



2016 Legislative Priorities

The legislative priorities of the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association were established to attract and retain the highest quality personnel to lead North Carolina's public schools and support higher achievement of North Carolina's students, ensuring their readiness for competition in our global economy. The following are NCSSA's recommendations for legislative actions that will support these goals and move the state's public schools to the next level.

1. Low-Performing Schools & School Performance Grades

- Reward academic improvement and lift morale of the teachers and administrators working hard to ensure student success in struggling schools by removing all schools that “meet growth” standards from the definition of and penalties for low-performing schools.
- Make the 15-point school performance grading scale, rather than a 10-point scale, permanent after the third set of grades are released for the current school year.
- Allow the State Board of Education to adjust the school grading system on an ongoing basis to prevent an excessive swing in letter grades as current standards, curriculum and assessments are revamped.

2. Increased Compensation For All Educators and School Personnel

- Begin to address the teacher shortage facing North Carolina classrooms by increasing base pay for all teachers before implementing differentiated-pay measures.
- Provide all school-based administrators a salary increase which, at a minimum, mirrors the average of the teacher increase provided in 2016.
- Overhaul the principal salary schedule to ensure it provides adequate compensation and yearly pay progression to facilitate recruitment and retention of effective school leaders.
- Provide salary increases to all school personnel in 2016 in recognition of their commitment to serving North Carolina students and the lost ground between inflation rates and their pay in recent years.

3. Invest Adequate Resources In North Carolina Public Schools

- Increase the state's per-student investment, which has been declining since 2008, to ensure each student has the resources and personnel needed to receive a high-quality education and preparation for college and a career.
- Return to a budget funding model that gives school systems predictability and allows them to adequately plan for their school year by restoring funding for student enrollment growth in the state's continuation budget.
- Provide recurring state funding to ensure adequate staffing in all aspects of school operations to ensure students are receiving they high quality educational experience they need and deserve.

4. Accountability in School Choice Options

- Restore funding of public schools to the 2008 pre-recession levels before further expanding the state's voucher system, implementing the proposed Achievement School District, or funding expansion of any program sending public tax dollars to private, for-profit entities.
- Ensure a rigorous learning environment for all North Carolina's K-12 students by requiring every educational entity that receives state funding to be held accountable under the same high standards now governing traditional public schools.
- Maintain fair funding of traditional public schools and charter schools by preventing proposed changes that would require local school districts to share funds with charter schools for programs they do not offer and for district and school grants and reimbursements that charter schools may apply for themselves.

5. Regulatory Reform

- Assist school districts in finding qualified teachers by establishing a system of true licensure reciprocity with other states, reinstating an emergency teacher licensure process, and creating an expedited military and spouse licensure system to facilitate their smooth transition as educators in the state.
- Align Pre-K facility licensure requirements in public schools with standards now allowable for kindergarten students served on the same campus.
- Restore the state's school bus replacement cycle of 200,000 miles or 20 years to alleviate school districts' increased costs and difficulty in securing replacement parts for older buses and to enhance student safety.
- Allow school district employees who are licensed in plumbing and HVAC services to use these certified skills both within and outside the school district, as currently prohibited.