

The Public School Forum's Friday Report

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Congressional Action Will Ease State's Budget Situation

By a vote of 61-38 the Senate overcame filibuster fears that cleared the way for two funding provisions that will greatly bolster states like North Carolina that are facing deep budget deficits. One of the provisions will mean \$10 billion in aid to local school systems; the other would provide states with \$16 billion for increased Medicaid support.

For North Carolina, the two provisions would provide roughly \$343 million for increased Medicaid support and nearly \$300 million more for teachers. The Medicaid support is less than the \$500 million originally under consideration. Anticipating Congressional support, the General Assembly's final budget included the \$500 million. The budget also included deep cuts that would have been made had the aid not materialized.

It remains to be seen how the combination of Medicaid and teacher funding will impact the state budget, but, at a minimum, the deep, mid-year cuts that would have been necessary without Congressional action should not be needed. The state will, however, need to fill the gap between the anticipated \$500 million and what appears to be an actual \$343 million.

Additional Congressional action is needed before the funds can be released to the states. The U.S. House of Representatives, currently on a recess, is being called back for a Special Session on August 10th to vote on concurrence with the Senate action. North Carolina's Senator Kay Hagan voted to support the funding measures, while Senator Richard Burr voted not to provide states additional aid.

State on the Upward Climb with 2009-10 ABC Results

The State's annual ABCs of Public Education report, released this week, shows that 87.9 percent (up from 81 percent last year) of schools met their academic growth goals for the 2009-10 school year. In addition, nearly 40 percent of North Carolina's public schools are in the top three tiers of performance: Honor Schools of Excellence (8%), Schools of Excellence (.6%) and Schools of Distinction (28.8%). In regards to academic growth, the percentage of schools earning High Growth improved for 39.4 percent last year to 52.4 percent.

ABC Results (cont'd)

The State's AYP results paint a far grimmer picture of student performance. The Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) results show that of the State's 2,518 schools reporting on AYP, 1,456 or 57.8 percent met AYP for 2009-10. This number is down from the 70.8 percent having met AYP in 2008-09. Likewise, of the 1,270 Title I schools throughout the state reporting AYP, only 755 (59.4 percent) met AYP. This too is down from nearly 78 percent in the previous year.

During his full report to the State Board of Education on Thursday, Dr. Lou Fabrizio, Director for Accountability Policy and Communications at the NC Department of Public Instruction highlighted the fact that no schools fell into the category of "Schools of Excellence". As Dr. Fabrizio shared, this shows the "connection between our State's testing and accountability system and AYP."

This is the 14th year of North Carolina's ABCs report, and for the second consecutive year the state's budget situation has meant that funding is unavailable for ABCs incentive awards for qualifying educators. A total of 2,490 public schools are included in the ABCs of Public Education. Complete results for all of these schools may be viewed online at <http://abcs.ncpublicschools.org/abcs>.

Governor Hunt Headlines NC Chamber Education Summit

The NC Chamber Education Summit commenced yesterday at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel with Governor James B. Hunt, Jr. as the opening speaker. Governor Hunt spoke to approximately 200 participants about the history of the Research Triangle Park and the enhancement of the RTP location by so many top-rated colleges and universities which served as an inducement for top ranked corporations and research entities to choose to come to the Park.

He shared that time after time, visitors to the Park made the point that higher education in North Carolina was tops but that "the public schools are not so good." He shared the progress K-12 schools had made in North Carolina since the *Nation at Risk Report* in the early eighties but concluded that we had a long way to go. Governor Hunt ended his remarks by extending the following four challenges to the Chamber members:

- 1) NC Chamber should support higher student learning and accountability. Governor Hunt emphasized that students should be measured during the year (formative assessment) and at the end of the year (summative assessment.) He stressed that the Chamber should monitor accountability in NC and reminded the audience that "testing is measuring accountability."
- 2) NC Chamber should support the State paying all teachers fairly. Governor Hunt stressed that the Chamber should push the concept that teachers should be paid based on how their students are learning.

