

*Thinking
Forward* ▶



6th Annual
North Carolina Legislators Retreat

Preparing Our Students for the Future

**A Report from the 6th Annual
North Carolina Legislators Retreat**

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JAMES B HUNT, JR INSTITUTE

for EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP *and* POLICY

Working at the intersection of policy and politics

INTRODUCTION

North Carolina is in a period of dramatic transition. As of December 2008, the state's unemployment rate was the highest in 25 years, while the poverty rate was nine percent above the national average. As 2009 begins, state leaders face a projected \$2 billion state budget shortfall.

Adding strain to these economic challenges is North Carolina's growing population. By the year 2030, its population is expected to grow to more than 12 million people, making North Carolina the 7th most populous state in the nation. This rapid growth will test North Carolina's existing infrastructure, especially its public schools. Consider the following trends that are already challenging school systems:

- The percentage of students eligible for free and reduced price lunch in North Carolina has nearly doubled since 1989, and is now at 49 percent.
- Nearly 63 percent of current school administrators in North Carolina have at least 20 years of experience, and nearly half are over age 50.
- By 2030, the high school age population will increase by roughly 50 percent.

Strong public schools are essential to building a competitive workforce, and state leaders remain committed to supporting public education. The 6th *Annual North Carolina Legislators Retreat*, **Thinking Forward: Preparing Our Students for the Future**, brought these leaders together with national and international experts to consider how these economic and demographic trends will shape the future of North Carolina's schools.

The *Retreat* discussions were framed by the first panel of experts, who presented data on how U.S. students perform relative to students in other countries, and who also shared successful international practices in education. Proceeding panels at the *Retreat* focused on the use of technology and innovation in the classroom, needed supports for teachers and principals, and the use of inter-agency collaboration to support students outside of the school day. This report summarizes information shared both during the *Retreat*, and highlights potential implications suggested by the experts gathered.



The content of this report has been drawn from Retreat presentations, which were made by the following resource experts:

Sir Michael Barber
McKinsey & Company

Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish
State of New Mexico

John Dornan
The Public School Forum of
North Carolina

Joe Freddoso
MCNC

Stephen Heppell
Heppell.net Ltd

Michael Horn
Innosight Institute, Inc.

Sam Houston
North Carolina Science, Mathematics,
and Technology Education Center

Irene Jacobs
Arizona Governor's Office for
Children, Youth and Families

Jackie Williams Kaye
The Atlantic Philanthropies

Bill McDiarmid
The University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill

Sharon Nelson
New Teacher Center – Wisconsin

Andreas Schleicher
Organisation for Economic
Co-operation and Development

SETTING THE CONTEXT: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION

At the same time that North Carolina leaders plan for the changes the state will experience in the future, they must also consider the impact of the rapidly changing economy. The spread of globalization has “flattened” the world, and it is more necessary than ever that schools give students the knowledge and skills they need to be competitive, not only at home, but in a global marketplace. Although states have invested significant money in public education, data from international assessments show that the United States has already fallen behind many countries in student achievement and degree attainment.

To set a context for discussions throughout the *Retreat*, Andreas Schleicher of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provided a snapshot of student performance around the world. In the 1960s, the United States led the world in the proportion of individuals with at least a high school diploma. Since that time, however, many countries have caught up, and in several cases have surpassed the United States in graduating more students from high school. Two generations ago, South Korea had the standard of living that Afghanistan has today, and it was among the lowest performers in education among OECD countries. Today, it is among the top performers in terms of successful high school completion. The United States has also dropped in the number of college graduates, falling from 2nd to 15th among OECD countries. In the last decade, China has doubled the number of students attending college, and Schleicher estimates that in 10 years it will have twice as many college graduates as the European Union and the United States combined.¹

