

2015 Priorities for Strengthening and Enhancing Cumberland County Schools

- 1. Attract and Retain the Best Public School Teachers:
Competitive Compensation**
- 2. Provide Adequate Resources for North Carolina's
Public Schools**
- 3. Develop Accountability System That Nurtures
Academic Improvement**
- 4. Increase Local Control and Flexibility
to Implement Reforms and Enhance Performance**
- 5. Increase Accountability in Taxpayer-Funded
Education Provided outside Public Schools**

Attract and Retain the Best Public Schools Teachers: Competitive Compensation

- Re-establish a state-funded scholarship program to attract high-performing high school students into teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities across the state
- Increase the pay of all teachers
- Address an increase in teacher base pay before addressing pay for performance measures
- Adjust teacher salaries in order to compete within our region and exceed the national average
- Allow pay incentives for hard-to-staff subject areas and in high-needs schools
- Provide supplements for master's degree and doctoral degree earned after July 1, 2014 on an ongoing basis
- Layer merit-based pay on top of a well-performing salary schedule to further incentivize outstanding performance in the classroom
- Establish an initial probation period of less than a full year

Provide Adequate Resources for North Carolina's Public Schools

- Reinstatement of the low-wealth formula by putting a greater weight on property tax valuation as originally intended
Impact on CCS: \$6 Million
- Increase funds for Capital improvements by allocating 40% of the lottery proceeds to capital construction as originally legislated
Impact on CCS: \$4 Million
- Fund Technology improvement adequately
- \$2,150,000 cut to Teacher Assistants for 2013-2014
Impact on CCS: 127 Positions
- Restore \$120,000 cut in Transportation
- Restore \$500,000 in Remediation Funds
- Allow a local option for additional sales tax for education
- \$77 million non-recurring cut to instructional resources and digital content in 2012-2013 not restored
Impact on CCS: \$2.7 Million

Provide Adequate Resources for North Carolina's Public Schools (cont'd)

- \$38 million non-recurring cut to classroom supplies in 2012-2013 not restored and exacerbated by a \$7 million recurring reduction in 2013-2014
Impact on CCS: \$1.6 Million
- Restore ability to transfer positions at state-wide average salary to allow for meaningful flexibility
Impact on CCS: \$6 Million
- Restore Drivers Education cuts from Transportation fund

Develop Accountability System That Nurtures Academic Improvement

- Provide incentives, such as a letter grade increase, to lower-performing schools that make great strides in increasing student achievement
- Reduce the number of required passages in the portfolio option of demonstration for meeting reading standards
- Provide flexibility to local school districts regarding details of, and adequate funding for, the summer reading camps
- Treat traditional public schools and charter schools equitably with regards to the program's requirements
- Clarify details regarding testing exceptional children

Increase Local Control and Flexibility to Implement Reforms and Enhance Performance

- Synchronize the public school calendar with those of community colleges and universities to facilitate enhanced learning opportunities for high school students and to better accommodate block scheduling
- Ensure that curriculum changes, such as the mandate to teach cursive writing and the multiplication table, are deemed essential by the instructional leaders of the school district before implementation
- Provide flexibility to redirect funding and other resources to higher priority services and programs
- Eliminate unnecessary or redundant reporting requirements by schools and school districts
- Retain LEA authority over all aspects of public schools, including but not limited to, facility construction and operations, schedule, attendance zones, budget, curriculum content and delivery options, staffing levels, extracurricular activities, and other core services

Increase Local Control and Flexibility to Implement Reforms and Enhance Performance (cont'd)

- Eliminate the prohibition on school counselors administering tests to ensure adequate staffing and maintain the integrity and fidelity of all assessments mandated by the state and federal government
- Reduce state-mandated tests and eliminate the mandate on scheduling them in the last 10 days of the school year for elementary and middle schools and the last 5 days of the course in high schools. The testing schedule should be subject to local control to account for inclement weather, retesting opportunities and adequate staffing levels as determined by the school district

Increase Accountability in Taxpayer-Funded Education Provided outside Public Schools

- Eliminate state-funded voucher from the budget
- Ensure the ongoing viability of LEA-operated schools in areas where charter schools are expanding by increasing the relevance of the LEA Impact Statement in the application process
- Ensure that all virtual learning continues to have state oversight through the N.C. Virtual Public School and State Board of Education, is part of blended learning along with on-site instruction, and does not negatively affect student enrollment and associated funding that the state provides to school districts
- Prohibit establishment of a virtual charter school until sufficient accountability measures can be established to ensure only quality educational services are offered through an entity, ensure that its funding structure acknowledges the cost differences with brick and mortar schools, and does not detract needed resources from traditional public schools