Governor Hunt (cont'd)

- 3) NC Chamber should support the State providing and training teachers well in pre and post service and should support the State's reinstatement of funding for professional development. Teachers need continuous professional development and improvement and they should be measured.
- 4) NC Chamber should support all schools being successful and all students learning at their highest potential. School systems should not be packing schools with all low-performing or low income students. Students must have diversity in their schools and every student should have a good teacher and every school should have a good principal.

Governor Hunt closed his remarks by challenging the participants to become mobilized and galvanized to make the above points a reality. He stressed that the Legislature had to focus on these issues as much as any other issues before them.

The remaining program included panels on K-12/Business Partnerships, Community Colleges/Industry Partnerships, and 21st Century Schools, as well as presentations from representatives of the US Department of Education, IBM International Foundation, and the Institute for Competitive Workforce at the US Chamber. Special guests were Lt. Governor Walter Dalton who gave an update on the JOBS Commission and Governor Bev Perdue who spoke about the State of NC Education Initiatives. Governor Perdue also shared that she was interrupting her family vacation next week to go to Washington with Superintendent June Atkinson, State Board Chairman Bill Harrison and others to make the State's presentation for the Race to the Top grant. North Carolina is one of 19 finalists in the second round for Race to the Top funds.

Cynthia Marshall, President, AT&T and NC Chamber Chair brought the closing remarks. In her comments, Chair Marshall gave a "Call to Traction" to all the Chamber members in which she said the Chamber would do three things: 1) support Governor Perdue's Ready, Set, Go agenda; 2) internalize the Chamber's four education priorities which are increase high school graduation rates, promote STEM for all students and teachers, address the shortage of skilled workers for manufacturing companies and connect economic development and education and 3) "put more skin in the game" by strongly supporting education.

Distinguished Leadership in Practice (DLP) Receives Attention

Forty principals, from across the state, are participating as the inaugural cohort of Distinguished Leadership in Practice (DLP), a leadership development program for practicing school leaders. DLP, which was developed by the N.C. Principals & Assistant Principals' Association (NCPAPA) in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and UNC-Learn NC, is a professional development program aligned to the new performance evaluation standards recently adopted by the State Board of Education for North Carolina's school leaders.

DLP participants will critically examine the meaning of "Distinguished" school leadership through a problem-based, real-world approach. In DLP, current practicing North Carolina principals provide participants with models of exemplary school leadership allowing them to study the behaviors, attitudes and competencies that define a "Distinguished" school leader. Throughout the year-long experience, participants will be led and coached through a proven continuous improvement approach that includes a series of real-world activities. "As participants learn how to build the capacity of their schools, they will also be building their own capacity as 'distinguished' leaders," says Dr. Shirley Prince, NCPAPA Executive Director.

Home Schooling Continues to Gain Popularity in NC

For the second year, the State has recorded the highest number of home schools on record, with a presence in all 100 counties, according to a report released this week by the state Division of Non-Public Education. The number of home schools in the state has more than doubled in the last 10 years with 43,316 home schools during the 2009-10 school year.

The counties with the largest number of home schools during the 2009-10 school year included Wake (4,023), Mecklenburg (3,131) and Buncombe (1,666). Counties with the least number of home schools were Tyrrell (23), Hyde (33), and Clay (44).

North Carolina officially legalized the concept of home instruction, in modern times, starting with the 1985-86 school year. Today, home school enrollment constitutes slightly less than five percent of the state's compulsory attendance age student population (ages 7 through 16).

Longtime Principal Mentor/Coach Dies

For many school administrators across North Carolina, John “Jack” McCall was an inspiration. An eclectic educator and psychologist, McCall was on the faculty of the UNC’s Principals Executive Program (PEP) long beyond his formal retirement. UNC Chapel Hill now awards the Jack McCall Award as its highest honor to participants in the PEP program.

Mc Call’s background included serving as the chief psychologist at Central Prison. He began his career as a Jesuit Priest in Boston before locating in North Carolina in 1974. He has served on various state task forces and boards, including the Public School Forum. After retirement he stayed on the lecture circuit not only speaking to educators but to Fortune 500 executives.

