

# *The Public School Forum's Friday Report*

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## **It Appears an Agreement Has Been Reached (Again)**

On Thursday the word around Raleigh was that a tax deal had again been reached and that a budget could be finalized as early as next week. The latest agreement apparently would impose a 3% income tax surcharge on couples and individuals earning more than \$250,000 and a 2% surcharge on couples and individuals earning between \$100,000 and \$250,000. It would also raise taxes on cigarettes, alcohol and extend sales taxes to a limited number of services. The revenue agreement would raise \$990 million, considerably less than the \$1.3 million recommended by Governor Perdue.

Whether this approach satisfies the Governor's concerns remains to be seen. However, for educators, a larger question is how the Senate and House budget framers will respond to the Governor's concern that budget cuts not result in teacher layoffs.

Throughout the week rumors have been circulating indicating that budget negotiators are considering eliminating the increases to class size in grades K-6 that have been proposed and moving instead to a "discretionary reduction" of school spending that could be as much as \$250 million.

## **Fines / Forfeitures Legislature Approved by House Committee**

The House Finance Committee Thursday morning unanimously approved legislation that will begin to satisfy a 2008 court judgment entitling North Carolina public schools to \$747 million in school technology funds. Senate Bill 269 will establish a pilot program of speed-measuring cameras that would detect speeding violations in highway construction areas and school zones. There will be up to 16 cameras, 8 in the work-zones and 8 in school zones. Violations in school zones would result in a fine of \$125 (up from the current range of \$25-\$100) by the Department of Transportation, while work zone violations would result in the regular work-zone speeding fine of \$250. Seventy-five percent (75%) of the fines will be dedicated exclusively for paying down the judgment. Estimates are that this program would generate approximately \$47 million per year for school technology. The bill is calendared for a full House vote on Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## National News...

### Committee Votes: \$50M More for Afterschool Funds

On July 17, the House Appropriations Committee voted to increase funding for the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) afterschool initiative by \$50 million in fiscal year 2010. This sustains a similar vote by the House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies a week earlier - putting the House of Representatives on track for a small but significant increase in afterschool funding next year.

"This is good news for America's children and families," said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. "The Subcommittee's action is particularly gratifying given the economic struggles facing the nation."

Grant thanked Representative David Obey (WI), who chairs both the Committee and Subcommittee, for championing and including the increase in the legislation. She also thanked Representatives Nita Lowey (NY) and Rosa DeLauro (CT) for their continued leadership in pressing to increase afterschool funding.

"We urge the full House and the Senate to pass a budget that includes at least this \$50 million increase. This modest increase would still put us at less than half the *No Child Left Behind* authorization for FY 2007 of \$2.5 billion," Grant added. "By supporting afterschool, and we hope by increasing 21st CCLC funding, legislators are making a sound investment in children, families and communities across the nation."

## Forum News...

### Thumbs up to the Teaching Fellows staff

The entire Teaching Fellows staff deserves recognition for all their hard work successfully completing the "summer road show".....which goes something like this:

- Six-day Discovery Trip for 500 rising sophomores plus 25 facilitators and staff (11 tour buses) in May.
- One-day Freshman Orientation for 1,200 people (recipients, parents, and alternates) in June.
- Two-day joint meeting for 18 campus directors and 11 Commission members in June.
- One-day Commission meeting for 11 members in June.
- Junior Enrichment (30+ opportunities in the US and Abroad) for 500 rising juniors all summer.
- Four-day conference for 500 rising seniors and 45 facilitators plus TF staff in July.
- Four-day conference for 500 rising juniors and 45 facilitators plus TF staff in July.

## Call for EPFP Applications – Deadline Extended

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](http://www.ncforum.org) and click on EPFP. Apply today!

### *Did You Know...*

## So That's What They Mean When They Call it a Long Session!

According to legislative statistics from 1965 through 2008, provided by Gerry Cohen, director of the Bill Drafting Division of the General Assembly, one regular session adjourned in April; two in May; three in June; 12 in July; four in August; one in September; and the longest – 2001, extended from Jan. 24, 2001-Dec. 6, 2001.

### *Just for Fun...*

## “Thank a Teacher” by Bill Gates

Rule 1: Life is not fair - get used to it!

Rule 2: The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

Rule 3: You will NOT make \$60,000 a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice-president with a car phone until you earn both.

Rule 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss.

Rule 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your Grandparents had a different word for burger flipping: they called it opportunity.

Rule 6: If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

## “Thank a Teacher” (cont’d)

Rule 7: Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now. They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

Rule 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life HAS NOT. In some schools, they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as MANY TIMES as you want to get the right answer. This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.

Rule 9: Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you FIND YOURSELF. Do that on your own time.

Rule 10: Television is NOT real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

Rule 11: Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.

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