

The Public School Forum's Friday Report

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The Public School Forum expresses its sympathy to the family of Jo Ann Norris, Associate Executive Director of the Public School Forum, upon the death this Tuesday of her brother, James S. Payne. The graveside services for Mr. Payne are set for today, Friday, July 24th, at 3:30 p.m. at Pinewood Memorial Park in Greenville, NC.

Bill Harrison Stepping Down as Educational CEO

Less than one week after the court ruling that re-established the elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction as the chief administrative officer of the Department of Public Instruction, Bill Harrison, the CEO of Public Schools appointed by the Governor with support from the State Board of Education, announced his retirement. Since the court ruling was announced there has been extensive media coverage of the decision and speculation regarding what kind of working relationship would be established between Atkinson and Harrison as their roles were reversed within the Department. Harrison's decision to retire ends that speculation and leaves Atkinson in charge of the Department; albeit, the State has yet to decide if it will appeal the court decision.

Harrison will retain his position as Chair of the State Board of Education. Commenting on Harrison's decision, John Dornan, the Forum's Executive Decision, said, "Not many people would walk away from a job paying \$265,000 a year. His decision and the announcement he issued underscore his integrity and commitment to young people. He brings to the Board many of the same strengths possessed by Jay Robinson, widely viewed as the strongest Board Chair in recent history. Like Robinson he is widely respected within the educational community. Like Jay he had worked in large and small districts and understands the needs of both. And his decision this week has earned him the respect of many in the public policy arena and the general public."

Revenue Package Remains in Limbo

On Wednesday night and Thursday morning media was reporting that the House and Senate revenue committees had reached an agreement on an \$981 million tax package. Late Thursday afternoon it was announced that the agreement had broken down and legislators in both houses went home for the weekend leaving the revenue package in limbo.

Revenue Package (cont'd)

It appeared that there was a solid agreement and details of the proposed tax package were widely circulated by media outlets across the state (see details later in this story). However, it was also reported that legislators in both houses were not happy that key provisions that had originated in either the House or Senate were not part of the final revenue package.

What had been agreed to :

Tax	Amount Raised (in millions) for FY 2009-10
1-cent sales tax increase	\$803.5
2 percent income tax surcharge	\$197.0
2 percent corporate income tax surcharge	\$15.4
Digital downloads and online purchases	\$8.4
Conforming to Internal Revenue Code changes	(\$116.3)
0.8 cent increase per can of beer (5-cents per 6-pack)	\$12.6
5 percent increase on liquor	\$20.1
4-cent increase per wine bottle	\$2.9
10-cent-per-pack cigarette tax increase	\$33.3
2.8 percent increase on other tobacco products	\$5.0
Total	\$981.9 million

It is not altogether clear what caused the revenue agreement to break down. Some are reporting that the Senate could not muster a majority behind the plan. Others speculate that Governor Perdue's public announcement that she would not support a tax surcharge on working families threw the issue into doubt. Whatever the reason, it appears lawmakers will need to begin again on Monday to build a consensus around a new budget package.

NCDPI to Host Webinar on the 2008-09 Preliminary ABCs/AYP Results

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires local school districts to make preliminary Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results available to parents and their communities. Local school districts released their schools' preliminary AYP reports on Tuesday. This preliminary data release allows time for Title I schools to notify parents in cases where the parents have the option of public school choice or supplemental educational services (tutoring) under NCLB.

NCDPI to Host Webinar (cont'd)

Due to several changes being implemented this year that will affect the reporting results, DPI will be hosting a webinar on the 2008-09 ABCs/AYP release next Tuesday, July 28, from 10-11 a.m. The NCDPI Accountability Policy and Communications Director Lou Fabrizio will be discussing changes to the 2008-09 ABCs/AYP accountability program and be available to respond to any questions regarding this year's release. To sign up for the webinar, go to: <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/425071377> . The State Board of Education will approve the 2008-09 ABCs/AYP results at its Aug. 6 meeting.

BWF Introduces Career Award for Science and Math Teachers

The Career Awards for Science and Mathematics Teachers program is a partnership between the North Carolina State Board of Education and the Burroughs Wellcome Fund. The award provides \$175,000 over a period of five years (\$35,000 per year) to eligible teacher in the North Carolina public school system. SBE is providing additional salary support to secure 12-month contracts to award winning teachers.

