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It is a distinct honor to present the second edition of the North Carolina Undergraduate Journal of Public Affairs. Our first volume – published online – generated more than 15,000 views and was featured on the Roosevelt Institute Campus Network’s national website. We hope that this volume will be an even bigger success

This edition features work from members of the UNC Roosevelt Institute and the Wake Forest Roosevelt Institute. This year, many of our authors chose to focus on education – an important and increasingly controversial aspect of government policy in North Carolina. Two of our authors address problems at the state level, while a comprehensive report on Wake County takes a close look at a local problem. This volume is not only about education, however: it also includes a proposal to reform North Carolina’s laws surrounding parental rights and rape.

On behalf of all of our authors and editorial staff, I would like to extend a sincere thank you to our readers for making our last journal such a success. We are united by a belief that our state’s problems will not be solved until we educate ourselves about them – we hope you will find the experience of reading these articles as informative as we found writing and editing them.

As always, anyone interested in publishing or serving on the editorial board should contact me at my email address, paul.wilson.parker@gmail.com. I’d like to extend a special welcome to other universities in North Carolina – we would love for you to be involved!

Happy reading,

Wilson Parker
Editor-in-Chief

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Expanding Access to Dual Enrollment in North Carolina

by Kate Matthews

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Idea

North Carolina should expand access to dual enrollment courses in an effort to increase the number of North Carolinians with a college degree. By changing eligibility requirements of the Career and College Promise Program, it is likely that more minority, low-income, and first generation college students will pursue higher education.

History

One of the most complex dichotomies in education is the struggle to ensure that more low-income, minority, and first-generation college students pursue higher education even while the cost of attendance at these institutions continues to rise. Fortunately, many states, including North Carolina have chosen dual enrollment as a tool for addressing these issues. Dual enrollment programs vary from state to state but tend to consist of partnerships with local colleges and universities that allow high school students to earn college credit before graduation. These programs are often offered at no cost to the student.

Last year, North Carolina passed “College and Career Promise”, a sweeping reform to

dual enrollment that was intended to help high school students accumulate 1-2 years of college credit at no cost. The program is divided into 3 tracks; a college transfer pathway, a career tech pathway, and a cooperative innovative high schools pathway. Here we focus on the need to change eligibility requirements within the college transfer track in an effort to promote college enrollment and retention among low-income, minority, and first generation college students.

Key Facts

- First generation college students are more likely to benefit from dual enrollment participation than students with a college-educated parent.¹
- North Carolina Dual Enrollment requirements currently require participants to be a junior or senior, have a B average (3.0 GPA), *and* have demonstrated college readiness in the reading, writing, *and* math portions of an approved standardized assessment².
- Only 35.1% of North Carolina students graduate from a 4-year public university in 4 years and only 59.1% graduate in 6 years.³

Analysis

In the College and Career Promise overview, there is repeated mention of the state's effort to help “qualified” students prepare for and reduce the cost of college.⁴ The eligibility requirements are stringent and require that students be a junior or

senior, have a B average (or 3.0 GPA) and have demonstrated college readiness in the reading, writing, *and* math portions of an approved assessment such as PLAN, ACT or SAT.⁵ Research shows that participation in dual enrollment programs can increase the number of underachieving and underrepresented students who complete high school and enroll in college.⁶ During the last 10 years, longitudinal studies in several states have reported that, regardless of academic and social background, students who participated in Dual Enrollment programs were more likely to attend and complete college.⁷ Therefore, North Carolina should broaden the eligibility requirements of these programs and work with high schools and colleges to ensure that students from nontraditional backgrounds are not excluded from dual enrollment. Specifically, students should be allowed to supplant the GPA requirement with a teacher recommendation and community colleges should be allowed to develop course-specific prerequisites.

