

OUR KIDS WON'T WAIT

THEY NEED WORLD-CLASS
SCHOOLS *today*



THE RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FORUM'S FOURTEENTH STUDY GROUP, A YEAR-LONG PROCESS IN WHICH LEADING BUSINESS PEOPLE, EDUCATORS AND ELECTED OFFICIALS FOCUSED ON THE CHALLENGES FACING NORTH CAROLINA AS IT WORKS TO BUILD A SCHOOL SYSTEM SECOND TO NONE. // WINTER, 2011



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INTRODUCTION

While the Forum has issued Study Group reports roughly every other year since its inception in 1985, none of the previous reports have been issued with the feeling of urgency that underlies this set of recommendations. For over twenty years, North Carolina has been working to improve the quality of its schools, but the results of those efforts are far from what anyone can be satisfied with.

- North Carolina has registered remarkable gains through the nineties, coming from at-or-near the bottom in educational indicators to average or slightly below average in most categories used to measure student success – SAT scores, performance on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) exams and the state’s end-of-course and end-of grade tests.
- That progress, while measurable, pales when one considers that in recent international test results comparing students in 65 industrialized countries, the United States ranks 31st in math and 23rd in science. Being an average state in an industrialized country slipping behind in international comparisons is not a recipe for economic success.
- Worse, North Carolina is among the lowest in successfully graduating its young people. In 2007-08, the latest data available, North Carolina was 43rd out of fifty states in its ability to motivate students to graduate from high school.

These numbers in strong economic times would be reason for alarm. In today’s recessionary climate they are worse than that. Even a casual reader of business news understands that today’s competitive climate is global, not regional or national. Companies seeking to grow are today looking at the pros and cons of locating in countries across the globe, not just at states within the boundaries of the United States.

Low-paying manufacturing jobs have already fled North Carolina to countries as diverse as Vietnam, China and Mexico. Better-paying jobs have also fled to countries like Singapore and India – for a stunning total of 285,000 jobs since today’s recession began only a few short years ago.

And the results are tangible. Last year 67,000 North Carolinians lost their homes due to foreclosure. 9.8% are out of work and, for those without at least a high school degree, the prospects are dim.

When the quality of education was essentially a matter of being competitive in the Southeastern portion of the United States, creating quality schools was a challenge. Today it is a question of economic viability. Without a workforce that is skilled, that is able to learn and learn again on the job, the State faces a bleak future. Ranking slightly above Alabama or Mississippi no longer gives the state “regional bragging rights.” The question is how do our young people fare compared to their peers in Finland or Singapore?

In non-economic terms, it is about the quality of life that millions of North Carolinians will have – or not have – depending on the foundation given them by the State’s educational system. For the roughly 20,000 students who drop out annually, the future is growing bleaker. But even for those who graduate from high school, the demands of today’s job market are such that more education will almost certainly be required. Young people aspiring to own a home, send their children to college and have a decent retirement, must be given more than a sound, basic education. They need the very best we can give them.

What follows is an ambitious set of proposals drawn up by leaders who in their respective worlds of work – private enterprise, education or public policy – must look at strengths and weaknesses, analyze what the best in their fields are doing and make decisions upon which jobs, futures and fortunes depend.

Some will say, “How on earth can an organization propose an ambitious agenda when we’re in the middle of a recession?” To them, we have a very simple answer.

OUR KIDS AREN'T WAITING FOR THE ECONOMY TO TURN AROUND.

And we can’t wait either. Much of what is proposed in the following pages can be done with little or no cost. Recognizing that in the coming school year and, in all probability the next, there will be virtually no new state resources, the report separates recommendations into two categories – those that can begin immediately with little or no cost and those that will take investments.



THE CHARGE OF THE STUDY GROUP

The goal of the Forum's fourteenth Study Group was as ambitious as the recommendations which emerged from it. The eighty-plus North Carolinians who participated in the Study were charged with envisioning and recommending a systems approach in two very broad areas – personnel policies impacting teachers and school administrators and reducing today's dropout rate.

Those two areas were chosen because they are at the heart of school improvement. Study after study finds that the factor most important in determining how well or badly students perform academically is the quality and skills of the educators upon whom they rely. Schooling is a people business and if the people teaching in and leading the schools of North Carolina have high-quality skills and capacity, schools will improve.

With that, the Achilles Heel of North Carolina's educational system is the fact that between 25 and 30% of the students who enter the State's schools will not graduate from high school. That is one of the highest non-completion rates in the nation and, in an era where more and more companies are making investment decisions based on the availability of a skilled work force, it is a huge negative for a state seeking to rebound from the current recession.

The members of the Study Group began their work last spring and continued meeting through the Holiday Season. During that time the two work groups that comprised the Study Group heard from experts and resource people from in and out of North Carolina. They examined how other states and countries approached these two issues. And finally they worked toward the consensus recommendations that are contained in this document.



DEFINING AN EDUCATIONAL VISION FOR TOMORROW'S NORTH CAROLINA . . .

Since North Carolina's school reform movement began in the mid-eighties the mark it has had to aspire to has increased dramatically. The movement was fueled initially when North Carolina had the dubious distinction of being last in the country on SAT scores. Being last in the nation sounded an alarm bell that led to unprecedented investments in schools, supported by business leaders, parents and taxpayers.

The goal at that time was to be a leader in the United States. That goal continued to be espoused by Governors, the business community and the General Assembly. Perhaps no Governor articulated

the goal better than former Governor Jim Hunt who left office challenging the State to be the first in America by 2010. We aren't. At best we are in the middle of the pack, admittedly a better place than we were in the early eighties, but a far cry from "first in America."

That goal, while laudable in its time, is not adequate for today. As noted earlier, today's competition is not South Carolina or Georgia, it is China, India and a host of countries that are building an educational foundation at the same time they are emerging as leading economies. What could, or should, our strategic vision for education be? It is certainly not to be average in a below-average country. Considering that question, the Forum offers the following as a strategic vision for North Carolina:

North Carolina aspires to create an educational system that is second to none.

One which:

- Draws on the practices and lessons of countries that are among the world's best.
- Is built on the knowledge and skills of the administrators who lead our schools and the teachers in whose care we place our young.
- Rewards educators and school systems that are reaching world-class standards.
- Leaves no children behind.

This vision, like visions before it, is easier said than done. As the Forum Study Group reviewed the reform initiatives of the past twenty years one realization emerged. Promising programs and initiatives came and went based on two and four-year election cycles. Today's panacea was tomorrow's political orphan. The history of North Carolina's school reform movement is one of false starts and abrupt ends.

We do not have a personnel system that systematically seeks to recruit the best-and brightest, invests in giving them additional skills and rewards them when they do a good job. We do not have a state-wide approach to teaching basic subjects like math and reading; instead, schools are left to their own devices to determine which of the many programs in the marketplace may work. We haven't adopted the best practices of countries that lead the world when it comes to educational progress – countries as diverse as Singapore and Finland.

The lessons from those countries will sound like "Business 101" to an MBA student. In looking at the common educational-approach denominators in those countries one finds:

- The successful countries have a philosophy of teaching basic courses like mathematics and reading.
- That philosophy is taught to college students preparing to teach; it is reflected in the material and approaches used in schools, and it is the basis upon which all teacher and administrator training is based for those working in the schools.
- Educators are recruited from those who rank in the academic upper one-third of high school graduates.
- Once on the job, successful nations invest heavily in building the skills of their teachers and administrators. Those who excel have a variety of upward-mobility options that enable them to grow throughout their careers.
- Performance expectations are high and schools and educators are rewarded when students meet expectations.

