

The Public School Forum's Friday Report

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State News

Revenue Collections Up for First Half of Year

Governor Bev Perdue issued a press release on Tuesday announcing that North Carolina's revenue collections were strong in December, exceeding budget projections by \$60 million and bringing the overall amount collected above forecasts for the first half of the fiscal year to \$150 million.

"Creating jobs is my top priority," Gov. Perdue said. "We still have a long way to go, but these figures suggest that the top-rated business climate and educated, trained workforce we have built over the years is helping our recovery gain traction."

- Businesses did particularly well in December, with corporate and franchise collections reaching 14.5 percent above budget that month and ending on target for the first half of the year.
- Individual income tax collections finished December 2 percent above budget expectations and remain above forecast for the first half of the fiscal year.
- Sales collections reflected the modest success of retailers this season, ending 3.8 percent above budget projections in December but slightly below budget for the first half of the year.

State economists report that the recent economic data remains upbeat. A stronger business confidence, stronger consumer spending and stronger housing starts suggest the economy gained momentum as 2011 closed. Challenges still exist, however, as consumers still face high debt levels, home prices are still falling and the financial situation in Europe remains worrisome. In addition, the most volatile revenue sources are collected during the second half of the year.

The combination of a first half with collections modestly above forecast, combined with recent upbeat economic news has improved the overall revenue outlook for the second half of the fiscal year.

27th Annual Emerging Issues Forum to Highlight Generation Z

This year's Emerging Issues Forum, "Investing in Gen Z: Guaranteeing Our ROI" is shaping up to be a "can't miss" event. Taking place February 6-7, 2012 at the Raleigh Convention Center, the forum will explore Gen Z's impact on our economic and workforce development, how increased connectivity raises the bar, and how we can ensure Gen Z's (and North Carolina's) overall well-being.

Speakers lined up include: Ami Dar, executive director of Idealist.org; Robert Safian, editor and managing director of *Fast Company* magazine, and Anthony Carnevale, director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. For a more detailed look at the agenda as well as to register for the event, [click here](#).

Asheboro City Schools Superintendent Finalist for National Superintendent of the Year

Asheboro City Schools Superintendent, Dr. Diane L. Frost is one of four finalists for 2012 National Superintendent of the Year, awarded by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). Dr. Frost was named the 2012 A. Craig Phillips North Carolina Superintendent of the Year in November. AASA will announce the 2012 National Superintendent of the Year at the National Conference on Education in February. The Forum extends congratulations to Dr. Frost for this well-deserved honor.

Restraining Order Issued in Dues Check-Off Battle

The latest twist in the ongoing battle over whether organizations that serve active and retired employees of public schools and school systems should be allowed to collect membership dues through payroll deduction, took place on Monday when a Wake County Superior Court judge issued a restraining order temporarily blocking enforcement of the newly passed law. Various news reports have detailed the arguments on both sides of the issue. What may not be clear to most is why the restraining order is significant to both the membership organizations affected by the new law, and school districts across the state.

Dues Check-Off Battle (cont'd)

Passage of the bill via the veto override vote taken by the General Assembly late last week, meant that the law was to go into effect immediately. School systems across the state are in the middle of a payroll cycle and without the injunction would need to implement changes to their processes to stop the collection of dues for thousands of members of organizations like the North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE) and the Professional Educators of North Carolina (PENC). The injunction allows school systems to continue current processes until legal issues surrounding the passage of the new law and the legality of the law itself are decided. It also allows the membership organizations time to work on strategies to collect future dues directly from members should the judicial system uphold the new law.

National News

New Study Links Good Teachers to Long-Term Gains

The merits of using the value-added (VA) approach to teacher evaluation have long been debated. A teacher's value-added is defined as the average test score gain for his or her students, adjusted for differences across classrooms in student characteristics (i.e. prior test scores, demographic variables, etc). Proponents say that such metrics hold teachers accountable and can help improve educational outcomes of students. Opponents counter that isolating the effect of a single teacher is hard to do given the various factors that intertwine during a child's educational journey. Many value-added ratings have a high margin of error and are prone to shifts from year to year and class to class (for a given teacher).

A team of economists working for the National Bureau of Economic Research recently joined the debate, by releasing the findings of a long-term study of over 1 million school children from a large urban school district. These children were tracked from fourth grade into adulthood. The longevity of the study, according to the researchers, allowed them to address two questions that have long been at the center of the debate. The first question researchers sought to address was whether VA accurately measures teachers' impacts on scores or unfairly penalizes teachers who may systematically be assigned lower achieving students. The second question was whether high VA teachers improve their students' long-term outcomes or whether they were simply better at "teaching to the test."

