



State Board Review

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

March 7, 2008

The State Board of Education (SBE) met March 4-6 at the Education Building in Raleigh. The pages that follow summarize the board's actions for this month.

N.C. Education Leaders Meet with Spellings

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings fielded questions Wednesday from members of the State Board of Education as part of the Board's monthly meeting, before participating in a focus group meeting with North Carolina superintendents, principals, teachers and parent leaders. NCASA Executive Director Bill McNeal served as facilitator for the focus group meeting, which State Superintendent June Atkinson arranged to enable North Carolina education practitioners to share their concerns regarding the No Child Left Behind law.

In both the public meeting with the SBE and the focus group meeting of North Carolina education leaders, Secretary Spellings touted North Carolina as being among the pioneers in state testing and accountability programs that preceded No Child Left Behind's requirements.

"Absolutely, there's more to praise about North Carolina than to criticize," she said.

Spellings is touring the country to promote the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind and to get feedback on how to improve the program.

"No Child Left Behind, love it or hate it, has been a real game changer for education," Spellings said.

But she also acknowledged that federal education and Congressional leaders who must decide if the program will continue have much to learn from states like North Carolina, which is participating in a federal pilot program focusing on student academic growth over time and not just an all-or-nothing measure of proficiency. She referred to this same "growth model" pilot as one possible solution when asked by Wilson County Superintendent Larry Price about the possibility of federal changes to address the problem of more schools and school districts being labeled as failing and the rapid ratcheting up of standards.

Spellings also acknowledged, in response to a question from NCASA President-Elect Evan Myers, that she is "open-minded" about possible federal changes to allow tests that are retaken to count for the school, whenever the student shows proficiency.

"That's the 'first test or best test' scenario," Spellings said, "and Texas has raised this is an issue as well." She said technology is improving the options for multiple tests to be given and calculated in a timeframe that still allows parents to receive needed notification about their options and their child's performance.

State Superintendent June Atkinson noted that North Carolina has requested approval for counting students as proficient when they succeed on retaken tests and indicated she would follow up with the federal education department now that Secretary Spellings has heard this issue from school leaders who see this as a needed improvement.

New Principal Evaluation Instrument Training Announced

Dr. Jean Williams and the Department of Public Instruction's Professional Development staff on Wednesday provided information on the training plan for the new principal evaluation instrument to the State Board of Education's 21st Century Professionals Committee.

The first phase of training will be conducted in May. McRel will provide five-day in-depth training sessions for two 30-member cadres of professionals who will train throughout the state. The dates of these sessions will be May 5-9th and May 12-16, 2008.

The cadres will then be deployed to provide two-day training sessions for principals regionally during the months of June and July 2008. These eight sessions will take place on:

- June 23-24
- June 25-26
- July 7-8
- July 9-10
- July 14-15
- July 16-17
- July 21-22
- July 23-24

Principals are encouraged to start making arrangements to participate in one of the two-day sessions. The N.C. Principals & Assistant Principals' Association (an affiliate of the N.C. Association of School Administrators) and the N.C. Department of Public Instruction's Professional Development Division will be providing further information on registration and locations.

SBE Vows to Move Forward on Testing Recommendations

The State Board of Education's Vice Chairman, Wayne McDevitt, has been leading a team of State Board members and staff from the Department of Public Instruction to study the implementation and feasibility of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability's recommendations.

The team's proposals will be scheduled as discussion items for the April State Board of Education meeting, according to McDevitt.

"Testing and accountability must be a high issue for us," said State Board Chairman Howard Lee. "We must move forward and take leadership on this issue."

The N.C. Principals & Assistant Principals' Association and the N.C. School Superintendents' Association have endorsed the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission of Testing and Accountability, and both have urged the State Board to move expeditiously on these matters.

SBE Approves 2008-2009 Supplemental Budget Request

The State Board of Education approved the public schools' supplemental budget request for the 2008-2009 fiscal year on Thursday. The total budget request is \$385,721,478, which is a 5 percent expansion of the current year's budget. Requests include, funding 16 regional data coaches to help school systems use test data to improve student performance. This request aligns with the recommendations found in the Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability report. For a full review of the State Board Supplemental Budget FY 2008-2009 request, please visit: <http://www.ncpapa.org/forms/0809Budget/SBEBudgetFY0809.pdf>

Action Items

The State Board of Education took action on the following items. Please click on the link for further information.

GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE STUDENTS COMMITTEE (GCS)

Action

- **APPROVED** Impact of Possible Revision of K-5 NC Standard Course of Study in Mathematics - http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/gcs/0803gcs01.pdf

Action on First Reading

- **APPROVED** Waiver to Allow Five Pilot School Systems to Replace Present Special Education Identification and Eligibility Procedures with the Responsiveness to Instruction Procedures-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/gcs/0803gcs03.pdf

BUSINESS/FINANCE AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE (TCS)

Action

- **APPROVED** 2008 – 2009 Supplemental Budget Request-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/tcs/0803tcs01.pdf

Action on First Reading

- **APPROVED** Approval of Grants-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/tcs/0803tcs02.pdf

21ST CENTURY PROFESSIONALS COMMITTEE (TCP)

Action

- **APPROVED** Policy On Eligibility For State Teacher Of The Year-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/tcp/0803tcp01.pdf

Action on First Reading

- **APPROVED** Adoption of a Praxis II Test for Licensure in Latin and Deletion of Expired Testing Requirements-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/tcp/0803tcp03.pdf

LEADERSHIP FOR INNOVATION COMMITTEE (LFI)

Action on First Reading

- **APPROVED** Program Approval Exemption Requests Under the Innovative Education Initiatives Act -
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/lfi/0803lfi01.pdf
- **APPROVED** School-Based Calendar Waivers for Educational Purposes-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/lfi/0803lfi02.pdf
- **APPROVED** Final Approval of New Charter Schools-
http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/sbe_meetings/0803/lfi/0803lfi04.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 Pre-View, please contact Beth Worsley, Director of Communications, at 919-828-1426 or bworsley@ncasa.net or Emily Doyle, Assistant Director for the N.C. Principals & Assistant Principals' Association, at 919-833-3205 or edoyle@ncpapa.net.