The recommendations that follow track these common excellence denominators. Put together they result in a system for education, a system that North Carolina currently does not have.

recommendation one:

LEARN FROM COUNTRIES LEADING THE WORLD IN EDUCATION AND CREATE AN ALIGNED, STRATEGIC SYSTEM OF LEARNING

GOAL: By 2018 establish a uniform framework and approach for the teaching of communication skills, mathematics and science and align pre-service training, materials and books used in all public schools and the use of staff development funds to reinforce that alignment.

Research attempting to explain learning gaps between students of different races and family income levels finds that teacher preparation and effectiveness, or the lack of the same, are the most critical factors in student performance. Unlike most industrial countries the United States (and North Carolina) does not have a uniform approach to the teaching of key subject areas such as math or reading. Instead, college and university Schools of Education, approach the preparation of teachers in these key subject areas differently depending on the biases and strengths and weaknesses of their faculties.

At the individual building level, different instructional approaches in those same areas are used depending on the preferences of school principals and curriculum directors. Subsequently, a candidate training to be a teacher might be taught using one method only to be employed in a school using an entirely different approach. This lack of consistency is reinforced with differing approaches to on-the-job training.

Fortunately, North Carolina is, with the majority of states around the country, working toward an unprecedented national agreement on a “common core curriculum,” one that would be agreed to by states across the country and one that would be the basis for the development of national performance assessments like the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). That effort makes the following recommendation much more feasible. It is in line with the State Board of Education’s goal of aligning North Carolina’s curriculum and assessment standards with the voluntary national standards being developed.

To bring about a more uniform framework and approach to teaching in critical subject areas, those for which schools are held accountable under the state’s ABCs plan and the federal government’s No Child Left Behind program, it is recommended that the state begin by adopting a uniform approach to teaching in the areas of mathematics, reading and science. Uniform approaches to teaching additional subjects should be added in subsequent years. Further, it is recommended that the uniform

approaches to teaching these subjects be the basis of teacher preparation coursework in all accredited Schools of Education as well as in the classrooms of schools across the State. Finally, it is recommended that the uniform approaches adopted be aligned with the emerging common core curriculum initiative of which North Carolina is a part.

SPECIFICALLY:

- The State should set a goal for adopting a uniform approach to teaching in mathematics, science and reading, the subjects upon which state and federal accountability standards are based.
- Schools of Education seeking accreditation for their teacher preparation programs should be given a two-year period of time to alter their programs as needed to conform to the state-mandated approaches in these critical teaching areas.
- At the same time, local school systems would have a three year period of time to alter, where necessary, their approaches, textbooks and instructional materials to conform to the state-mandated approaches.
- In advance of the deadlines for conforming to the new mandates, the State should create long-distance professional development modules that will equip teachers to effectively use the state-mandated approaches in the two-years before the mandates go into effect.
- Additionally, the Teacher Academy and/or the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) should be charged with developing and delivering “train-the-trainer” staff development programs to teachers who will be responsible for overseeing capacity-building training programs supporting transition to the new approaches to the teaching of math, science and communication skills at the local level.
- From 2014-15 forward, colleges seeking to keep their accreditation status would need to require additional coursework in the teaching of mathematics and reading for candidates seeking general degrees in Elementary Education.

TIMELINE FOR ALIGNING THE PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH FOR TEACHING BASIC SUBJECTS

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
SBE sets timeline ///	Math approach adopted ///	Science approach adopted ///	Reading approach adopted ///	Colleges introduce aligned science coursework ///	Colleges introduce aligned reading coursework ///	Schools shift to new reading standards ///
Math task force begins work	Training plans developed by NCCAT, Virtual School & Teacher Academy ///	Math “train the trainer” sessions begin ///	Colleges introduce aligned math coursework ///	Schools shift to new math standards ///	Schools shift to new science standards ///	Local on-site reading, math & science training continues as needed ///
	Science & reading task forces at work ///	Local on-site and virtual math training begins ///	Local on-site and virtual science training begins; math training continues ///	Local on-site and virtual reading training begins; science training continues ///	Local on-site and virtual reading training begins; math/science training continues as needed ///	Alignment completed ///
		Reading task force at work ///				



recommendation two:

INCREASE THE PIPELINE OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS ENTERING THE PROFESSION

GOAL: By 2020 80% of the teachers beginning to work in North Carolina classrooms will come from the upper one-third of their high school graduating classes and will have completed their pre-service training in an accredited North Carolina college or university.

Countries that are world leaders in educational performance tend to draw teaching recruits from the top one-third of their high school graduating classes. In addition to drawing prospective teachers from the best and brightest of their high school graduates most of them subsidize college expenses for their future teacher work force. Singapore, for instance, not only provides free tuition to education majors, it pays college students 60% of a beginning teacher’s salary while they complete their college education.

In contrast, North Carolina, largely because of the phenomenal increase in student growth over the last two decades, has grown to rely on multiple sources of new teachers. Currently, the State’s schools are staffed by teachers who:

1. Majored in education in one of the State’s 48 colleges and universities that are accredited to prepare teachers.
2. Majored in education in an out-of-state college or university.
3. Graduated from college, but did not major or minor in education.
4. Entered teaching through the Teach for America program which recruits recent college graduates who did not major in education.

Less than 42% of teachers entering the profession each year are graduates of accredited North Carolina public and private college and university Schools of Education. A recent study that linked teacher

preparation to student performance outcomes found that the State is best served by teachers who have been prepared by in-state Schools of Education; the second best source of teaching was found to be candidates who graduated from Schools of Education in other states. The least productive source of teachers was those who had a college degree but who had no formal preparation for teaching (formally referred to as “lateral entry” teachers). It should be noted that teachers recruited through the national Teach for America program were rated among the top performers; however, while there are valuable lessons to be learned about that organization’s recruitment and training policies the numbers of teachers coming into the state through that route are miniscule and deemed not to provide a viable option for a state with nearly 100,000 teachers and instructional support personnel.

Because the overriding goal of the state has been to simply fill classrooms with teachers it has not established a clear goal regarding the type of teacher that it wants in the State’s classrooms. The Study Group strongly recommends that the State establish as a long-term goal recruiting prospective teachers from the upper one-third of high school graduating classes and focusing its resources on effectively preparing teacher candidates in the colleges and universities within North Carolina.

The Study Group specifically recommends that the State establish a goal of increasing, overtime, the number of graduates of in-state schools of Education while decreasing the number of teachers entering the profession through the lateral entry avenue. Reaching such a goal, however, will require investments in marketing and recruiting teaching candidates.

SPECIFICS FOLLOW:

- *Establish an Office of Teacher Recruiting in the Department of Public Instruction that is charged with marketing teaching as a career to high school and middle school students across the State. Such an office should begin with a marketing budget sufficient to produce material aimed at high school students and their parents; it should next collaborate with public and private colleges and universities to support recruiting efforts aimed at motivating college students to major in education.*
- *Increase the State’s support for the establishment of Teacher Cadet programs designed to identify students who have the potential to become teachers and to foster in them a motivation to enter the profession.*
- *Direct the UNC General Administration to establish recruiting goals for all Schools of Education housed in UNC colleges and universities and work collaboratively with the UNC General Administration and the organization representing private colleges and universities in designing financial incentives that would reward public and private Schools of Education that are making measurable progress toward reaching the goal of 80% of new teachers coming from accredited in-state preparation programs.*
- *Consolidate funding streams currently subsidizing prospective teachers from multiple sources and focus resources on the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Scholarship Program or campus-based aid programs focused on recruiting top-ranking high school graduates with potential.*

TIMELINE TO CREATE MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS				
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
SBE requests funding for Teacher Recruitment Office /// General Assembly consolidates prospective teacher expenditures and focuses revenue on increasing scholarship support	Teacher Recruitment Office created (TRO) /// Schools of Education design marketing campaigns aimed at college Freshmen & Sophomores	TRO produces campaign material for middle and high school parents and students /// TRO provides Schools of Education marketing material; college campaigns continue	SBE requests additional resources to establish Teacher Cadet programs in middle & high schools /// Local school system & college campus marketing campaigns continue	Local school system & college campus marketing campaigns continue



recommendation three:

STRENGTHEN TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

GOAL: *By 2016, teacher education majors will be required to meet more rigorous graduation requirements and both prospective teacher and administrator candidates will be required to take coursework better equipping them to successfully work with at-risk youth.*

Recruiting high potential candidates into teaching is only the first step in creating a world-class educational workforce. The critical next ingredient after recruitment is to have high-quality teacher and administrator preparation programs offered at the State’s public and private colleges and universities.