One of the people who worked closely with Mc Call was Dr. Ken Jenkins, the former Director of the Principal’s Executive Program. Commenting on McCall’s impact, Jenkins said, “Many wonderful people contributed to the growth and development of PEP. But, Jack McCall was the soul of that growth and development. His enthusiasm for school leaders, his love of the organization, and his keen wisdom and insights that he enjoyed sharing with principals and assistant principals were legendary. The patio area adjoining the Center was dedicated as the Jack McCall Garden. There is a reason for that – him.”

A memorial Mass will be held at 10:00 AM on August 14 at St. Raphael Catholic Church on Falls of the Neuse Road in Raleigh. Donations may be made to the Jack and Mary McCall Charitable Foundation, 312 Mount Eden Place, Cary NC 27518.

Weekly Wages Show Slight Increase in Majority of Counties

Even with the state’s unemployment rate running above 10% the average weekly wage paid to a North Carolina employee rose slightly, .02% to be exact, according to *Business North Carolina* which tracks wages across the state. Forty of the state’s 100 counties, including Mecklenburg, saw wages decline; however, sixty saw improvement. As the chart below illustrates, the wage gap between counties remains stark.

Gap Between Weekly Earnings in North Carolina Counties

Highest		Lowest	
Durham	\$1,175	Alleghany	\$471
Mecklenburg	\$997	Washington	\$483
Orange	\$887	Clay	\$503
Wake	\$868	Tyrrell	\$506
Forsyth	\$798	Pamlico	\$510

Source: *Employment Security Commission*

Editorial Tackles KIDS COUNT Data

The release of the new Annie E. Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Book, which ranked North Carolina 37th in child well-being nationwide, has sparked a recent Fayetteville Observer editorial denouncing that the state is "failing its obligation to our children". To read the editorial in its entirety, [click here](#).

The data book, released annually, is a state-by-state comparison of ten selected measures of the well-being of America's children. The data book reveals that NC has improved on five of the ten measures since the year 2000.

National News...

It Could Be Worse . . . We Could Live in Bell, California

As dire as North Carolina's fiscal situation is, things could be worse. We could be faced with a California-like retirement debacle. It might be uncharitable to find solace in other's problems, but revelations arising out of an unfolding story in Bell, California, provide some consolation for one living in North Carolina.

The Bell saga began when the Bell taxpayers discovered that they were paying their City Manager and Chief of Police the highest salaries in California, if not the nation. The City Manager was making \$787,637 and Bell's Chief of Police was making \$457,000 a year, roughly 50% more than the Chief of Police in Los Angeles and more than double New York City's police commissioner.

The community rose up in outrage and soon the City Manager and Chief of Police and one other well-paid employee resigned. Resignations, however, have not brought an end to the story. No sooner had the officials resigned than details regarding retirement pay to which they are entitled began to surface. The City Manager will become California's highest-paid retiree, earning more than \$650,000 per year for life. At age 62 his annual pension would rise to \$976,771 per year. If he lives to age 83, his annual payout would rise to \$1.48 million.

The eye-popping retirement payouts made news across California and indeed the country, but the saga was still not over. California's pension system is organized around special districts that create pension liability pools which spread retirement costs out among communities within the districts. That means that more than one-half of the generous pension payments to Bell's top three employees will have to be shared (i.e., paid) by taxpayers in 140 communities in the Bell liability pool district.

For cities like Glendale and Simi Valley that will require an additional \$40,000 in taxpayer dollars to cover the increased costs related to Bell retirees. Larger cities like Ventura will owe much more.

Bell, California (cont'd)

The Bell saga continues. State and local lawmakers are calling for an overhaul of the states' public employee retirement system. Others are calling for some policing mechanism to insure similar situations don't arise elsewhere. Meanwhile back in Bell, citizens are calling for recall votes on the Mayor and members of the City Council, four of whom are paid close to \$100,000 annually.

Forum News...

