



## NC ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

April 22, 2010

Dear Members of the North Carolina General Assembly:

We have the utmost respect for the difficult position you are in as you seek to establish a financially sound budget that does not stifle the progress this state has made the past few years. We, too, want to see our state continue to prosper, and we believe a contributing factor is ensuring that public schools and the students they serve will not face adverse impacts from the budget decisions you ultimately make.

By now you have probably reviewed Governor Beverly Perdue's recommendations for the 2010-2011 state budget. Since we know her proposal is the likely starting point for your own deliberations, we wanted to make you aware of several points of concern we have been hearing from many of our more than 6,000 members across the state, particularly the superintendents of the local school districts. We ask that you please consider the following concerns regarding components of Governor Perdue's budget proposal:

- **The magnitude of the LEA Adjustment (commonly called the Discretionary Reduction) cannot be sustained without laying off additional school personnel and negatively impacting classroom services.** School districts absorbed \$225 million in discretionary cuts for 2009-10, and that amount already is authorized to grow to \$304.8 million for 2010-2011. The governor's proposal to increase that cut by \$135 million for a **total LEA discretionary reduction of \$439.8 million** simply cannot be managed without irreparable harm to public school classrooms.
- **Public schools cannot cover all of the proposed discretionary reduction and other line item cuts with federal funding.** Most school districts used federal funds provided in 2009 to prevent large-scale personnel layoffs, and those same dollars will help extend those job protections for the same personnel for 2010-2011. There is no capacity for stretching those two-year federal dollars to cover larger cuts that have been proposed. In addition, school districts cannot rely on federal funds through the JOBS initiative that Congress has not yet, and may not ultimately, approve.
- **Proposed line item cuts to Central Office, Assistant Principals and others will result in additional public school job losses and detrimentally impact each school district's capacity to ensure accountability and support classroom services.**
- **Any pay and benefit enhancements approved for state-paid personnel will result in an unfunded mandate for school districts, since they must treat locally and federally paid employees the same.** The governor's proposals for a retirement contribution increase, a step increase for employees paid on the teacher salary schedule and the payback for furlough time mandated in 2009 all would increase the funding crisis school districts already are facing at the local level.
- **Public school job protection should be given priority over a pay increase for personnel and any expansion funding proposal.**

We appreciate your careful consideration of these concerns and welcome the opportunity to work with you on a K-12 education budget that minimizes the negative impact of the current economic crisis facing our state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill McNeal". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "B" and "M".

Bill McNeal  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katherine W. Joyce". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "K" and "J".

Katherine W. Joyce  
Assistant Executive Director

Cc: NCASA Board of Directors and Local School Superintendents