In examining the college preparation required of teachers and administrators, Study Group members came to the realization that while much is expected of Schools of Education they are laboring under time constraints that make it virtually impossible to prepare educators for the challenges they will face on the job. Those constraints, however, are self-imposed.

At most colleges and universities education majors do not declare a major until their junior year; subsequently the amount of course work they take in education is limited. To remedy this, the Study Group strongly recommends that Schools of Education increase the credit requirements and years necessary to complete an education major. Beyond making the requirements for educational majors more rigorous, such changes will enable Schools of Education to give education major more real-world exposure to working directly with young people, especially with young people identified as being at-risk.

SPECIFICALLY:

- *Education majors should declare in the sophomore year and Schools of Education should increase the course work required for majors in education.*
- *Elementary majors should be required to take course work in the teaching of reading and mathematics; such course work should be aligned to the State’s philosophy and approach for the teaching of both subjects.*
- *Middle and high school education majors should be required to take course work focused on successful approaches to reducing dropout rates including, where feasible, practical real-world experience in school settings where there are concentrations of at-risk young people.*
- *Prospective teachers and administrators should receive instruction in the use of the value added assessment tools such as EVAAS, now used by schools across the State, and in diagnostic technology tools now being piloted in over 400 elementary schools across North Carolina.*
- *Schools of Education should create laboratory schools serving diverse student populations to give prospective teachers and college faculty real-world experience in dealing with diverse learners; such schools could be operated as Charter Schools.*

TIMELINE FOR STRENGTHENING TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS				
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Schools’ of Education Task Force designs phase-in plan for creating a more rigorous and effective pre-service training approach for teachers and school leaders /// Schools of Education considering creating Lab Schools create planning groups	College and university boards adopt phase-in plan for new education major requirements /// Schools of Education prepare to introduce additional coursework in 2013-14 /// Schools of Education interested in creating Lab Schools apply for Charters	New teacher major requirements go into effect /// Schools of Education introduce additional math and reading coursework as well as new coursework diagnostic tools available in schools /// Successful Charter applicants open new Lab Schools	Additional coursework as required to meet new State standards in math, science & reading /// Charter application process for Lab Schools continues for interested Schools of Education /// New Charter Lab Schools continue operation	Additional coursework as required to meet new State standards in math, science & reading /// New Charter Lab Schools continue operation

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recommendation four:

THE STATE SHOULD CREATE A “GROW YOUR OWN” SYSTEM FOR INSURING HIGHLY-EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

GOAL: By 2016 the State will have in place a comprehensive staff development and personnel assessment program that has as its goal developing a continuous and self-sustaining pool of leaders for tomorrow’s schools.



To insure a strong pool of educational leadership talent, North Carolina should create a “grow your own” system that reflects best practices in corporate and public sector leadership development. Specifically, the state should invest in designing a program that maximizes its human resources, provides upward career mobility for educators, results in a clearer and more efficient focus on student improvement and creates a school environment in which students will become engaged in learning and teachers will aspire to higher levels of professionalism.

Today’s pool of candidates for assistant principal and principal positions consists largely of individuals who have self-selected to enter leadership programs. Few college or university Leadership Programs have rigorous selection processes and/or are highly selective in accepting candidates; instead, individuals seeking degrees in school leadership can enroll virtually at will and upon successful completion of course work and required research or writing assignments will receive a degree in school leadership. In many schools roles such as grade team leader or Department Chair are not viewed as leadership stepping stones, but rather are rotated around in an “it’s your turn” fashion. Further, individuals holding these positions are typically not given additional salary for the additional leadership responsibility. In contrast to that, the Study Group recommends a “grow-your-own” leadership system.

SPECIFICALLY:

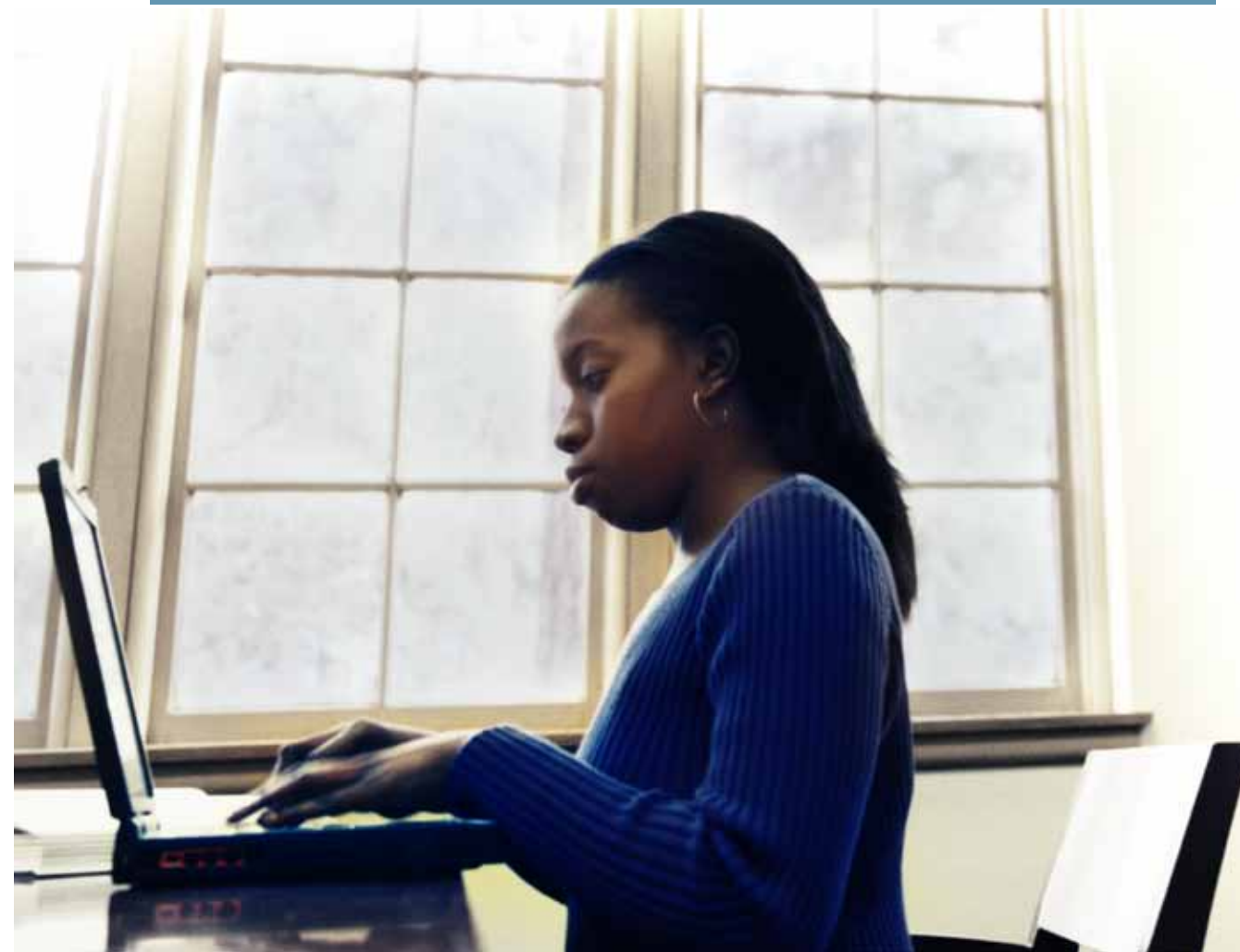
- The State should create a collaborative working group comprised of representatives of public and private sector leadership programs and reach a consensus on desirable traits and qualifications candidates for school leadership should possess.
- The outcome of that collaborative process should result in a framework for local school systems and college and university Schools of Education to use in selecting candidates for leadership positions.

