA will use the following principles as guidelines for formulating the association's position:

APPROPRIATIONS/FUNDING
- The General Assembly should provide sufficient resources to ensure that all public school allotments are fully funded.
- All state mandates should be fully funded before implementation.
- New and/or expanded programs should not occur at the expense of existing public school programs and services that school leaders deem are essential and are working well.

PUBLIC SCHOOL POLICIES
- Ensuring the academic growth for every student should be the driving force behind each public policy decision affecting North Carolina's public schools.
- Since one size does not fit all in North Carolina's public schools, local control should be preserved to ensure individual needs in different schools and school districts are met.
- The state should ensure that public school administrators are well-prepared, highly motivated and strongly supported, since these individuals play a key role in delivering quality educational services to students in Grades K-12.

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