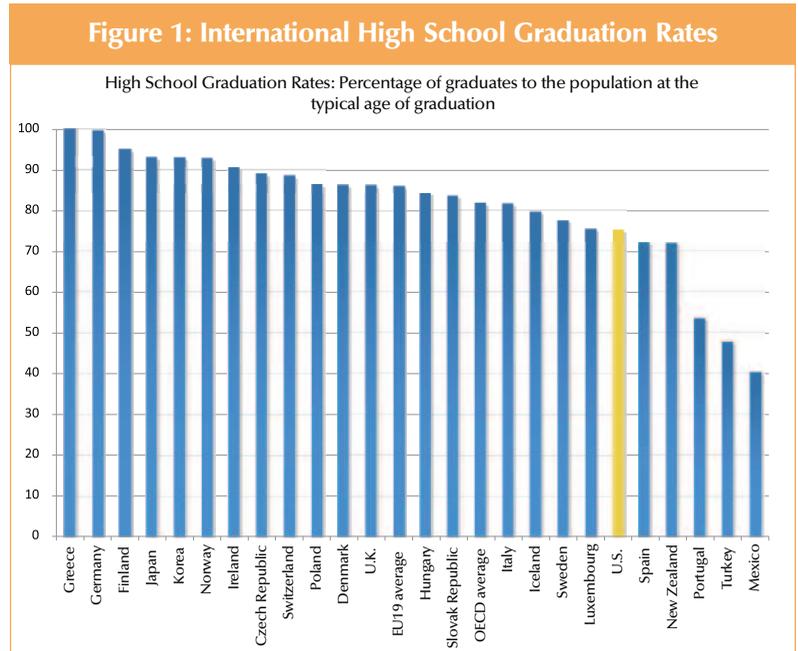
Schleicher presented results from the 2006 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which indicate that U.S. students performed below the average of all developed countries that participated. Recent results from both the PISA and the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) show that U.S. student performance in math has seen a small increase, while student performance in science remains unchanged. Countries like Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong continue to outperform the United States on the TIMSS assessment.

“When the goal posts for expectations are moving one way, and the support from the family is moving in the opposite direction, is it a wonder that we are not successful?” — James B. Hunt, Jr., Hunt Institute



“Our low-performing students are showing improvement, but our top students are showing declines. We’ve failed to balance our system so that we can still take our top students as far as they can go.”

—John Doman, North Carolina Public School Forum



Source: Andreas Schleicher, NCLR Presentation.

Across the world, the countries that lead in student achievement have been able to do so by investing in high-quality education systems. John Doman, the Executive Director of the Public School Forum of North Carolina, suggested that countries like Ireland and Singapore have found success by setting international benchmarks for student achievement and creating long-range education plans. Many countries have created different types of high schools based on students’ interests and abilities. Schleicher and Sir Michael Barber, who was responsible for school improvement in the United Kingdom under former Prime Minister Tony Blair, also presented characteristics of schools in top-performing countries. Countries that have made strides in education have invested in many of the following strategies or have the following characteristics.

These systems:

- Recruit top professionals to the teaching profession and retain them through increased pay and support, and by implementing high-quality, ongoing, professional development
- Recruit and train good principals
- Allow principals to have more control over the implementation of decisions that affect their school’s academic performance, including making decisions on staffing and programming
- Set rigorous and relevant national standards
- Create learning experiences for both top and under-performing students that are personalized and student-centered

INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

It is evident that technology has changed learning in the last decade as computers and the Internet have been incorporated into the classroom, and in the next decade, innovation and technology are likely to bring even greater changes. This transformation is necessary at a time when the marketplace is demanding greater proficiency in 21st Century skills. Researchers Frank Levy and Richard Murnane found that between 1970 and 2000, work involving routine manual tasks, like that of a factory worker, decreased significantly. At the same time, the demand for higher-order analytic skills has increased. Schleicher emphasized that the skills that are the easiest to teach and test are also the skills that are easiest to automate and send offshore. North Carolina's future economic success relies on training students to be creative, innovative thinkers.

Innovative schools and programs are engaging with technology to re-envision content delivery and enhance collaboration among students and teachers. According to CEO and President of MCNC, Joe Freddoso, the United States is transitioning from an information society, where there is a focus on sharing information, to a creative society where an emphasis is placed on collaboration, teamwork, and collective problem solving.



"We have traded ingenuity and originality for standardization and conformity."
— Stephen Heppell, Heppell.net Ltd.

Although technology is an important tool to bring innovation to schools, Michael Horn, co-author of *Disrupting Class*, argued that schools will not see significant academic gains by "shoe-horning" technology into the traditional classroom. Simply adding computers to schools where teachers present content through lectures and students take timed exams will not necessarily increase student achievement. According to Horn, this restrictive use of technology is more likely to perpetuate existing problems and increase the cost to school systems. He suggests that schools should instead move toward new student-centric learning models like virtual schools, online collaboration, and simulations.