- The portion of the newly created teacher evaluation program that focuses on leadership ability shall be used to identify candidates for upward mobility within the educational system.
- The State shall identify existing and potentially new roles that will form the nucleus of a new school leadership structure within education (i.e., department chairs, grade team leaders, new teacher mentors, building-based curriculum, instructional technology specialists, etc.).
- Candidates for leadership positions shall undergo a rigorous selection process. That process shall not only consider leadership potential evaluations but demonstrable examples of leadership exhibited by candidates.
- The State shall provide leadership training focused on building the capacity of those selected to fill leadership roles.
- The State salary schedule shall create salary ranges for existing and new leadership positions that fall between the salaries of classroom teachers and assistant principals.
- After assuming leadership positions, leadership potential will continue to be evaluated annually: the evaluation criteria will be based on expectations and performance for and in their new positions.
- After two successful years in a leadership position, educators will be eligible to join the pool of candidates for assistant principal positions.
- Here again candidates for assistant principal positions will undergo a rigorous evaluation process that includes consideration of their rankings on leadership potential, their performance in leadership experiences and the assessments of interview teams that will include educators from a cross section of the school system.

- Successful candidates selected to serve in assistant principal positions will undergo State-provided training and be assigned a coach/mentor employed within the system in which they are hired.

- This process will be repeated for candidates vying for the position of School Principal.

TIMELINE FOR CREATING “GROW YOUR OWN” LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM					
2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
SBE creates task force on leadership /// SBE adopts program phase-in schedule	Task force on shaping and re-shaping new and existing school leadership positions created	Local schools identify candidates for one or more leadership positions set to begin in 2014-15 /// NCCAT and/or Teacher Academy provide leadership training in the summer of 2014 /// Schools of Education adopt selection criteria and process for candidates for leadership degrees	Phase-in of school leadership programs and training for candidates continues /// Schools of Education begin using new leadership criteria and selection process	Second wave of school leadership positions begin working in fall of 2015	Phase-in of school leadership positions continues /// Beginning in 2017-18 candidates for admission to regional Leadership Academies will be given preference if they have successfully served two years in a school leadership position



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recommendation five:

THE STATE SHOULD ACCELERATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMIES

GOAL: By 2017-18 the State will have Regional Principal Training Academies in operation in each of the eight educational regions.

Professional development provided to candidates for principal positions should, as much as possible, be experiential, placing a primary focus on preparing trainees to deal effectively with real-life situations and challenges. Such programs should also be the result of collaboration between the Department of Public Instruction, cooperating school systems and college and university Schools of Education. Additionally, access to professional development should be, as much as possible, brought to the candidates not only through decentralizing traditional training sessions but through reliance on long-distance technology.

The three experiments with Regional Principal Training Academies that are getting underway are extremely encouraging and the Study Group endorses them wholeheartedly. It is important to note that they meet the Study Group's primary criteria for revamping leadership training in that they are envisioned to be experiential and field-based in nature and that the training provided will take place within collaborating educational regions. However, if the initiative is to make an impact on schools across the State it will be necessary to plan to expand them beyond the three geographic regions that are currently slated to pilot the programs. The Study Group recommends

- That the State devise a phase-in plan that will add two additional regional academies every-other-year beginning with two additional academies in the 2013-14 school year, continuing with two more in the 2015-16 school year and opening a final one in the 2017-18 school year. Such a

phase-in process will result in all eight Education Regions having Regional Academies in operation by the 2018-19 school year.

- A successful phase-in plan, of necessity, must be adequately funded or the effort (like many before) will wither. Currently, the bulk of the funds for the new Academies are coming from the federal government's Race to the Top competition funds. Those funds will come to an end in four years and sustaining the newly opened Academies much less supporting new ones in the additional five educational regions will be virtually impossible without state funding. To insure sustainability of the network of Academies, the State should create a revenue stream that supports expansion and sustains the network of regional Principals Academies by ceasing the practice of increasing teachers' pay by 10% if they have obtained a Masters Degree in school leadership. Specifically, if a teacher with a Masters Degree in school leadership has not secured employment as an assistant principal or principal within three years of securing the degree, additional pay for a Masters Degree should end. The savings should be applied toward the cost of expanding and sustaining the network of regional Principals Academies. The rationale behind this proposal is that the State's use of additional pay for advanced degrees presumably builds the capacity of an individual to do his/her job. If individuals securing degrees in school leadership are not in positions where these skills can be used (i.e., they remain in the classroom) the State is paying for skills that are not being used to advance education.

TIMELINE FOR CREATING REGIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMIES IN EACH EDUCATION REGION

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Race to the Top funded regional leadership academies open	SBE requests funding to open two new regional leadership academies in 2013-14 /// SBE issues request for proposals for new regional academies	Two new regional academies open in fall of 2013 /// SBE asks General Assembly for funding for two new regional academies	SBE issues Request for Proposals for new Regional Academies	Two new regional leadership academies open /// SBE requests funding for the Last regional leadership academy	SBE issues request for proposals for final regional leadership academy	The last regional leadership academy opens

6

recommendation six:

HARNESS TECHNOLOGY TO FILL THE CURRENT STAFF DEVELOPMENT VOID FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

GOAL: By 2012-13, the State will have in place a long-distance technology delivery system enabling it to communicate with and provide high-quality training to school principals and assistant principals.

Funding for the Principals Executive Program has already fallen victim to budget cuts in recent years leaving a void in state-provided professional development training for principals and assistant principals. At a relatively low-cost, the State can better harness long-distance technology to fill this void.

SPECIFICALLY:

- Long-distance technology (i.e. webinars, etc.) should be used to provide newly hired principals and assistant principals with orientation sessions regard-

ing the State Board of Education's expectations of school leaders, the implications of the State's bi-annual study of school working conditions and other issues of importance to new school leaders.

- With that, the State at very low cost could use long-distance technologies to keep school leaders better informed about state and national trends in education that will impact their schools, introduce school leaders to policy changes that will impact their faculties and establish dialogue and sharing between school leaders.

A TIMELINE FOR HARNESSING TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE STAFF DEVELOPMENT TO PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
SBE collaborates with NC Virtual Public School to create long-distance staff development program for school principals	SBE Launches long-distance staff development program for school principals	Program refined and expanded

recommendation seven:

REWARD EDUCATORS AND SCHOOL SYSTEMS THAT ARE SUCCEEDING IN THE GOAL OF CREATING A SYSTEM SECOND TO NONE.