Administrators are undoubtedly concerned that students with traditionally weak academic success may not be prepared to succeed in Dual Enrollment courses. North Carolina's eligibility requirements are certainly in place to address this concern, yet they inadvertently exclude students who stand to gain most from participation. Consider a student who does poorly on the math portion of an approved assessment but is trying to enroll in a Dual Enrollment English course. They would be unable to participate in the program. Likewise, a student with a 2.9 GPA at the time of application is automatically excluded from program participation, even if their GPA is expected to reach a 3.0 by the end of the semester.⁸ The goal of Career and College Promise should not be to exclude students on the basis of technicalities but rather to

include as many students as possible. This approach was recently tested in California, where the Concurrent Courses initiative specifically targeted underachieving youth for participation in Dual Enrollment. The study found that participants were more likely to graduate from college, transition to a four-year college, persist in postsecondary education and less likely to take a basic skills course in college.⁹

Additionally, expanding use of community college courses means utilizing available resources rather than funding new initiatives. Many rural schools do not have the funds to hire an advanced placement (AP) teacher for new courses such as psychology or history that are increasingly in demand. Yet, local community colleges often have seats available and, indeed benefit from the enrollment of additional students in these courses. Therefore, the money schools save by utilizing community college resources rather than hiring new staff will likely decrease the overall cost of expanding dual enrollment.

Talking Points

- Changing eligibility requirements would extend Dual Enrollment to students who stand to gain most from participation.
- Removing barriers to access would allow North Carolina to lead the nation in Dual Enrollment accessibility.¹⁰

Next Steps

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction should take immediate action to expand access to Career and College Promise by changing the dual enrollment requirements in a number of ways.

Firstly, interested students should be allowed to supplant the GPA requirement with a recommendation from a teacher or school counselor who will testify to their

interest in and commitment to the proposed Dual enrollment course. In addition, colleges should be given the authority to decide what qualifications are necessary for a specific course. As a vital stakeholder in expanding postsecondary success, colleges should be careful to make courses as inclusive as possible by not requiring proof of success in a subject unrelated to the proposed Dual Enrollment course. For example, an introductory English class should not require scores above 500 on the SAT Math portion.

These two steps will allow North Carolina to become a leader in Dual Enrollment access by taking a targeted approach to including more students who are currently unlikely to pursue college. By including such students in Dual Enrollment, North Carolina will increase the chance that minority, low-income, and first generation college students will receive a postsecondary degree.

¹ An, Brian. "The Impact of Dual Enrollment on College Degree Attainment Do Low-SES Students Benefit?." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*.
<http://epa.sagepub.com/content/early/2012/10/08/0162373712461933.full>

² NC Department of Education, "NC Career and College Promise." Last modified 2013. Accessed February 28, 2013.
<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/ccpromise/>.

³ The Chronicle of Higher Education, "College Completion." Last modified 2010. Accessed February 28, 2013.
<http://collegecompletion.chronicle.com/state/>

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ NC Department of Education, "NC Career and College Promise ." Last modified 2013. Accessed February 28, 2013.
<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/ccpromise/overview.pdf>.

⁶ Hughes, Katherine, Olga Rodriguez, Linsey Edwards, and Clive Belfield. Community College Research Center, "Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment ." Last modified 2012. Accessed February 27, 2013.
http://knowledgecenter.completionbydesign.org/sites/default/files/407_Hughes_2012.pdf.

⁷ Bassett, Jessica. Educate Texas, "Study: "Dual enrollment" students more likely to attend, graduate from college." Last modified 2012. Accessed February 27, 2013. <http://www.edtx.org/media-center/news/study-dual-enrollment-students-more-likely-to-attend-graduate-from-college/>.

⁸ NC Department of Education, "NC Career and College Promise ." Last modified 2013. Accessed February 28, 2013.
<http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/ccpromise/faqs.pdf>.

⁹ Hughes, Katherine, Olga Rodriguez, Linsey Edwards, and Clive Belfield. Community College Research Center, "Broadening the Benefits of Dual Enrollment." Last modified 2012. Accessed February 27, 2013.
http://knowledgecenter.completionbydesign.org/sites/default/files/407_Hughes_2012.pdf.

¹⁰ Jobs for the Future, "Dual Enrollment." Last modified 2013. Accessed February 27, 2013.
<http://application.jff.org/dualenrollment/index.php>

Prohibiting Parental Rights for Rapists in North Carolina

by Molly Williams

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Idea

Prohibit convicted rapists from obtaining custody or visitation rights for children fathered through rape in North Carolina by implementing legislation modeled after bills passed in 17 other states.