With regards to the first question, researchers found that when a high VA teacher joined a school, test scores rose immediately in the grade taught by that teacher; when a high VA teacher left, test scores fell. Test scores changed only in the subject taught by that teacher, and the size of the change in scores matched what researchers predicted based on the teacher's VA.

New Study (cont'd)

Researchers found that high VA teachers also improve students' long-term outcomes. Students assigned to high VA teachers were more successful in many dimensions. They were more likely to attend college, earn higher salaries, live in better neighborhoods, and save more for retirement. They also had lower teen pregnancy rates.

Another key finding of the study was that there is just as large of a gap between a teacher with an average VA to a teacher with a VA in the upper 5% as there is from average to the bottom 5%. According to the researchers, replacing a teacher whose true VA is in the bottom 5% with a teacher of average quality would generate lifetime earnings gains worth more than \$250,000 for the average classroom. Researchers also found that teachers had a great impact on all of the grade levels that were studied (4-8), implying that the returns to education remain large well beyond early childhood.

The New York Times printed an [article](#) about the study and its findings last Friday. Read the entire study as well as an executive summary [here](#).

Teaching Fellows News

Local Boards of Education Support Teaching Fellows

The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission and staff continue to receive copies of resolutions passed by local boards of education in support of the restoration of the NC Teaching Fellows Program. NEW RESOLUTIONS received since last week's *Friday Report* are included in the list in **BOLD** type.

Alamance-Burlington Board of Education, Jackie Cole, Chair; Dr. Lillie Cox, Supt.

Alexander County Board of Education, Josh Lail, Chair; Jack Hole, Supt.

Avery County Board of Education, John L. Greene, Chair; David Burleson, Supt.

Brunswick County Board of Ed., Shirley Babson, Chair; Edward Pruden, Supt.

Cumberland County Board of Education, Carrie Sutton, Chair; Dr. Frank Till, Supt.

Edenton-Chowan Board of Education, Ricky Browder, Chair; Dr. Allan Smith, Supt.

Elkin City Board of Education, James Freeman, Chair; Dr. Randy Bledsoe, Supt.

Greene County Board of Ed, Patricia Lee Adams, Chair; Dr. Patrick Miller, Supt.

Boards Support Teaching Fellows (cont'd)

Guilford County Board of Education, Alan W. Duncan, Chair; Maurice Green, Supt.

Hoke County Board of Education, Hank Richards, Chair; Dr. Freddie Williamson, Supt.

Jackson County Board of Education, Ken Henke, Chair; Michael Murray, Supt.

Martin County Board of Education, Gene Scott, Chair; Ron Melchiorre, Supt.

McDowell County Board of Ed., Russell Neighbors, Chair; Dr. Ira Trollinger, Supt.

Pamlico County Board of Ed, Reggie Hawkins, Chair; Dr. Wanda Dawson, Supt.

Richmond County Board of Education, Wiley L. Mabe, Chair; Dr. George Norris, Supt.

Robeson County Board of Education, Dr. Jo Ann Chavis Lowery; Dr. Johnny Hunt, Supt.

Surry County Board of Education, Sexton E. Coe, Chair; Dr. Ashley Hinson, Jr., Supt.

Vance County Board of Education, Gloria J. White, Chair; Ronald Gregory, Supt.

Watauga County Board of Ed., Deborah H. Miller, Chair; Dr. Marty Hemric, Supt.

Whiteville City Board of Education, James DiMuzio, Chair; Dr. C. T. Hager, Supt.

Dr. Mike Priddy, retired superintendent and NC Teaching Fellows Commission Chair stated, "Having had the privilege of hiring the first Teaching Fellows graduate and many more since then, I personally know their value to our children, classrooms, and schools. I also know that every principal, superintendent, and school board member in NC appreciates the quality that is so very predictable. Even though there are many important, even competing, educational priorities, we must remain diligent in seeking support for the re-instatement of the Teaching Fellows Program."