GOAL: By 2016 the state should have a tiered salary schedule in place that offers advancement and growth opportunities for educators while rewarding successful performance over time and recognizing supply/demand pressures that make it necessary to differentiate between salaries paid to teachers in competitive areas. Additionally, successful school systems should be given greater flexibility to use their resources as they see fit.

The current teacher salary schedule may have served the State well in the past, but it has major defects that need to be rectified. Specifically, today's schedule provides salary advancement only for years of experience on the job and degrees or certification earned beyond the Bachelor Degree level. It does not reflect the supply/demand pressures resulting from hard-to-fill positions such as advanced mathematics teachers or special education teachers. It also does not provide opportunity for career advancement, nor does it reward effective educators for a job well done. Recognizing that in today's fiscal climate it is highly probable that the State will freeze the salaries of state employees and educators for a fourth consecutive year, the Study Group recommends that the state devote the coming year to devising a salary schedule that would support efforts to reward teacher performance, enable school systems to be competitive in hard-to-fill areas and offer teachers career advancement based on performance.

SPECIFICALLY:

- The State should consider creating a three-tier salary schedule. The first level would encompass all teachers and instructional support personnel; the second level would be existing and newly created leadership positions (see Recommendation One); the final level would be for principals and assistant principals.
- During the coming year, the Office of State Budget & Personnel should establish salary ranges for all teaching and instructional support personnel included in the first level of the proposed salary schedule as well as for middle-level leadership positions. Those salary ranges should reflect the same factors used for other civil service positions in state government (i.e., degree requirements needed, demands of the job, etc.) as well as supply/demand/performance differences between teachers of various subject matter.

- The Study Group recommends that the State adopt as a goal increasing the base salary for teachers and instructional support staff to a level equal, or close to, what salaries would have been if cost-of-living increases had been paid during the years when salaries were frozen.
- By adjusting the base salary upward to reflect cost-of-living increases for years during which salaries were frozen and by creating salary ranges that better reflect supply/demand realities, both the base pay of teachers and the potential earning power of teachers would increase across the board, albeit the earning potential of teachers would vary depending on whether they are employed in hard-to-fill subject areas.
- To create upward career mobility potential, the State should also have the Office of State Budget & Personnel establish salary ranges for new and existing leadership positions which would fall between full-time classroom teacher/instructional support positions and those of assistant principals and principals.
- When State revenues begin to rebound, the State should begin a multi-year, phase-in plan that would over time result in placing all of the state's teaching, instructional support,

assistant principal and principal work force at the appropriate place on the new schedule. To accomplish that, the General Assembly should allocate a portion of new salary dollars to "catch-up" cost-of-living increases and another portion to placement within the new proposed salary ranges on an annual basis for as many years as it takes to complete placement of the educational workforce on the appropriate place on the new salary schedule.

- While putting in place a new salary schedule will, of necessity, require a multi-year effort, the State should work toward incentive pay plans for teachers, middle managers, assistant principals and principals that reward gains in student performance. Such incentives should begin when the new salary schedule is in place.
- To provide an incentive for school systems, the State should establish a system of "graduated flexibility." Schools whose students are performing at a high level should be given wide latitude in their use of state resources. Schools that are average performers would have essentially the same degree of latitude as they have today. Schools whose students are performing below average would be required to spend resources within a tightly-defined range established by the State.

A TIMELINE FOR CREATING A SALARY SCHEDULE THAT REWARDS OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE AND OFFERS OPTIONS FOR CAREER GROWTH

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Task force creates wage pay plan that differentiates teaching positions based on supply and demand and job requirements	State revenue permitting, educators receive cost-of-living increases	Year One of phase-in of new salary schedule	Year Two of phase-in of new salary schedule	Year Three of phase-in of new salary schedule	3rd wave of school leadership positions created
///	///	///	///	///	///
Task force begins work on developing performance pay reward plan	General Assembly adopts new salary schedule for educators	School leadership Task Force sets salary ranges for school leadership positions	First wave of school leadership positions created	2nd wave of school leadership positions created	Performance pay plan continues
///	///	///	///	///	///
	Criteria for salary performance reward plan adopted	First year of performance pay plan	Performance pay plan continues	Performance pay plan continues	



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recommendation eight: LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND

GOAL: By 2018, 100% of North Carolina's children who are identified as at-risk will be served by Smart Start and/or More at Four; by 2020, North Carolina's graduation rate will have reached 90%.

North Carolina ranks 43rd of the fifty states in its ability to successfully lead students to graduation. The toll that takes in human terms is difficult to quantify, but the lack of a high school diploma for the 29.7% of the 2008 class of seniors means the following in economic terms:

- If all members of the Class of 2008 had graduated, they would have generated an additional \$10.8 billion in income over the course of their lifetimes.
- If the graduation rate for males increased by only five percent, North Carolina would realize \$151.9 billion in savings related to crime, \$80.9 billion in additional earnings by those men, and \$232.8 billion in overall benefits to the state economy.
- The state saves \$12,355 per additional graduate on health-related expenses.
- If all heads of households were high school graduates, the state's families would have an additional \$2.6 billion in personal wealth.
- If all community college students graduated from high school, the community college system would save almost \$100 million in remediation costs.

Our four-year graduation rate of 2010 has increased to 74.2%; an improvement over the 68.3% rate in 2006. However, this means that 25.8% of the class of 2010 did not graduate. Percentages aside, that translates to 20,000 students. That is a rate that cannot be permitted in the future if North Carolina is to maintain its standing as a current regional and national leader in the nation. It cannot be permitted if North Carolina, given its current budget crisis, aspires to a better future.

Those sobering numbers have led the Study Group to make recommendations that will require investments. Unlike some of the other recommendations contained in this report, if the state is to prevent failure it will take more resources than currently are being made.

SPECIFICALLY:

Before Students Enter Kindergarten...

- The State's investment in early education must be increased. The State's two early-education programs have become models for states across the country. Smart Start which focuses on at-risk young people and their families served 117,000 young children in 2008-09. It focuses the resources of the State on insuring that at-risk youth get off to a healthy and supported start. More at Four worked with over 31,000 four-year olds with a mission of getting at-risk youngsters off to a solid academic start when they enter schools. The focus of the programs vary. While the numbers of children served are impressive they are threatened with budget cuts and thousands more are eligible for service but not receiving it. Recent studies validate the benefits of the programs. Both should be maintained and grow over time.

Once They Are in Elementary School...

Even though young people may come to school having benefited from early programs such as Smart Start and More at Four, if they are falling behind by grade three studies find that the chance of recovery is slim unless schools act early. Reading and math scores in third grade, as an example, are used by the State's Juvenile Justice Department to predict the need for space in Juvenile Delinquency Homes. Researchers call it the "third grade alarm," the question is whether schools hear the alarm bell.

- Accelerate the use of diagnostic assessment tools in first, second and third grade enabling every student's progress to be traced year after year. Currently, teachers in 480 schools have diagnostic tools that enable them to pinpoint which children need more attention, especially in reading. These tools need to be available to far more schools and teachers.

- It is erroneous to assume that all elementary teachers are trained to deal with slow learners. Most teachers grew up taking reading for granted. Most grew up in families with vocabularies that far exceed the norm. Staff development focused on teaching reading skills is essential, especially for new teachers. Budget cuts have severely reduced the number of specialists who can work one-on-one with teachers, especially with beginning teachers working in schools serving large numbers of low-performing schools. These need to be restored, especially in low-performing schools.
- Schools today are faced with a bewildering array of remedial reading and math products on the market – all claiming to be research-proven. Claims aside there is wide variation between the quality of these products. The Department of Public Instruction should annually issue a list of remedial programs that are making a measurable difference as a service to school systems.