Regional Afterschool Summits to Focus on Disadvantaged Youth

The NC Center for Afterschool Programs (NC CAP), with support from the James B. Hunt, Jr. Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy, Burroughs Wellcome Fund, and NC Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, will be convening regional afterschool summits this fall to bring together organizations and state agencies working to support disadvantaged youth within the following four communities: Health / Wellness, Dropout Prevention, Closing Performance Gaps, and Juvenile Crime Prevention. While these communities are serving the same demographic, they often operate in silos. By fostering dialogue among the communities, NC CAP aims to foster cross-sector collaboration to open up more opportunities for disadvantaged youth, to make better use of funds and grant dollars, and to increase awareness about the need for afterschool.

The events are scheduled from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., with lunch provided, at the following dates and locations:

Goldsboro City Hall, September 13
Durham/RTP Sheraton Imperial, September 21
Salisbury Historic Train Depot, October 15
Wilmington Coastline Convention Center, October 19
Asheville Civic Center, November 4

NC CAP welcomes policymakers, business leaders, the philanthropic community, educators and school officials, local law enforcement, the faith-based community, and nonprofit leaders to attend. At the summits, NC CAP will unveil tools for success and partnership-building as follows:

- **Policymakers / State Leaders** will learn about the latest research supporting high quality programs, cost-effective community-wide partnership efforts, as well as effective practices across the state and nation.
- **Funders** will help chart a common vision for increasing the supply and quality of afterschool programs, with the invitation to join a statewide Funders Committee on Quality & Access.

Regional Afterschool Summits (cont'd)

- **Afterschool / Direct Service Providers** will learn how to maximize the impact of funding dollars and form local partnerships, as well as receive nationally renowned program standards, state agency funding criteria endorsed by NC state agencies funding afterschool, and staff competencies that outline the skills necessary to achieve outcomes for children and youth.

The regional summits follow a successful December 2009 tri-state summit held in partnership with the Hunt Institute, and Georgia and South Carolina afterschool networks that explored efforts to expand access to out-of-school time programs. For more information and to RSVP to one of the events, contact Katie Biggerstaff, (919) 781-6833 ext. 132, or kbiggerstaff@ncforum.org.

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) the week of May 16th – 21st.
- One-day Freshman Orientation for 1,200 people (recipients, parents, and alternates) held June 19, 2010, at the McKimmon Center in Raleigh.
- Two-day joint meeting for 23 campus directors and staff, 7 state staff, and 11 Commission members held June 15th -16th, at the Renaissance, North Hills, Raleigh.
- One-day Commission meeting for 11 members and state staff held June 17th at the Forum.
- Junior Enrichment (30+ opportunities in the US and Abroad) for 500 rising juniors all summer.
- Four-day conference for 500 rising seniors and 20+ concurrent session/workshop presenters plus TF staff held July 16th -18th in Hickory at Lenoir-Rhyne University.
- Four-day conference for 500 rising juniors and 25+ concurrent session/workshop presenters plus TF staff held July 23rd-25th in Hickory at Lenoir-Rhyne University.

2010-11 Teaching Fellows Scholarship Applications Available for High School Seniors

The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission has announced that the 2010-2011 application for the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Scholarship/Loan Program will be available online at www.teachingfellows.org beginning August 13, 2010. The deadline for students to return completed applications to a Teaching Fellows Liaison Counselor in a high school is October 15, 2010, by the end of the school day.

Jo Ann Norris, Associate Executive Director for the Public School Forum and Administrator of the Teaching Fellows Program, states, "In order to meet the increasing demand for top quality teachers for North Carolina's public schools, the program was created by the General Assembly in 1986, upon the recommendation of the Public School Forum of North Carolina."

Each Teaching Fellow receives a \$26,000 scholarship/loan from the state, payable in \$6,500 annual increments. The full loan is forgiven after the Fellow has completed four (4) years of teaching service in North Carolina's public schools. Additional program information is available online via the Teaching Fellows website at www.teachingfellows.org. Applications may be downloaded from this site.

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