History

As of 2010, a majority of states provided no protection for rape victims who carry their pregnancies to term.¹ Current laws regarding rape in many states originate from a history of discriminatory denials of a woman's legal right to equality and are perpetuated by societal myths surrounding rape.¹ As a survivor of rape, Shauna Prewitt says, "in a rape case it is the victim, not the defendant, who is on trial."²

There are 32,011 pregnancies from rape each year and about 10,307 women who decide to carry those pregnancies to term. Of rape victims who are impregnated, 32.2 percent choose to keep the pregnancy and raise their children, 50 percent abort, and 5.9 percent place their children up for adoption. In 31 states, including North Carolina, the rapists can assert the same custody and visitation rights that other biological parents enjoy.³

Key Facts

- There are an estimated 32,011 pregnancies from rape each year.³
- Of the female rape cases in 2010, 25 percent of perpetrators were strangers, 48 percent were a friend or acquaintance, and 17 percent were intimate partners.⁴
- 32.2 percent of rape victims who are impregnated choose to keep the pregnancy and raise their children, 50 percent abort, and 5.9 percent place their children up for adoption.³
- In North Carolina and 30 other states, rapists can assert certain custody and visitation rights.⁵

Analysis

In North Carolina, victims of rape also become victims of the legal system. Because of stereotypes about these victims, many people assume that no woman desires to raise a child conceived in rape.² However, about 185,526 women in the United States choose to raise a child conceived in rape every year.³ If the woman chooses to raise her child, she may be forced to share custody privileges with her rapist, ensure the rapist's access to the child, and foster her rapist's relationship to the child.⁵ Most states, including North Carolina, have little or no protection in this regard for rape victims who carry their pregnancies to term. Unfortunately, the adoption process is often not a better option, as women are forced to obtain their rapist's consent to place the baby up for adoption.⁶

These problematic policies are also costing taxpayers in North Carolina because the state subsidizes the costs of attorneys, therapists, supervisors, probation monitoring, and court hearings that accompany a rapist seeking custody. Bills passed in 17 states – Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Wisconsin – provide a progressive alternative by requiring that men convicted of rape lose their custody and visitation rights.⁷

Talking Points

- Under current parental custody and visitation policies, rape victims remain connected to their rapists through their child.²
- North Carolina needs legislation that limits the parental rights, specifically those of custody and visitation, allowed to rapists.
- The bills passed in Idaho, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania provide excellent models for a legislative solution in North Carolina.

Next Steps

North Carolina should use the aforementioned bills, specifically those of Idaho, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania, as models to introduce legislation that would achieve similar goals. Idaho Code Section 16-2005 states that the “court may grant termination of parental rights as to a parent who conceived a child as a result of rape.” According to Oklahoma’s Statute Annotated Title 10 Section 7006-1.1, the court “may terminate parental rights if the child was conceived as a result of rape.” Finally, in Pennsylvania, Consolidated Statute Annotated Section 2511 states “father’s parental rights may be terminated if child

conceived as a result of rape or incest.”⁷ It is essential for North Carolina’s policymakers, as well as policymakers in the remaining 30 states allowing parental rights to rapists, to understand the magnitude of these unjust policies and pass legislation to protect victims of rape and their children.

¹ West, Robin. "Equality Theory, Marital Rape, and the Promise of the Fourteenth Amendment." *Georgetown Law: The Scholarly Commons*. Last modified 1990. Accessed November 27, 2012.

² Prewitt, Shauna. "Raped, pregnant and ordeal not over." Cable News Network. Last modified 2012. Accessed November 20, 2012.

³ Holmes, MM, Resnick HS, Kilpatrick DG, and Best CL. "Rape-related pregnancy: Estimates and descriptive characteristics from a national sample of women." Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Medical University of South Carolina. Last modified 1996. Accessed November 6, 2012

⁴ "Sexual Violence" from *National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide*. National Crime Victimization Survey, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Last modified 2010. Accessed November 3, 2012.