When At-Risk Students Reach Middle and High School...

While researchers find that third grade reading scores are typically strong barometers of student performance, student performance at the sixth grade level is equally predictive. A longitudinal study conducted in Chicago showed that for every 100 sixth-graders who failed math or language only 11% would go on to successfully graduate from high schools. Many researchers consider middle school the time when many at-risk students become lost and decide to leave school when reaching the legal dropout age. That is especially true for students in schools with heavy concentrations of at-risk young people.

In addition to student testing results, researchers have found other factors that impact the graduation rates of high school students. Students, for instance, who do not earn on-time promotion from the 9th grade to the 10th are highly likely to dropout



of high school before graduation. Students who miss 10 or more of the first 30 days of school while in high school are very likely to drop out.

Critical for both middle and high schools is focusing on the transition years when students move from elementary school to middle or from middle to high. Schools wanting to curb today's dropout rate should take the following steps to ease those transitions and increase the potential for students to succeed:

- Middle and high schools should create standing Transition Teams composed of faculty members from their respective middle or high schools as well as faculty from feeder schools (i.e., elementary schools feeding students into middle schools or middle schools sending students to high schools).
- Such teams should analyze student performance and value added data as well as attendance records in order to pinpoint students who are below proficiency in reading and/or mathematics. They also should review remedial steps formerly or currently being used with students and determine which approaches have the greatest likelihood for success once students make the transition.

- Where appropriate, Transition Teams should arrange meetings between teachers in middle and high schools with teachers who are most familiar with at-risk students transitioning into their schools.
- Ninth grade students most at-risk of dropping out should be assigned a mentor (i.e., an academic coach, a life skills coach, a literacy coach, a graduation coach, etc.) who can maintain a personal relationship with the students either face-to-face or through on-line contact.
- The State Board of Education should require all middle and high schools with below-average student performance levels to immediately create such transition teams and have transition strategies for at-risk students in place by the fall of 2011. The Board should urge all other schools to consider creation of such teams.
- Beginning in 2012, middle schools should introduce job counseling programs such as Futures for Kids that orient students toward specific careers and insure that they are taking course work that would enable them to pursue their career goals.

- To support the efforts of middle and high schools the Department of Public Instruction should accelerate the development of software programs that have the capacity of identifying potential at-risk students. Specifically, the Graduation Resiliency Software being deployed in partnership with SAS is currently being piloted in 16 school systems. That tool should be made available as quickly as possible to all school systems with graduation rates that are less than 70%.
- The Department of Public Instruction should also systematically collect and showcase best practices proven to decrease the dropout rate and improve graduation rates. "What Works" information should be made readily available to all middle and high school faculty members through the use of technology.
- Middle and high school teachers and administrators need additional training to use the value added software tools like EVAAS that the State has made available. The potential of these programs will not be realized until faculty members are trained to maximize their use. Such training, if delivered via long distance technology could be made readily accessible at very low cost.

- Early outcome data coming out of the growing number of early college programs and technical high schools is very encouraging. Young people are graduating at rates much higher than those found in traditional high schools and many are going on to complete degrees at two-or-four year colleges and universities. The State should continue expanding the number of these programs with the goal of having an early college or occupationally-themed high school as an option for all students.
- Finally, the State Board of Education should reconsider the graduation requirements for students who do not plan to continue education beyond high school. For some a five-year program might be needed in order for them to meet graduation requirements. For others a reassessment of existing requirements might be in order to determine what, at a minimum, is needed for a sound, basic education and whether today's required graduation load is reasonable for students not planning on schooling beyond their high school years.



A TIMELINE FOR INCREASING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Maintain existing level of Smart Start & More at Four support	Increase level of Smart Start & More at Four support with goal of serving all children identified as at-risk	Increase level of Smart Start & More at Four support with goal of serving all children identified as at-risk	Increase level of Smart Start & More at Four support with goal of serving all children identified as at-risk	Increase level of Smart Start & More at Four support with goal of serving all children identified as at-risk	Increase level of Smart Start & More at Four support with goal of serving all children identified as at-risk	Increase level of Smart Start & More at Four support with goal of serving all children identified as at-risk
///	///	///	///	///	///	///
SBE considers revising graduation requirements for students not planning on pursuing 2 or 4 year college degrees	SBE takes actions on any graduation requirements proposed after study	SBE continues issuing annual ratings of remedial products	SBE continues issuing annual ratings of remedial products	SBE continues issuing annual ratings of remedial products	SBE continues issuing annual ratings of remedial products	SBE continues issuing annual ratings of remedial products
SBE begins to issue annual ratings of remedial reading and math products	///	SBE continues issuing annual ratings of remedial products				

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recommendation nine:

TIME IS AT THE HEART OF LEAVING NO CHILDREN BEHIND

GOAL: By 2017, all elementary and middle schools whose students move into one of North Carolina's high schools currently labeled "a dropout factory" will operate on an extended day schedule; additionally, by 2020 all of North Carolina's public schools will operate on a 190 instructional-day calendar.

North Carolina's top students as well as those who are academically at-risk are at a distinct educational disadvantage when compared to students in other industrial countries. North Carolina and the other forty-nine states in the United States have the dubious distinction of offering its young people the shortest academic year in the industrial world – 180 days per year compared to an average of roughly 207 days per year in other industrial nations.

That learning deficit is one of the major contributing factors to the young people in the United States slipping further behind in tests measuring academic performance of young people around the world. The most recent international test, released last month, found that when compared to students in 65 countries, students in the United States, once among the world's top performers, ranked 23rd in science and 31st in mathematics. At the top of the list were Asian countries like Japan, Singapore and South Korea, all of which have school years exceeding 200 days per year.

Japan's school year, as an example, was 240 days per year, giving their students a four year learning advantage over students in the United States. While Japan has scaled their school year back to something closer to 220 days per year, the time advantage remains stark.

In considering the issue of time, the Study Group opted to differentiate between all schools in North Carolina and those serving a disproportionate number of at-risk young people. While Study Group members believe that North Carolina must address the issue of additional time for all students it recommends beginning with those most in need.

SPECIFICALLY:

- The Study Group recommends that beginning in 2012 the State should extend the length of the school day in the elementary and middle schools whose students move into the 25 high schools with the highest dropout rate in North Carolina – schools labeled as "dropout factories" in national publications.
- From 2012 forward the State should increase the number of elementary and middle schools operating on an extended-day schedule each year until the feeder schools of all high schools with below average graduation rates are providing additional time for their students.
- Beginning in 2015-16 the State should add two days of instruction per year to all schools in North Carolina. That process should continue for five years with the goal of moving all of the State's schools to a 190 day academic calendar.

A TIMELINE FOR INCREASING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES

2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
SBE requests funding for extended day programs in middle & elementary schools feeding low-performing high schools	Phase-in of extended day programs begins with middle & elementary schools feeding into 20 low-performing high schools	Phase-in of extended day programs begins with middle & elementary schools feeding into 20 low-performing high schools SBE requests funding needed to add 2 instructional days to school Calendar	Phase-in of extended day programs begins with middle & elementary schools feeding into 20 low-performing high schools 2 additional days of instruction added to school calendar
2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Phase-in of extended day programs begins with middle & elementary schools feeding into 20 low-performing high schools 2 additional days of instruction added to school calendar	Phase-in of extended day programs begins with middle & elementary schools feeding into 20 low-performing high schools 2 additional days of instruction added to school calendar	2 additional days of instruction added to school calendar	2 additional days of instruction added to school calendar

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recommendation ten:

ADOPT POLICIES THAT WOULD ENABLE SCHOOLS TO BETTER COPE WITH CURRENT ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

GOAL: In the short run, maximize opportunities to be made strategic decisions while confronting the State's current budget deficit.