The purpose of the award is to recognize teachers who have demonstrated solid knowledge of science or mathematics content and have outstanding performance records in educating children. This five-year award presents opportunities for professional development and collaboration with other master science or mathematics teachers who will help to ensure their success as teachers and their satisfaction with the field of teaching.

Special consideration will be given to teachers working in hard to staff, economically deprived classrooms in North Carolina. The award also offers schools and school districts the opportunity to fully develop teachers as leaders in the field.

Burroughs Wellcome Fund will support five awards for the first series of awards and invite other foundations and corporations to join this partnership. For more information and a brochure, visit: <http://www.bwfund.org/pages/379/CASM/> .

NC Teachers Recognized for Excellence in Math & Science

Congratulations to Kathleen Conroy (Providence Spring Elementary, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools) and Carol Swink Wooten a 1998 Meredith Teaching Fellows Graduate (Hunter Elementary, Wake County Schools) for receiving the 2008 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Conroy was the state's 2008 Mathematics recipient and Wooten was North Carolina's 2008 Science recipient.

NC Teachers Recognized (cont'd)

The award is the highest recognition that a K-12 math or science teacher can receive in the United States for outstanding teaching. Recipients are recognized for their contributions to teaching and learning and their ability to help students make progress in math and science. Winners receive \$10,000 awards from the National Science Foundation to be used at their discretion. They also receive an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. for a White House awards ceremony and several days of educational and celebratory events, including visits with members of Congress and science agency leaders.

National News...

Holliday Selected as Kentucky Education Commissioner

Terry Holliday, superintendent of the Iredell-Statesville school district has been selected as Kentucky's fifth commissioner of education. The Kentucky Board of Education announced the selection last week at a special-called meeting in Frankfort. Holliday, who has signed a four year contract, will report to work on August 5th.

Holliday has served as superintendent of the more than 20,000 student school district since 2002. During his tenure, he has received recognition in a variety of areas, including being named 2009 NC Superintendent of the Year. Under his leadership, the Iredell-Statesville school district received the 2008 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, which was created by an act of Congress in 1987 to recognize companies, organizations, businesses and other entities that have shown long-term improvement in quality and productivity.

Holliday has served as NC School Superintendent Association president and as a member of the NC Race to the Top Committee, the NC Blue Ribbon Commission on Testing and Accountability the Governor's Teacher Working Conditions Advisory Committee and many others.

California's State Superintendent Continues Fight for Schools

California State Superintendent Jack O'Connell has urged the governor and lawmakers to avoid suspending Proposition 98, declaring public education is being made the scapegoat of the ongoing state budget crisis. Proposition 98 requires about 40 percent of the state's budget be spend on public education. The state constitution allows for the suspension of the law during a fiscal emergency. The suspension of the initiative requires a two-thirds vote by the state legislature.

California's State Superintendent (cont'd)

If Proposition 98 is suspended, schools may face nearly \$5.6 billion in additional cuts for fiscal year 2009-10. O'Connell said while educators understand the need for cuts, public schools have taken a disproportionate amount of budget cuts following years of slashing budgets. "Schools are operating nearly \$12 billion below what was expected just a few years ago," said O'Connell.

Forum News...

Call for EPFP Applications – Deadline July 31st

Applications are now being accepted for the Forum's Education Policy Fellowship Program (EPFP). The ten month seminar program meets weekly on Tuesday night from 5:30 to 8:30 pm from September 15, 2009, to May 11, 2010. The program addresses issues related to policy and leadership development. The program seeks high energy individuals committed to enhancing their professional career through networking and exploring leadership and policy in the "real" world. An application may be obtained at the Forum's website. Go to www.ncforum.org and click on EPFP. The deadline is quickly approaching! Apply today!

Editor's Note...

We received the following note in response to last week's story entitled, "Budgets About More Than Numbers . . . They're About People" and wanted to share with our readers.

"Thanks for the article about 'Budgets About More Than Numbers...'. I see the results everywhere. My wife and I were in Walmart in Elkin yesterday. The customer in front of us was hugging the cashier and talking to her encouragingly. At first, we thought the cashier had cancer or something like that. When the cashier started checking out our purchases, she explained 'We're both displaced teachers'!"

-Kerry Crutchfield, Finance Director,
Winston-Salem / Forsyth County Schools

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