



Welcome to the 2019 Cumberland County Schools Legislative Breakfast

Cumberland County Board of Education



Collaborate.



Compete.



Succeed.

Cumberland County Schools-Fast Facts

- Fully accredited school system with 87 schools
- 50,937 students (5th largest school system in NC out of 115)
- 2nd largest employer in Cumberland County behind the military
- 6,042 total employees, with 3046 certified teachers and 1,362 other student support staff
- 75.3% of students qualify for free/reduced meals
- 3,604 high school graduates in 2018, with \$91,677,622.38 in scholarship dollars awarded (academic, athletic, military and other)

The Cumberland County Board of Education 2019 Legislative Agenda is based upon the North Carolina Schools Boards Association (“NCSBA”) 2019-2020 Legislative Agenda, and is also aligned with the legislative agendas of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators and North Carolina Association of Educators. The following presentation is not intended to repeat the NCSBA agenda verbatim, but rather, to hit the highlights from our local perspective.

2019 Legislative Priorities

01

Ensuring Student Success

02

Providing a Safe Learning Environment

03

Ensuring Efficient Operations

04

Recruiting and Retaining Top Talent

05

Accountability

1. Ensuring Student Success

A. School Calendar Flexibility:

- **The “ask”**: Our resolution does not simply ask for greater flexibility, but specifically requests the ability to start up to 10 days prior to August 26, and finish up to 10 days prior to June 11.
- **Why this matters**: This measured, incremental increase in flexibility will assist greatly with the “high school exams before Christmas” calendar which we piloted this year, and enhance alignment with community college and university calendars for the benefit of students enrolled in college-level classes.

1. Ensuring Student Success, continued...

B. School Technology:

- **The “ask”**: Establishment of a payment schedule for the State to pay over time the \$730 million fines and forfeiture judgment in favor of public schools which dates back to 2008.
- **Why this matters**: The judgment proceeds are earmarked for technology funding, which is essential to maintaining and enhancing student instruction.

1. Ensuring Student Success, continued...

C. K-3 Class Size:

- **The “ask”**: Authorize the State Board to provide waivers if space is not available or sufficient certified teachers are not available.
- **Why this matters**: In some specific instances, strict adherence to the K-3 mandates may be impractical.

1. Ensuring Student Success, continued...

D. Low-performing Schools:

- **The “ask”**: Revise the statutory definition of low-performing schools to eliminate schools which meet expected growth, regardless of their school letter grades.
- **Why this matters**: Student growth is a powerful indicator of the effectiveness of instruction, and this change will ease negative misperceptions of schools which are achieving solid student growth.

2. Provide a Safe Learning Environment

- A. Adequately Fund Student Support Personnel (school psychologists, social workers, counselors and nurses)
- **The “ask”**: Provide sufficient allotments to meet the nationally recommended staff-to-student ratios for these critical positions.
 - **Why this matters**: Recent tragedies and studies confirm the need for better ratios of these positions in order to support student health, improve student outcomes, and avoid school shootings.

2. Provide a Safe Learning Environment, continued...

B. Additional SRO's:

- **The “ask”**: Provide additional funding to place a full-time resource officer in every school.
- **Why this matters**: Deterrence and response times.

3. Ensuring Efficient Operations

A. Statewide School Bond

- **The “ask”**: Allow North Carolinians to vote on a statewide school bond at least as large as that proposed by the Speaker.
- **Why this matters**: North Carolina’s multi-billion-dollar school capital needs backlog. Cumberland County has a substantial renovation/repair backlog and an elderly school inventory.

3. Ensuring Efficient Operations, continued...

B. Sales Tax Refund:

- **The “ask”**: Provide a state sales tax refund for public schools to bring local boards of education in-line with cities, counties, public universities, and charter schools.
- **Why this matters**: Fundamental fairness and elimination of burdensome “work-arounds” involving deeding properties to counties in order to avoid sales taxes on construction/renovation projects.

4. Recruiting and Retaining Top Talent

A. Teacher Pay

- **The “ask”**: Ensure consistent, predictable increases in base salary, reinstate advanced degree supplements, and provide overdue salary increases for veteran teachers.
- **Why this matters**: Attract and retain high quality teachers and begin to restore the attractiveness of teaching as an honored profession in our state.

4. Recruiting and Retaining Top Talent, continued...

B. Principal Pay:

- **The “ask”**: Restore years of experience as a factor in the salary formula and extend the 2016-2017 hold harmless salary clause.
- **Why this matters**: The need to retain and reward effective, experienced principals.

5. Accountability

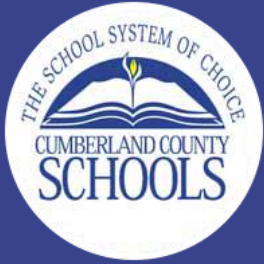
A. School Grades:

- **The “ask”**: Increase the current weight of student growth from 20% and make the 15-point scale permanent.
- **Why this matters**: Since principal salaries and teacher bonuses are determined by student growth scores, it makes sense to use a similar calculation to determine a school’s overall grade. Maintaining the 15-point scale allows for better comparisons year over year and will avoid an artificial, state-wide grade decrease.

5. Accountability, continued...

B. Charter Schools Accountability and Transparency:

- **The “ask”**: Require greater accountability and transparency of charter schools which receive CCS funds, including transparency in spending and budgeting comparable to public schools, and objective measures of student achievement such as EOG’s administered in public schools.
- **Why this matters**: In FY 2017-2018, CCS paid out almost \$1.7 million in local Cumberland County taxpayer dollars to charter school operators, some of which are not even located in Cumberland County, and CCS received no per pupil reimbursement when over 100 charter school students returned to CCS over the course of the school year.



**Thank you for your Continued
Support of Cumberland County
Schools!**

Questions?

Cumberland County Schools.