With cuts to education a virtual certainty in the short term, the State should strongly consider adopting policies that would attempt to minimize the negative impact of cuts to school budgets while attempting to maintain or improve the quality of education provided to young people.

SPECIFICALLY:

- The State should require that local school system Reduction in Force (RIF) policies include the use of value added student performance data for teachers in subject areas for which adequate data is available. Student outcomes, not the seniority of individual teachers, should be the primary consideration when local schools are required to lay off teachers in those subjects.
- If it proves necessary to increase class sizes due to budget cutbacks the State should earmark a portion of potential savings for the development of professional development training modules

that could better equip teachers to manage large class sizes – as an example, teachers need new skills if they are to think of a classroom with 30 students in terms of working with 6 learning teams composed of 5 individuals. Additionally, if class size increases prove to be necessary, the State should increase class sizes strategically. Instead of treating all schools the same, class size should be maintained as much as possible in schools serving concentrations of low-performing students.

- Given that the State has already eliminated state funding for staff development as well as all funding for the Principal's Executive Program, the State should move toward better harnessing technology to provide high-quality staff development training modules for teachers and for assistant principals and principals. While the State has made great strides in harnessing technology for student long-distance learning, it has only begun to maximize the potential of technology for capacity building of its educational workforce.

WHAT COMES FIRST & *When Could This Begin?*

For those who follow State politics there are only two questions on people's minds as the 2011 Session of the General Assembly deliberates – how deep will the cuts to North Carolina's budget be and which programs will fall victim to budget cutting?

It would be easy to dismiss the recommendations in this document as the wrong ideas at a very wrong time. That reaction, however, only insures that real, systemic changes in the State's public schools will once again wait for another generation of policymakers.

Many of the recommendations contained in this document can be done through policy. It doesn't, for instance, require millions of dollars for the State to adopt a uniform approach to the teaching of critical subject areas and work to align teacher preparation, materials used in schools and staff development to those new standards.



Exploratory work on developing a new approach to teacher pay and creation of a leadership assessment program do not require immediate expenditures.

Forming Transition Teams and making better use of software that can pinpoint students who are most at-risk can be done immediately. It does not require either law or dollars; it is simply a matter of doing it.

With the recommendations made by the Study Group is a timeline that shows how these recommendations could be phased in. It presumes that this year and next will be low-or-no new investment years as the State attempts to get back to fiscal equilibrium.

Items that would cost money (i.e., salaries, extending the school day and year, etc.) are proposed to begin in 2013 when, hopefully, the economy begins to rebound.

If the Study Group has any single recommendation to policymakers it is that for these recommendations to result in a personnel system and a comprehensive early education to graduation approach to dropout reduction they need to be seen as a package, as a system.

The history of school reform in North Carolina is littered with “silver bullet” solutions (i.e., single

program answers to complicated issues) that have come and gone. The State, for instance, had an Office of Teacher Recruiting in the eighties. It once had a screening program for prospective school principals. It has had several experiments with merit pay. Its Principals Executive Program which trained school principals and assistant principals has been the model for similar programs around the country.

All of those programs are gone in large part because they were seen as single answers to complicated problems. They were not viewed as parts of an inter-locking system of personnel.

Going back to lessons learned from high performing educational countries or highly regarded businesses, the key personnel components for a successful enterprise are recruiting high-potential job candidates, providing them skill building training and support, having clear and high performance expectations and creating an environment where employees can grow professionally overtime and know that good work will be rewarded. To focus on only one component of the personnel puzzle is likely to meet the same fate as programs cited above.

OUR KIDS AREN'T WAITING

In closing, the Study Group would remind educational policymakers that our kids are not waiting for an economic rebound. They continue going to school for 180 days per year, regardless of the size of the deficit facing North Carolina.

They will receive a good, mediocre or poor education regardless of where the stock market is or how high the unemployment rate reaches.

They aren't waiting for us to develop world-class schools and we can't wait either. These recommendations are offered in a spirit of urgency. They are offered in the belief that education is a fundamental building block to a strong economy. They are offered in the hopes that “first in America” or “creating a system of schools second to none” are more than fantasies; rather, they are offered in the hope that the challenge of creating schools that are genuinely world class will be one that will be taken up by the new leadership in North Carolina's House and Senate.

In the meantime, the children aren't waiting.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABCs Plan:

The ABCs of Public Education began in the 1996-97 school year as North Carolina's primary school improvement program and was, for that time, a major step forward in improving schools, providing the state's first school-level accountability system and generating information that has allowed North Carolina to better target school improvement efforts.

In 2006, the first significant changes were made in the ABCs program with the implementation of new growth formulas to measure change in student performance from one year to the next. The model continues North Carolina's long-standing focus on the annual growth of students and on the reporting of each school's performance composite, the current ABCs formulas are different enough from the original ones that comparisons between the performance of schools from 2006 forward and prior years should be avoided.

In 2008, the State Board of Education adopted the “Framework for Change: the Next Generation of Assessments and Accountability.” The Framework for Change has already begun to modernize the state's curriculum and assessment systems. The work of implementing the Framework's recommendations is called the Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort (ACRE). This work, once completed, will provide North Carolina with a completely overhauled standard course of study, new student assessments and a new school accountability model. Most of these items are expected to be operational by the 2012-13 school year.

Dropout Rate:

North Carolina General Statute 115C-12(27) requires the compilation of an annual report of students dropping out of schools in the state. Dropouts are reported for each Local Educational Agency (LEA) and charter school in the state, and “event dropout rates” are computed. The event dropout rate, or simply the “dropout rate,” is the number of students in a particular grade span dropping out in one year, divided by a measure of the total students in that particular grade span. Rates are calculated for grades 7-12 and 9-12.

A dropout is defined by State Board policy (HSP-Q-001) as “any student who leaves school for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of studies without transferring to another elementary or secondary school.” For reporting purposes, a dropout is a student who was enrolled at some time during the previous school year, but who was not enrolled (and who does not meet reporting exclusions) on day 20 of the current school year. Schools that cannot document a former student's enrollment in a US school must report that student as a dropout. An exception is made for students who are known to have left the country.

EVAAS:

SAS® EVAAS™ (Education Value-Added Assessment System) for K-12 is a customized software system available to all NC school districts. EVAAS provides diagnostic reports to district and school staff. The system basically answers the question of how effective a schooling experience is. By looking at colorful, easy-to-understand charts and graphs accessed via the Web, users can produce reports that predict student success, show the effects of schooling at particular schools, or reveal patterns in subgroup performance.

Graduation Rate:

North Carolina education policy provides a conservative definition of high school graduates. Students who leave public high school for a community college GED or adult high school program are counted as dropouts under state policy. Also, the cohort graduation rate does not capture students with disabilities who complete the 12th grade but do not qualify for a standard diploma and instead earn a Certificate of Achievement or Graduation Certificate. In addition, school officials are not allowed to tag a student as having transferred to another public or private high school until the receiving school requests the student's records.

The four year cohort graduation rate is calculated (for a school) taking the number of students who graduate with a diploma by the end of a given school year and dividing by the number of students who were in the 9th grade of that school four years earlier.

More at Four:

More at Four is North Carolina's state-funded pre-kindergarten program that is narrowly targeted to at-risk four-year-olds. Its purpose is to provide an academic pre-kindergarten experience during the year prior to kindergarten entry, targeting at-risk children from low-income families who have not been served in any other formal program.