⁵ Prewitt, Shauna. "Giving Birth to a 'Rapist's Child': A Discussion and Analysis of the Limited Legal Protections Afforded to Women Who Become Mothers Through Rape". *The Georgetown Law Journal*. Last modified 2010. Accessed November 17, 2012.

⁶ Bitar, Kara. "The Parental Rights of Rapists." *Duke Journal of Gender Law and Policy*. Last modified 2012. Accessed November 10, 2012.

⁷ Schroeder, Joanna. "Are States Giving Custody to Rapist Fathers?" The Good Men Project. Last modified 2012. Accessed January 21, 2013.

Establishing Equal Access to Educational Opportunities in Wake County

by Hassan Nasif, Jason Guo, Joe Swanson, Sinthuja Ramalingam, Kelsey Mullin, Samantha Geary, and Katie Draper

Bios for WFU authors will be added once they are sent to me. Franklinus Delano Roosevelt, vulgo saepe FDR appellatus (natus die 30 Ianuarii 1882; obiit die 12 Aprilis 1945), tredecim annos fuit tricensimus secundus Praeses Civitatum Foederatarum (1933–1945) et gravissimus in rebus orbis terrarum per medium saeculum vicensimum princeps, qui Civitates Foederatas tempore depressionis oeconomica et belli universi duxit. Qui, solus praeses Civitatum Foederatarum plus quam bina spatia temporis creatus, firmam societatis consociationem faciliorem reddidit quae civilem rationem FDR Herbertum Hoover, incumbentem Republicanum, pessimis Magnae Depressionis diebus Novembre 1932 vicit. Arte cum Winston Churchill et Iosepho Stalin laborans, Socios contra Germaniam et Iaponiam per Bellum Orbis Terrarum II duxit, sed mortem obiit victoria paene praesente.

Idea

In order to afford equal access to education for high school students within the Wake County Public School System, we recommend the establishment of a career center accessible to all high school students within Wake County providing both upper level and career-technical courses.

History

The merging of approximately 20,000 Raleigh City students and 33,000 Wake County students in 1976 created the current Wake County Public School System. One of

the motives behind this union was to combat segregation within Raleigh's public schools.¹

In 2000, the Wake County Board approved a school assignment plan that aimed to create greater socio-economic diversity. Under this plan, enrollment of students dependent on reduced price or free lunches was capped at 40% at each school. In order to implement this policy, some students were bused to schools outside of their area, causing some dissatisfaction with the time students spent getting to and from school.²

Some parents were not happy with the extra time their children spent on buses. However, a poll released by the school board in 2010 showed that 94.5% of the nearly 40,000 parents in the district who participated in the survey said they were "satisfied or very satisfied" with the schools their children attended.³ Furthermore, the Wake County Public School System's students were earning higher test scores, and the achievement gap between the district's minority students and their peers narrowed.⁴ The school system gained a reputation for its successful diversity program, even earning a place on the front page of *The New York Times* in 2005. Furthermore, sociologist Gerald Grant praised the program in his book *Hope and Despair in the American City: Why There Are No Bad Schools in Raleigh*.⁵

After an election showing a low voter turnout in District 2 of the Wake County Public Schools,⁶ the school board shifted to a 5-4 Republican majority. This new majority pushed for a policy to send students to schools closest to their homes, and in 2010, the school board ended busing for diversity, voting along party lines in favor of a neighborhood assignment plan.⁷

As Wake County schools conclude their third year after ending the busing program, we can now see that past warnings of a return to a racially segregated public school system held legitimate weight during the debates. Of the 24 Wake County public high schools in 2009, 17 experienced some degree of growth in the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunches by the 2012-2013 school year.

Some high schools saw increases of over 10% in the number of students receiving free and reduced lunches. Yet the school experiencing the most significant decrease in number of students receiving subsidized lunches was Millbrook High School, with a mere 2.8% decrease, followed by East Wake School of Engineering Systems with only a 0.9% decrease. At first glance, these numbers seem as though they could be attributed to the 6.63% increase in student enrollment in the Wake County Public School System over the past three years. Unfortunately, under the new assignment policy adopted in 2010 there is a high correlation between schools serving a large percentage of minority students and heavy increases in the enrollment of students receiving free and reduced lunches.⁸ In effect, the new enrollment programs concentrated students of low socioeconomic backgrounds.

