



State Board Review

A Publication for Members of the
N.C. Association of School Administrators

June 6, 2008

The State Board of Education (SBE) met June 3-5, 2008. The pages that follow summarize the board's actions for this month.

BOARD APPROVES CHANGES TO TESTING/ACCOUNTABILITY

The State Board of Education approved changes Thursday to North Carolina's testing and accountability program as the Board begins the process of revamping the state's 15-year-old ABCs accountability program. Chairman Howard Lee reminded State Board members of the work ahead of them, "I'd like to emphasize we have taken the first step of many steps to come."

Changes were presented by Board member Wayne McDevitt who chaired a workgroup of State Board of Education members that made policy recommendations based on proposals previously presented by the Board's Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability.

Last month the workgroup presented a document encompassing a significant number of the proposals from the Blue Ribbon Commission. Following May's meeting, the Board took the recommendations under review and solicited comments from stakeholders for approximately 30 days. According to McDevitt, feedback which included 165 emails shared with the Board was overwhelmingly positive. The workgroup's document set forth in May was adopted with limited updates made for clarification.

Eleven of the adopted changes will be implemented in the 2008-09 school year, while seven policies requiring further development will be addressed in the comprehensive implementation plan to be presented to the State Board in October. Timelines, resources needed and plans to involve the business community and other stakeholders are to be included in that report.

Immediate changes include the elimination of the state's fourth- and seventh-grade writing tests, which will be replaced with a K-12 writing assessment system that includes authentic and on demand writing assignments appropriate to each grade level and backmapped from the graduation project for LEAs to use in assessing these K-12 assignments. Due to federal No Child Left Behind requirements, the 10th-grade test may still be offered for the 2008-09 school year.

All changes are outlined in the document "Framework for Change: The Next Generation of Assessments and Accountability," which can be accessed at: <http://www.ncasa.net/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=211>.

The proposals from the Blue Ribbon Commission were fully endorsed by the North Carolina Association of School Administrators (NCASA), the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association (NCSSA) and the North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association (NCPAPA), all of which were instrumental in getting that commission's work started last year.

NCASA Executive Director Bill McNeal addressed the Board in Thursday's meeting stressing the need to work together to implement the adopted changes. "We as administrators want to work arm in arm, shoulder to shoulder with you. We want to be part of the solution, not part of the problem and we are committed to improving performance of our students."

Lloyd Throer, NCPAPA Executive Director also expressed his approval of the recommendations by emphasizing NCPAPA's goal of fairness in testing and the significance of the changes in order to achieve that goal, "we thank you for listening to our concerns and we thank you for this document."

DATA REPORTING STALLED

The State Board of Education temporarily removed the reporting requirement found in the School Executive: Principals Evaluation Policies. The requirement would require LEAs to annually report to DPI summative ratings of all school executives on the new evaluation tool to ensure validity of the instrument.

The North Carolina Principals and Assistant Principals' Association (NCPAPA) and the North Carolina Association of School Administrators (NCASA) oppose this policy recommendation. While we support ensuring validity, collection of all data is unnecessary to perform this task.

Board member at Large, Patricia Willoughby, suggested temporarily removing the reporting requirement during the Twenty First Professionals' committee of the State Board of Education Wednesday.

"It's reasonable to wait a year," said Willoughby.

Eulada Watt, State Board member and former principal, expressed to the committee that time is helpful for adaptation to a new evaluation instrument. She stressed administrator trust is key to the progress of all future evaluation tools.

The State Board of Education will review the reporting requirement at the August board meeting. NCPAPA and NCASA members should contact State Board representatives and urge them to conduct periodic audits in lieu of a statewide transmittal of all principals' evaluations. Audits would address other concerns NCPAPA and NCASA have with the current reporting proposal. Those concerns include confidentiality of personnel records, personnel time and cost associated with transferring the information, and administrator trust with the new evaluation system and DPI.

All other related policies of the School Executive: Principals Evaluation were adopted by the State Board of Education Thursday. These related policies require principals be evaluated annually using the new instrument and all principals and individuals responsible for their evaluations to complete state-approved training on the new instrument.

ACTION ITEMS

The State Board of Education took action on the following items:

21st CENTURY PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE

Action

Approved TCP 1 - School Executive: Principal Evaluation Policies (*with changes outlined above*)
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcp/0806tcp01.pdf

Approved TCP 2 - State Evaluation Committee Program Approval Recommendations
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcp/0806tcp02.pdf

Action on First Reading

Approved TCP 3 - Recommendations from the Advisory Board on Requests for Exception from Teacher Licensing Requirements (*panel recommendations presented in closed session*)
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcp/0806tcp03.pdf

Approved TCP 4 - Approval of Guilford County Schools Alternative Licensure Program for Lateral Entry Teachers (*moved to action on first read*)
http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcp/0806tcp04.pdf

GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE STUDENTS

Action

Approved GCS 1 - Discussion of HSP-M-001 Course for Credit Policy

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/gcs/0806gcs01.pdf

Approved GCS 2 - Standard Course of Study for English Language Development, K-12

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/gcs/0806gcs02.pdf

Action on First Reading

Approved GCS 3 - Changes to NC's NCLB Consolidated State Application Accountability Workbook

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/gcs/0806gcs03.pdf

BUSINESS/FINANCE AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING

Action on First Reading

Approved TCS 1 - Approval of Grant

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcs/0806tcs01.pdf

Approved TCS 2 - Pre-Approval of Financial and Business Services' Policy Manuals

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcs/0806tcs02.pdf

Approved TCS 3 - Membership for the State Advisory Council on Indian Education (*moved to action on first read*)

http://www.ncpublicschools.org/sbe_meetings/0806/tcs/0806tcs03.pdf

Members of the NCASA staff represent NCASA at all meetings of the State Board of Education.

If you have questions about the issues discussed in this State Board Review, please contact

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