Under the authority of the NC State Board of Education, More at Four classrooms are located in public schools (54 percent), licensed child care centers (27 percent), and Head Start programs (19 percent). These classrooms provide a full school day, full school year program that meets standards set by the State Board of Education to align with K-12 education and prepare children for academic success. North Carolina is one of the top two states nationally for state pre-kindergarten quality standards, according to the National Institute for Early Education Research.

No Child Left Behind:

On January 8, 2002, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 into law, which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The major focus of the legislation is to raise academic standards for all students and to hold states accountable for student performance. NCLB has five major provisions: annual testing, academic improvement, high-quality teaching, scientifically-based reading programs, and increased funding.

NCLB mandated that by 2005-06, states must annually test students in grades 3-8 in reading and mathematics and by 2007-08, students must be tested once in elementary, middle, and high school in science. The law allows states to use their own tests, but they must be aligned to the state's curriculum and state standards. States are also required to participate in the 4th and 8th grade reading and mathematics National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests, also call the Nation's Report Card, to provide a common measure of comparison across states.

North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT):

The North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) is a recognized national leader in professional development programming for teachers. Established by the state legislature in 1985, NCCAT provides a year-round curriculum of intensive cross-disciplinary seminars in the sciences, arts, humanities, technology, leadership, communication, and health and wellness.

Each year, nearly 5,000 teachers participate in residential seminars and professional development programs at the center's campus locations in Cullowhee and on Ocracoke.

North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention:

The mission of the North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (NCDJJD) is to reduce and prevent juvenile delinquency by effectively intervening, educating, and treating youth in order to strengthen families and increase public safety.

The North Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention partners with Juvenile Crime Prevention Councils in each county to galvanize community leaders, locally and statewide, to reduce and prevent juvenile crime. JCPC board members are appointed by the county Board of Commissioners and meet monthly in each county. The meetings are open to the public, and all

business is considered public information. DJJD allocates approximately 23 million dollars to these councils annually. Funding is used to subsidize local programs and services.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction:

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is the agency charged with implementing the State's public school laws and the State Board of Education's policies and procedures governing pre-kindergarten through 12th grade public education. The elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction heads the Department and functions under the policy direction of the State Board of Education.

The agency has approximately 750 positions providing leadership and service to local public school districts and schools in the areas of curriculum and instruction, accountability, finance, teacher and administrator preparation and licensing, professional development and school business support and operations.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is a state agency that serves the 2,524 traditional and charter public schools and their nearly 1.5 million students.

North Carolina State Board of Education (SBE):

The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is that every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century.

The State Board of Education consists of the Lieutenant Governor, the Treasurer, and eleven members appointed by the Governor. The Governor's appointees are subject to confirmation by the General Assembly in joint session. Eight of the appointed members represent the eight education districts of the state. Three members are appointed from the state as at-large members. The State Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction serves as secretary and chief administrative officer of the Board. The State Board also has seven advisors (non-voting): two high school student advisors (a junior and a senior, appointments made in the junior year for two-year service) appointed by the Governor; the NC State Teacher of the Year (serves two years; overlapping terms); the NC State Principal of the Year (serves one year); a superintendent appointed by the Governor (serves one year), and a local board of education member (serves one year).

North Carolina Teacher Academy:

The North Carolina Teacher Academy is a professional development program for teachers established and funded by the North Carolina General Assembly. The mission of the Academy is to support continuous learning to the growth of a career teacher by providing quality professional development in the areas of school leadership, instructional methodology, core content, and use of modern technology in order to enrich instruction and enhance student achievement.

North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS):

In September 2002 the North Carolina General Assembly enacted a general statute to create BETA, the Business Education Technology Alliance. The BETA Commission, under the leadership of Governor Bev Perdue, established the E-Learning Commission and charged it with establishing the North Carolina Virtual Public School.

The purpose of the North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) is to provide courses that students are unable to take at their local schools. In other words NCVPS will provide courses that augment a student's local school's program of study. All courses are taught by a certified teacher in the subject certified to teach in North Carolina. Once the on-line course is completed the student receives credit on his or her school transcript from the student's participating school.

Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM):

The Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) is organized into sections encompassing budgeting, management, demographics and economics, data services and IT, and HR. The State Budget Director and the Deputy State Budget Directors provide state and internal OSBM management for processes related to development, administration, and execution of the state's budget. They direct the activities of budget administrators; advise executive and legislative policy makers; consult with agency budget officers on budget systems and problem resolution; provide leadership in determining budget needs and priorities based on program mission and costs, and provide leadership in administering the budget.

OSBM's top administrators oversee the timely and accurate preparation of the governor's budget for submission to the General Assembly and handle matters relating to execution of the budget consistent with legislative directive and intent. As well, they provide management on salary control issues and supervise the development of statewide budget data analyses and revenue and economic projections. They review and take required action on appropriate Council of State agenda issues and oversee capital improvement budgeting processes.

Principals Executive Program:

The Principals' Executive Program (PEP) formerly conducted professional development programs for principals, assistant principals, and other leadership personnel in North Carolina's public schools. Established in 1984 by the North Carolina General Assembly, PEP seeks to improve the performance of the state's K-12 students by enlarging the knowledge and school administrators as managers and education leaders.

Race to the Top (RTTT):

Race to the Top is a \$4.35 billion United States Department of Education program designed to spur reforms in state and local district K-12 education. It is funded by the ED Recovery Act as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

Phase 1 applications for funding were due on January 19, 2010. 40 states applied for funding, as did the District of Columbia. Phase 1 finalists were announced on March 4, 2010, and phase 1 winners were announced on March 29, 2010. The deadline for submitting Phase 2 applications was June 1; Phase 2 decisions were announced on August 24, 2010. North Carolina was awarded funding as a part of Phase 2.

Smart Start:

Smart Start is the state's early childhood infrastructure. Smart Start local partnerships serve as a system to convene stakeholders to assess local needs; ensure accountability; and leverage community, state and federal resources. Local partnerships have established community networks that bridge education, health services, and family supports to best meet the needs of young children and their families. The Smart Start network of 77 local partnerships serves all 100 North Carolina counties.

Teach For America Program (TFA):

Teach For America (TFA) is an American non-profit organization that recruits recent college graduates and professionals to teach for two or more years in low-income communities throughout the United States. During Teach For America's first year in 1990, 500 men and women began teaching in six low-income communities across the country. Since then, Teach For America's network has grown to over 28,000 individuals. They have become one of the nation's largest providers of teachers for low-income communities.

RESOURCE PEOPLE

AND INDIVIDUALS WHO PRESENTED TO AND SUPPORTED THE FORUM'S STUDY GROUP XIV

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Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System

Granville County Early College Panel comprised of faculty and students from the Early College

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Charlotte Hughes, Director of Federal Program Monitoring and Support, State Department of Public Instruction

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Dr. William McNeal, ASA Executive Director & Former National Superintendent of the Year

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Dr. Joseph Peel, former Elizabeth City/Pasquotank Superintendent & Former Director of the Wake County Leadership Academy

Dr. Donna Peters, former Rutherford County Superintendent of the Year & Former State Superintendent of the Year

Dr. Michael Priddy, Former Pitt County Superintendent

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Dr. Lee Stiff, Program Evaluator for NC Dropout Prevention Grants

John Tate, Senior Vice President, Wells Fargo Bank & Member of the State Board of Education

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Richard Urquhart, Chief Financial Officer, Investors Management Corporation

Jane Wettach, Director, Children's Education Law Clinic at Duke University's School of Law

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