Moreover, the implementation of the new program institutionalized racially segregated

enrollment. The high schools that experienced the three highest rises in the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunches serve student bodies whose largest ethnic group is African American.⁹ Since 2009 three high schools out of the twenty-four in Wake County have swelled past the 40% cap on free and reduced lunch enrollment set by busing policies. Two of the three high schools educate a student body whose greatest ethnic group is African American, while the other high school's African American population is less than 2% behind that of their white peers.¹⁰ This racial and socioeconomic segregation adversely affects students' resources and access to education.

In terms of AP classes offered in Wake County, there are several schools in the district that boast a variety of AP classes available to their students. However, as a rule, the lower the general income of the students at a school, the lower the enrollment rates in advanced college preparatory courses.

Examples of this can be seen throughout Wake County. In the 2012-2013 school year, only 5.8% of students at Green Hope High School qualified for the free and reduced meal programs, and the school reported that approximately 12% of their students were enrolled in Advanced College Prep Courses in 2011-2012.¹¹ On the other hand, Knightdale High School recorded 53.6% of their students qualified for free and reduced meals, but only 4% of their students enrolled in Advanced Placement Courses.¹² Wakefield High School follows this same pattern with 31.8% of students qualifying for the reduced meal program and only 7% of students in 2011-2012 enrolled in Advanced College Prep Courses.¹³ Though this is only a small sample of schools within Wake County, these statistics are generally

representative of all schools within the school system.¹⁴

It appears that all schools in Wake County offer AP classes as options during course registration. However, the problem is that students are not given the necessary resources to support them in actually utilizing this opportunity.

Research supports the presence of a positive correlation between socioeconomic diversity and achievement. Richard D. Kahlenberg is a senior fellow at the Century Foundation who focuses on economic integration in schools. In reference to Wake County's past success Kahlenberg said, "low-income students who have an opportunity to go to middle-class schools are surrounded by peers who have bigger dreams and who are more academically engaged. They are surrounded by parents who are more likely to be active in the school. And they are taught by teachers who more likely are highly qualified than the teachers in low-income schools." In the past, Wake County tried to accomplish this level of diversity through busing. However, according to Board Vice Chairman Keith Sutton, the school board will no longer consider "busing for diversity" to be a possible option.¹⁵

Another factor to make note of is that four year graduation rates in Wake County are on the rise. From 2009-2010 to the 2011-2012 school year, graduation rates rose from 78.2% to 80.6%.¹⁶ Students in Wake County are making efforts to improve graduation rates and make college a reality. With the help of a career center in Wake County, students would be able to further their participation in AP classes, and become better prepared for college.

Analysis

Wake County is in need of an assignment plan which aids the pursuit of equal access to education for all high school students regardless of residential location, race, or income level. Fortunately, Forsyth County in North Carolina has found a successful and replicable solution to this very issue.

Forsyth County shares Wake County's challenge of providing equal opportunity to a community highly segregated by race and income level. Though Forsyth County only boasts a student population of 53,367 students¹⁷ compared to Wake County's 144,173 students,¹⁸ Forsyth still has to overcome the difficulty of equally serving a wide range of socioeconomic need. For example, Forsyth County holds both Carver High School, a school with a predominantly African American population¹⁹ and 72% of students eligible for subsidized lunches,²⁰ and schools similar to Reagan High School, a school with a predominantly white population²¹ and only 13.4% of students eligible for subsidized lunches as of the 2010-2011 school year.²² Forsyth County has found a successful approach to this issue in the creation of its Career Center in 1974.

The Career Center is a centrally located educational center providing a variety of high school courses that may not be offered at students' assigned "home" school due to lack of interest or resources. These courses range from Advanced Placement to Career Technical Education courses that are accessible to all high school students within the county. As a result, the Career Center provides an opportunity for all students to realize their individual talents and potentials.

