



Education Matters!

Democratic Women of Catawba County

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Key North Carolina Public Education Issues

STATE FUNDING

Total state spending for K-12 for year 2018 is \$313 million, a net increase of 3.6% over spending compared with the prior year – two thirds of which will go to increase in teacher salaries. However, taking out that amount, the increase in net new spending for public schools is only 1.2% above prior year spending. Enrollment for public schools has increased by nearly 91,000 since 2008 – when adjusted for inflation per-pupil spending will remain below 2008 spending. Textbook funding per student is nearly 40% lower than the 2008 amount and there are nearly 7,000 fewer teacher assistants today. Under the budget, total state spending for FY18 remains below 2008 spending. Furthermore, the new budget marks nine consecutive years that state spending has declined as a share of the state's economy.

District Catawba County		District Hickory City		District Newton Conover	
Students	16,847	Students	4,480	Students	3,226
Teachers	1075	Teachers	287	Teachers	205
Teacher Assistants	232	Teacher Assistants	50	Teacher Assistants	56
# Schools	28	# Schools	9	# Schools	7
Funding Sources		Funding Sources		Funding Sources	
State	64%	State	53%	State	56%
Local	24%	Local	35%	Local	34%
Federal	12%	Federal	12%	Federal	11%
<i>Per Pupil Expenditure</i>	\$8,327	<i>Per Pupil Expenditure</i>	\$8,639	<i>Per Pupil Expenditure</i>	\$9,106 ¹

U.S. Average District Per-Pupil Expenditure \$12,578²

TEACHER PAY, TEACHER TURNOVER

Veteran teachers say that experienced educators were left behind when lawmakers developed the salary scale in this budget. Teachers with 25 years experience will see only a \$30 per month increase which will not even cover the expected increases in health care premiums. Enrollment in our state universities in teacher preparation courses is down 30% over the last 5 years and other states are luring our teachers away with higher pay. Governor Cooper has started a statewide drive to collect school supplies in order to assist teachers who must often pay for these supplies out of their own pocket.

NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC EDUCATION-NATIONAL RANKINGS³

Teacher Pay	35th
Funding Per Pupil	44th ³
Overall Ranking	44th ⁴
Change in Teacher's Salaries between 2004-2015	48th ⁵

HOW CATAWBA COUNTY'S LEGISLATORS VOTE FOR EDUCATION

Despite deepening cuts into public education and controversial measures such as increased funding for charter schools using funds from public education, representatives from Catawba County - Sen. Andy Wells, Rep. Jay Adams, and Rep. Mitchell Setzer - all voted in favor of the 2017-2018 Budget.

CONTINUED ON BACK

•••● PRE-K

The research is clear – a recent study by Duke University determined that the advantages of Pre-K last for years – in test scores, savings on special education, and grade retentions.⁶ This year’s budget added 3,525 new Pre-K slots over 2 years cutting in half the “waiting list” of eligible students (those that have already signed up). However, overall enrollment is only 25% of the number of children that could be served throughout the state. Governor Cooper has made providing Pre-K for all eligible 4-year olds a priority for his administration.

•••● CHARTER SCHOOLS AND VOUCHERS

Unlike NC Public Schools, private, charter schools are not accountable to the same standards – including teacher certification and non-discrimination requirements. Vouchers and state support for charter and private schools drain resources from public schools. The NC General Assembly has authorized 2,000 additional vouchers for each year through 2027 when charter school funding is expected to cost \$145 million dollars a year. As to accountability and standards, private schools are not required to administer state tests nor publish detailed achievement data which would allow the public to develop valid conclusions about the success of the program. **Indeed, the Duke Law Study⁷ found that student’s performance in charter schools is no better and in some cases worse than that of public schools.** Despite claims that tax dollars would not support religious schools, the data shows that the majority of vouchers go to students in parochial schools.

Education is the last public function that has not been totally “privatized” to allow profiteers to exploit it and our students. This is quickly changing.

Here is the key question for all parents to ask: How could any school that makes a profit possibly provide a better education than one that does not with the same amount of tax dollars? Public schools spend all the tax dollars on educating students, private schools remove funds for their own enrichment or profit first, then educate the students with what is left. Does that make sense to you?

Call your representatives to let them know you support public education.

Senator Andy Wells, 42nd District, (919) 733-5876, Email: Andy.wells@ncleg.net

Representative Jay Adams, District 96, 919-733-5988, Email: Jay.adams@ncleg.net

Representative Mitchell Setzer, District 89, 919-733-4948, Email: Mitchell.Setzer@ncleg.net

¹<http://apps.schools.nc.gov/ords/f?p=1:34:2546430722477601::NO::>

²https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/2016_NEA_Rankings_And_Estimates.pdf

³https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/2016_NEA_Rankings_And_Estimates.pdf

⁴<https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-teachers/7159/>

⁵https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/2016_NEA_Rankings_And_Estimates.pdf

⁶<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cdev.12645/full>

⁷<https://sites.duke.edu/policybridge/2017/06/29/duke-childrens-law-clinic-school-voucher-policy-brief/>

⁸ Ibid.