



School Matters

July 17, 2012

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Welcome to *School Matters* from Davie County Schools. *School Matters* is an electronic news source for parents, community members, and staff. Please feel free to share *School Matters* with others!

New Curriculum in 2012-13

As our children enjoy the last weeks of summer vacation, our lead teachers in each subject area have been training and preparing for the implementation of one of the most comprehensive changes that public schools in North Carolina have ever experienced. The new curriculum includes the Common Core Standards for English and Mathematics (a nationally adopted and recognized curriculum) and North Carolina's New Essential Standards for all other subjects.

What will we see that's different from other years? An increase in rigor, an emphasis on analytic thinking, and a concerted effort to meet new national guidelines for instruction will be the most obvious changes in classrooms from kindergarten through the senior year in high school. During the entire 2011-2012 school year, teachers met regularly for extensive training on the new curriculum as they prepared for this year, eventually mapping out pacing guides, thematic units, and lesson-by-lesson strategies to use in their classrooms.

A lead teacher team trained in Hickory, NC last week and they will continue to design, share, and coordinate new supports for our teachers. Expectations will include more complex thinking, using writing and reading across all disciplines, and putting the learner at the center of the action in the classroom. What an exciting time to be a student in the Davie County Schools!

STEM Center Professional Development in NC and MA

Summer days often provide teachers with opportunities to enhance their professional development, which is just what our Davie High School STEM Center teachers have been doing. They attended a week-long summer institute in Durham, NC, with other STEM Affinity High Schools from across the state, and two STEM Center math and science teachers are involved in seminars sponsored by North Carolina State University during July. In addition, as a participant school in the North Carolina New Schools Project for STEM high schools, this week four of our DCHS STEM Center teachers and one administrator will be attending extensive training at University Park Campus School in Worcester, Massachusetts. Their training will center on best practices from innovative high schools across the country, as well as developing our own implementation of the Common Instructional Framework.

2012-13 Budgets Finalized at Local and State Levels

Local Budget

The Davie County Board of Commissioners adopted the local budget on June 14, 2012. The allocation for Davie County Schools remained the same as it has been since 2009-10, and the school district's fund balance was left alone. Thank you to everyone across Davie County who showed their support for public education and Davie County Schools during the local budget process. Your voices were heard and additional cuts to our schools were avoided for 2012-13.

State Budget

The state budget has also been finalized. While the discretionary reduction was not eliminated, it was reduced. Instead of returning \$1.9 million to the state as we did last year, we must identify \$1.56 million to return from our initial state allotment. With this change, we will be able to eliminate cuts we had identified for 2012-13. We will not have to reduce our custodial services or eliminate media center materials as we had planned, based on our projected state allotments. We will also be able to fill some vacant teaching positions we were not going to be able to fill, based on the projected allotment. The complete elimination of the discretionary reduction would allow our district to rehire some of the 74 positions we have lost over the past several years due to state budget cuts. We hope this trend will continue into next budget year as the economy recovers.

Included in the state budget was a 1.2% salary increase for our employees and five bonus annual leave or vacation days. This is the first salary increase for teachers and school staff in 4 years. There were also some other provisions in the budget bill that affect public schools. We will be discussing these more with the Board of Education as we receive more details.

Other provisions in the budget bill:

- Calendar changes for 2013-14
- Required Kindergarten assessments
- New requirements for promotion from 3rd to 4th grade in 2013-14
- Numerical and letter grades for each school and school district

Our finance staff will work with final local, state, and federal allocations to develop a final budget for the Board of Education to consider at their first meeting in September.

How is the NC Education Lottery Money Used?

We are often asked, "Where does all of the lottery money go, can't it be used to solve our problems?" In the scheme of overall state funding for schools, the lottery is a small portion of the state education budget, and while it has helped, it sure does not solve all of our problems. Below are some interesting facts about the NC Education lottery.

The total operating budget for the NC Education Lottery in 2010-11 was \$1,464,640,000. Currently, 60 percent is paid out in prizes and about 29 percent of that revenue supports education. The remainder is paid out in commissions to retailers for ticket sales, in advertising, and in administrative costs. Last year, the lottery provided approximately \$446.9 million to education programs across NC, equal to about 4% of the entire

state education budget. The [State Lottery Act](#), originally established in 2005, outlines how the lottery revenues will be used.

According to state officials, lottery revenues will be directed to the following programs in 2012-13:

- Teacher salaries for class size reductions in grades K-3 (50%);
- Prekindergarten programs for at-risk 4-year-olds (14%);
- School construction (23%);
- Need-based scholarships and financial aid for students in North Carolina public and private universities and community colleges (9%); and
- Offset a portion of the school districts' discretionary reduction (4%)

There are four large revenue streams that support state funding for public schools: Fines and Forfeitures, Sales Tax, Lottery Receipts, and the General Fund. While there are guidelines as to how much of each stream comes to support public schools (e.g. 50% of net Lottery revenues go to class size reduction in early grades and prekindergarten programs), the funds are commingled when they enter the State Public School Fund (SPSF). The SPSF is then distributed to school districts according to the usual allotment formulas.

New Members of the Davie County Board of Education

Clint Junker, Paul Drechsler, and Wendy Horne took the Oath of Office to become our new school board members on July 10, 2012. Mr. Junker will serve a six-year term, and Mr. Drechsler and Mrs. Horne will each serve four-year terms. We welcome our new board members and look forward to continued positive progress in our schools and community. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will be held at the Central Davie Education Center on Tuesday, August 7, 2012, at 4:00 pm.

We hope you find *School Matters* to be an informative and useful resource. Thank you for your continued support of Davie County Schools!

Sincerely,



Darrin L. Hartness, Ed. D.
Superintendent