Under the Forsyth County Career Center model, students who choose to take a course at the center become part of two high school

communities in which they attend class both at their districted home school and at the Career Center, with transportation provided by the school district.

While the Career Center is listed as an independent high school in Forsyth County, it does not alienate students from their assigned schools. The Career Center opens up the opportunity for students to begin student organizations or participate in organizations with other Career Center students, yet they maintain ties to their home schools through classes and extracurricular activities such as sports, music, and student organizations.

Because all of the courses offered at the Career Center fall outside of basic graduation requirements, the center allows for like-minded, high achieving individuals throughout the county to interact. The interests and goals of the center's student body are just as diverse as the courses offered. With over 1,000 students taking AP courses, about 750 enrolled in CTE courses, and 150 students in specialty courses, the Career Center has not catered to a single profile or specific educational track.²³ The school even offers a few unorthodox classes which have been created due to student interest such as a course on biofuels.²⁴ Though teachers are not offered a financial incentive to teach at the Career Center, Dr. Dennis Moser, the principal of the Career Center, explained that teachers prefer to teach at the center because the students are there by choice and want to learn.²⁵ By establishing an atmosphere of high achievement which is accessible to all students, the Career Center model accomplishes the goals behind both busing and school choice.

The students at the Career Center have significantly risen above both state and

national averages in AP and VoCATS exams. According to the Career Center's web page, technical students consistently perform better than other students in the state on VoCATS exams with 70% of students scoring at Levels III and IV, since 2005. In the 2012 round of AP examinations, students at the Career Center exceeded both state and national averages in the percentage of students achieving a score of three or more in twenty-nine of the thirty-one exams offered.²⁶

Wake County public schools need a solution that provides equal access to education, giving low income students the benefits of a higher income school without limiting high income students. A new career center would be an invaluable resource for low income students in Wake County and would help to create valuable opportunities for schools serving a low income area by alleviating the discrepancies between the level of resources available to students in individual schools.

Next Steps

In order for a career center to be effective in Wake County, several factors must be considered.

Geographically, the center should be located in an area that is accessible for both low and high achieving schools so that all students have access to its resources. This may involve building multiple centers, or choosing to have one center built in an area demonstrating the most need. A possible location is in northeastern Wake County, so that students at Wakefield High, Knightdale High, Millbrook High, and the various East Wake schools can access the center. This location would allow for a racially and socioeconomically diverse student population.²⁷ If the county finds it more beneficial, they may be able to cut costs by

using an existing school or building to serve as the center.

Though Wake County can make its own decisions for scheduling changes, the Forsyth County Career Center has been most effective using a 7-period block schedule to make transportation between home schools and the center convenient. Forsyth County has also seen success in integrating their 4-period and 7-period schedules by having classes of 45 and 90 minutes in length in order to accommodate student's schedules.

The biggest obstacles for a career center in Wake County would be funding for transportation, construction, and establishing a relationship between "home schools" and the career center. In Forsyth County, buses are available from every high school to and from the Career Center. This service is fully paid for by Forsyth County.²⁸ It is our recommendation that Wake County should also cover transportation costs. The school board would also need to clarify the nature of the connection between the Career Center and the schools it would advance. For instance, should all AP and Career Technical courses be relocated to the Career Center? Should the new teaching positions be filled by teachers from existing schools in order to save on costs, or should they hire a new staff? All of these questions would need to be answered by the Wake County administration in order to mold the career center to the county's specific needs.

The Forsyth County Career Center was established in 1976. It began as a tech school, and evolved into what it is today through the county's desire for a wide-scale program where gifted students can learn and take classes together. Over thirty years of work on the Career Center has made it the success story it is today. If Wake County were to establish an initial career center, it

would be a long term investment for its school system, which would result in high test scores across the boards and county-wide improvements in the quality of education for students from lower income areas. A career center would naturally bring students from different communities together, creating a diverse environment based on students' goals rather than their home address.

This is a school district that has been through many changes in the last few decades. This career center could be a positive development for Wake County and help students reach their full potential in high school and beyond.

