

# 2018 Legislative Priorities

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*The North Carolina Association of School Administrators asks the General Assembly, the Governor, the State Board of Education and other state leaders to work with our organization and the 7,000 school leaders in our membership on focused initiatives to attract and retain the highest quality personnel for public schools across the state and support enhanced achievement and future readiness of North Carolina students. The following are NCASA's recommendations for legislative actions that will assist with these goals.*

## HELP LEAs ADDRESS REMAINING HURDLES TO PHASE-IN OF MANDATED K-3 CLASS SIZES

- **Provide additional exceptions to the mandated K-3 class size for special hardship circumstances**, such as lack of facility space or licensed teachers to hire, to facilitate compliance with the caps.
- **Amend the law on class size caps in K-3 to eliminate the districtwide average** from the standards school districts must achieve for compliance, thus enhancing the focus on student-to-teacher ratios in individual classrooms.
- **Authorize a 2018 statewide school bond referendum of \$1.9 billion that would help school districts address new K-3 classroom needs** that are exacerbating the \$8.1 billion in construction and renovation costs which had been identified prior to adoption of the class size mandate.

## ENHANCE THE NEW PAY PLAN FOR SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATORS

- **Increase the base salary of all principals** to ensure that it is more competitive with compensation offered by neighboring states in the Southeast, where NC continues to rank near the bottom, and minimize the need for paying these top leaders from either the assistant principal or teacher salary schedules to hold them harmless.
- **Add an experience factor to the base level salary** in the new principal pay schedule to recognize the value of previous service in school leadership and ensure that veteran principals earn more than new or early-career principals who are leading schools of the same size.
- **Extend the “hold harmless” provisions** to ensure that pay does not dip below 2016-2017 total state compensation for any principal or assistant principal in future years.
- **Add a grandfather clause** to allow current school-based administrators who hold a doctoral or advanced degree or those enrolled in a related program as of July 1, 2016 to continue to receive a supplement for these degrees and their own investment in higher-level education that helps improve their leadership and service as either a principal or assistant principal.
- Allow principals who lack traditional growth scores, such as those who lead alternative schools, to be **paid at the “exceed growth” level if they demonstrate that high performance** rather than capping their pay at the “meets growth” level as required under current law.

For additional information, please contact NCASA Executive Director and Chief Lobbyist Katherine W. Joyce at [kjoyce@ncasa.net](mailto:kjoyce@ncasa.net), or call 919-828-1426.

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## ENHANCE THE NEW PAY PLAN, *continued*

- Recognize the additional oversight and challenges associated with leading large schools by **adding new tiers in base principal pay** for schools with 1,300-1,699 students and 1,700+ students, since numerous schools across the state have up to 3,000 students.
- **Adjust the principal bonus plan** to reward principals who lead their new school to exceed growth in their first year, rather than only if the school exceeds growth in their second year of service there, as under current law.
- **Provide a 2% increase to assistant principal pay** to reflect pay that is 19% above that of a teacher with the same years of service on the “A” salary schedule, as stated as the General Assembly’s intent in the enacted 2017 budget law.
- **Provide statutory language connecting pay increases** for principals and assistant principals with those of teachers in future years to maintain salary differentials reflecting increased responsibility and to minimize the need to pay some school-based administrators from the teacher schedule to hold them harmless.

## ENHANCE STATE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES

- **Allow voters to vote on a \$1.9 billion statewide school capital bond** providing a significant one-time investment of dollars local counties need to address their school facility capital needs.
- **Provide counties with increased annual support for school facility needs** by raising the portion of Education Lottery proceeds designated for public school capital projects back to 40%.
- **Empower local communities** to address their public school facility needs by granting counties the ability to levy, with local voter approval, additional local option sales taxes dedicated to public school construction and capital projects.

## ENHANCE FACILITIES SUPPORT, *continued*

- **Expand the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund** so that more distressed counties can benefit from the new funding stream earmarked for assisting those with limited local resources for building new school facilities in their community.

## FINE-TUNE SCHOOL PERFORMANCE GRADES & ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

- **Make permanent the 15-point grading scale** for the A-F school performance grades to ensure fair comparison of grades from year to year and to provide stability and predictability for LEAs in terms of accountability measures that govern their operations.
- **Increase the weighting of student growth from 20% to 50%** in calculating the A-F school performance grades to reflect the true work and progress being made by public schools in increasing student achievement.
- **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.

## ENHANCE EACH DISTRICT’S ABILITY TO SUPPORT THEIR SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS

- **Prevent the 2018 earmarked \$4 million cut to the central office allotment**, which is now only 0.9% of the state’s K-12 education budget. This planned cut, if not reversed, would reduce the critical district-level administrative oversight and support back to 1995-1996 levels at a time when central offices oversee 33 percent more students, implement scores of new programs, and ensure compliance with a growing number of data and reporting requirements.

*For additional information, contact NCASA Executive Director via email at [kjoyce@ncasa.net](mailto:kjoyce@ncasa.net), or call NCASA at 919-828-1426.*