Pender County Commissioners Call for Teaching Fellows Reinstatement

An article in the January 4th edition of the *Topsail Voice*, reports that Pender County Commissioners voted unanimously during a November 21st meeting to pass a resolution asking the General Assembly to reinstate funding for the Teaching Fellows Program. In their resolution, the commissioners stated they, as well as others, fear the elimination of the program will have a negative impact on teacher effectiveness and the quality of education. “I have 35 years of experience in the school system and I know what this program did,” said Commissioner F.D. Rivenbark. “I think we [the citizens of North Carolina] get a good return on our investment,” said Commissioner David Williams.

The resolution has been forwarded to the delegation that represents the Pender County area in the General Assembly.

Forum News

Nationally Renowned Financing & Sustainability Group Confirmed for SYNERGY

NC CAP is pleased to announce that the groundbreaking and innovative out-of-school time experts The Finance Project will be conducting workshops at SYNERGY on financing strategies to build and sustain high quality afterschool and summer programs. The Finance Project has developed unparalleled resources that help leaders address financing and sustainability issues for out-of-school time programs. Their work features tools and resources for finding funding, using data for decision-making, developing partnerships, mobilizing communities, measuring and using results, and planning for sustainability.

Their online Out-of-School Time clearinghouse brings together a wealth of resources that will be addressed at the SYNERGY sessions. Resources include:

- [Financing and Sustaining Out-of-School Time Programs in Rural Communities](#)
- [Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs](#)
- [Follow the Money: A Tool for Mapping Funds for Out-of-School Time Initiatives](#)
- [Snapshots of Sustainability: Profiles of Successful Strategies for Financing Out-of-School Time Programs](#)
- [Investments in Building Citywide Out-of-School-Time Systems: A Six-City Study](#)

SYNERGY (cont'd)

- [A Guide to Effective Investments in Positive Youth Development: Implications of Research for Financing and Sustaining Programs and Services for Youth](#)
- [Sustaining Community Revitalization: A Tool for Preparing Budgets for Promise Neighborhoods](#)
- [Sustaining Community Revitalization: A Tool for Mapping Funds for Promise Neighborhood Initiatives](#)

Top American Leaders Award Recipient to Keynote SYNERGY Conference

NC CAP is excited to announce Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, University of Maryland Baltimore County President, as a keynote speaker for SYNERGY. Dr. Hrabowski was recently named one of the 2011 recipients of the *Washington Post's* Top American Leaders award. He has also recently been featured on *60 Minutes* and *NPR*. Dr. Hrabowski will speak during our April 17th STEM luncheon.

During his acceptance speech for the Top American Leaders award, Dr. Hrabowski spoke of his concern for the difference he regularly sees between American and foreign students in their willingness to work hard and remain disciplined when it comes to education. "Make no mistake about it," he said, "students from other countries tend to be more disciplined. ...you have to show a passion for the work itself." Dr. Hrawboski advocates for STEM afterschool programs as a critical component of our country's efforts to develop future leaders. [Click here](#) to hear Dr. Hrabowski's audio on NPR's *Talk of the Nation*, focusing on efforts to narrow the achievement gap.

A 12 minute video archive is available of Dr. Hrabowski's appearance on 60 minutes is available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KgTo4tslgwM>.

Details on the *Washington Post* award can be found [here](#).

Register for SYNERGY today to secure your spot to hear first-hand from Dr. Hrabowski!

Visit <http://www.nccap.net/about/conference.cfm> to download the conference registration form.

Nominations Open for Jay Robinson Leadership Awards

Nominations for the Forum's Jay Robinson Leadership Awards are now open. The original award was established by the Public School Forum Board of Directors in honor of Dr. Jay Robinson, former Superintendent Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, UNC Vice President and Chair of the State Board of Education. In 2011 the award was expanded to two awards; Exemplary Educator with statewide impact in K-12 education and Exemplary Leadership in Public Service with statewide impact in K-12 education. The awards may be given to anyone who has displayed innovative, creative, effective leadership for the public schools of North Carolina.

The nominations must be postmarked by March 1, 2012. Nominations postmarked after that date and nominations delivered in person will not be accepted. The award ceremony will be held on June 11, 2012 at the Raleigh Crabtree Marriott Hotel. Admission will be by invitation only. The honor includes a cash award sponsored by BB&T.

To obtain a nomination form, contact Pat Franklin (pfranklin@ncforum.org) at 919-781-6833. You may also use the form in the Winter 2011 edition of the *Forum Report which was released over the holidays*.

The *Friday Report* is published weekly by the Public School Forum of NC and is distributed to Forum Board members, legislators active in education policy, the press, and Forum subscribers. Archived editions can be found at www.ncforum.org/doc.



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