¹ Wake County Public School System. "Magnet Programs." Accessed June 19, 2013. <http://www.wcpss.net/about-us/our-leadership/board-of-education/work-session-materials/05-30-2012--work-session/magnet-program-historical-highlights.pdf>

² The New York Times. "District May End N.C. Economic Diversity Program." Accessed June 19, 2013.

³ Raleigh News and Observer. "Critics say survey tells Wake board to rethink." Accessed June 19, 2013

⁴ The New York Times. "As Test Scores Jump, Raleigh Credits Integration by Income." Accessed

⁵ Raleigh News and Observer. "Wake Schools, Struggling to Lead State, Haven't Caught Regional Targets." Accessed June 19, 2013

⁶ Raleigh News and Observer. "District 2 Runoff will Affect Wake Schools." Accessed June 19, 2013.

⁷ WNCN News. "Wake County Schools Timeline." Accessed June 19, 2013

⁸ Wake County Public School System. "Demographics: About Our District." Accessed June 19, 2013.

⁹ Knightdale High - 45% black, 24.8 % white; East Wake School of Integrated Technology - 42.3% black, 24.8% white; SouthEast Raleigh High - 74% black, 9.3% white (see footnote 10 for source)

¹⁰ Wake County Public School System. "Enrollment in Schools by Race/Ethnicity: October 2, 2012." Accessed June 19, 2013.

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- ¹¹ NC School Report Cards. "Green Hope High, 2011-2012." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹² NC School Report Card. "Knightdale High: 2011-2012." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹³ NC School Report Card. "Wakefield High, 2011-2012." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ *News & Observer*. "Wake School board will consider assignment compromise Tuesday." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹⁶ Wake County Public School System. "WCPSS High School Graduation Rates: 4-Year and 5-Year Cohort Rates 2011-2012." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹⁷ School Map. "Forsyth County Schools- School District." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹⁸ School Map. "Wake County Schools- School District." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ¹⁹ Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. "2012-2013 Demographics." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²⁰ School Map. "Carver High School." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²¹ Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. "2012-2013 Demographics." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²² School Map. "Reagan High School." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²³ Forsyth County Career Center. "School Info/Why Choose Career Center?" Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²⁴ Forsyth County Career Center. "School Info/Why Choose Career Center?" Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²⁵ Moser, Dennis. Interview by Hassan Nassif and Jason Guo. Personal Interview. Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 4/20/13.
- ²⁶ Forsyth County Career Center. "School Info/Why Choose Career Center?" Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²⁷ Wake County Public School System. "School Locations: 2011-2012." Accessed June 19, 2013.
- ²⁸ Moser, Dennis. Interview by Hassan Nassif and Jason Guo. Personal Interview. Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 4/20/13.

Restructuring Public School Funding in North Carolina

by Ioan Bolohan

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Idea

To ensure that adequate funding is available to all schools in the state, North Carolina should shift from a flat grant appropriations approach to the foundation funding model.

History

Despite its importance, there is no standard for school system financing in the United States and several models are in effect throughout the country.¹ North Carolina's flat grant funding structure provides state aid for some of its school systems' basic costs but leaves much of the additional financing burden on local populations, relying on district property taxes to support education.² Geographic socioeconomic differences lead to inequalities in the resources available to schools, resulting in inadequate funding and disparities in educational opportunities for students. This poses significant obstacles for low-income districts.³

Instead of using flat grants, North Carolina should implement the foundation finance model and join the 38 states already employing this funding structure.⁴ This approach defines the cost of educating each student in the state and sets a minimum tax rate for supporting schools in all districts. Local tax revenue is then combined with adjusted state contributions to meet the foundation spending level for each student,

ensuring sufficient funds to establish quality schools.⁵ States employing this system, such as Texas, Ohio, and Massachusetts, have less inequality among districts, smaller achievement gaps, and higher test scores.⁶

Key Facts

- North Carolina had a per pupil expenditure of \$8,451 in 2009-2010,⁷ 20 percent below the national average.³
- Among districts in North Carolina, inequality in school financing, as measured by standard deviation in funding, was 8.4 percent in 2010³ compared to about 4 percent for states using foundation funding systems.⁵
- According to 8th grade test scores, nine of the ten states with the smallest achievement gaps use foundation funding systems.⁶

Analysis

Foundation funding would have varied implications for local districts. Currently, North Carolina's state government contributes about \$5,162 for every student—roughly 62 percent of the average per pupil expenditure in the state—leaving 22 percent to be paid by districts on average.⁷ By mandating a minimum local tax rate, wealthier school systems—those collecting more than the foundation amount through minimal taxation—that receive financial aid under the flat grant structure would stop benefitting from state support, freeing funds for use in low-income districts incapable of generating sufficient revenue to finance education. This makes state allocations more efficient and, at the 2010 level of spending

per student, the shift to the foundation system leads to a projected savings of about 5 percent, or \$420 per pupil, and over \$592 million in total.^{5,7}

Foundation funding also addresses the needs of school systems by accounting for local capacity, based on the total value of taxable property, and effort, measured by additional education taxes. This allows districts to set tax rates above the minimum requirement and use the resulting extra funding to augment the foundation amount for higher spending levels.⁸

Talking Points

- Foundation funding helps increase equality in education spending across districts⁵ and ensures that adequate support is available for students in all school systems.¹⁰
- Switching from a flat grant system to the foundation funding model would save North Carolina over \$592 million and allow for local districts to steadily increase total education spending.^{5,7}
- Wealthy districts with high income tax bases that receive reduced state funding could supplement education spending with other finances while low-income districts receive state benefits until reaching the foundation level.⁸

Next Steps

Before reforms can be instituted, officials must project each district's potential for meeting local tax requirements as well as the sustainability of such measures. Current supplemental funding for specific educational initiatives such as English as a second language, academically gifted, and special needs programs should be maintained, and a gradual reduction in flat grants must take place to ease school districts into the foundation funding system.⁹

Over time, the foundation level can be raised until a balance in spending per student is reached between state and local governments and each district has established a tax rate equilibrium designed to support desired per pupil expenditures at the local level. Additionally, legislation should include mechanisms tied to inflation to adjust the foundation amount and allow for continued support at the level required to provide quality education to students across the state.¹⁰

Measures of district finance equality should also be used to ensure effective implementation. Together, these steps allow for increased education spending, reduced inequalities between districts, and overall bolstered scholastic achievement for North Carolina's schools.

¹ Versteegen, Deborah and Teresa Jordan. 2009. "A Fifty-State Survey of School Finance Policies and Programs: An Overview." *Journal of Education Finance* 34 (3): 213-230.

² Versteegen, Deborah, Teresa Jordan and Paul Amador. 2007. "A Quick Glance at School Finance." *Finance Formulae and Cost Differentials* 2 (1): 1-56.

³ New America Foundation. 2012. "North Carolina." <http://feb.newamerica.net/k12/NC#Achievement>.

⁴ Hightower, Amy, Hajime Mitani and Christopher Swanson. 2010. "State Policies That Pay: a Survey of School Finance Policies and Outcomes." *Editorial Projects in Education* 3-27.

⁵ Metzler, Jeffrey. 2003. "Inequitable Equilibrium: School Finance in the United States." *Indiana Law Review* 36 (1): 12-27, http://www.schoolfunding.info/resource_center/research/Metzler.pdf.

⁶ National Center for Education Statistics. 2011. "State Comparisons." <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/statecomparisons/Default.aspx>.

⁷ State Board of Education. 2011. *North Carolina Public Schools' Fast Facts*. 1-2.

⁸ Augenblick, John, John Myers and Amy Anderson. 1997. "Equity and Adequacy in School Funding." *The Future of Children* 7 (3): 64-66, http://futureofchildren.org/futureofchildren/publications/docs/07_03_04.pdf.

⁹ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. 2012. "Highlights of the North Carolina Public School Budget." 1-40.

¹⁰ Reschovsky, Andrew. 1994. "Fiscal Equalization and School Finance." *National Tax Journal* 47 (1): 185-197.