Investments in Technology in North Carolina

North Carolina has recently invested significant funds in technology. In its 2007-2008 budget, the North Carolina General Assembly allocated \$3 million in non-recurring funds to the *1:1 Laptop Initiative*, which provides laptop computers to entire schools in eight participating districts to facilitate the integration of technology into the classroom. The General Assembly provided an additional \$1.5 million in non-recurring funds in 2008-2009 to expand the program to an additional four school districts.

TECHNOLOGY IN NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina has already made strides towards the future in providing online learning opportunities. In the 2008-2009 fiscal year, the North Carolina General Assembly appropriated:

- \$6.5 million to Learn and Earn Online;
- \$1.5 million to the 1:1 Laptop Initiative;
- \$10 million for school connectivity; and
- \$1 million to create four Learn and Earn Virtual Schools.

The state has also improved schools' access to technology through the *North Carolina School Connectivity Initiative*, which provides schools with fast, reliable Internet access and connects them to the *North Carolina Research and Education Network* (NCREN). The North Carolina General Assembly has contributed \$22 million in recurring funds to support this project. The *Initiative* is also funded through \$5 million in federal telecommunication discounts, \$4 million from the Golden Leaf Foundation, and a commitment of \$8 million from the MCNC endowment. As of November 2008, 81 of 115 school districts have been connected to NCREN, and the remaining 34 districts were expected to be connected by January 2009.²



"If we continue to judge learning on the same metrics as we do the old system, we will lose the benefits — such a system will become just a digitized version of the old system."
—Michael Horn, Innosight Institute, Inc.

Virtual Learning

Michael Horn predicts that by 2019, almost 50 percent of high school courses will be delivered online. Virtual online learning through venues like the *North Carolina Virtual Public School* (NCVPS) may allow for more independent exploration and learning than traditional student learning. NCVPS opened in August 2007, and has already served more than 20,000 students. The school offers a range of remedial and advanced courses, including Advanced Placement (AP), world languages, and credit recovery courses to students across the state. Students are also able to earn college credit through *Learn and Earn Online*. Virtual schools like the NCVPS also have the potential to reach students who are not currently being served by the school system, such as struggling students and high school dropouts.

Assessments

Technology is also changing the role of traditional, timed, pen-and-paper assessments. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is in the process of overhauling the state's system of testing and accountability, building on the recommendations of the 2008 *Framework for Change*. As part of the *Framework*, the North Carolina State Board of Education has proposed an initiative to



"We don't want to simply impose a new idea, as good as it may be, without making sure it is integrated throughout the system...if you add technology to the classroom, you have to address instructional strategies and professional development." —Judith A. Rizzo, Hunt Institute

design and implement innovative assessments, such as simulations and electronic tests.

The State Board is also piloting a new writing assessment system, which allows middle grade students to compose and store their writing assignments on an electronic system. This new system will allow teachers to easily review a student's writing portfolio and share comments. The DPI will audit the online portfolios to determine professional development needs and to provide feedback to districts about student performance. The online writing assessment and portfolio provides a lesson in how technology can be used innovatively to expand traditional practices. Rather than simply requiring students to take a traditional exam in an electronic format, the revised assessment system creates new opportunities for teachers and state administrators to review student work and identify instructional needs.

Transforming Learning through Technology

In the book *Disrupting Class*, Horn and his co-authors explained that while educators and researchers recognize that students learn in many different ways, traditional education systems do not easily allow for the personalization of instruction. Technology has the potential to transform schools

from a standardized, “one-size-fits-all” model of delivering instruction to a student-centric model of teaching and learning. Ideally, technology equips teachers with the ability to individualize learning for each student.³

With increased virtual learning, the role of the teacher is changing from one of delivering content to serving as coach and mentor to students. Horn suggested that one-to-one interactions between teachers and students increase dramatically when technology is implemented in an appropriate manner in the classroom. Technology can deeply engage students, to the extent that teachers no longer need to focus most of their energy on classroom management. Instead, teachers can concentrate on guiding and coaching individual learners as they navigate the curriculum.

Horn also predicts that the introduction of quality, student-centric technology could help ease the burden of looming teacher shortages. As students receive more and more content from virtual sources, teachers will have additional time to work with students one-on-one. Teachers will mentor and motivate students with the aid of real-time computer data on student progress. Horn and his co-authors suggest

that schools will eventually be able to increase the number of students per teacher, reducing the extent of potential teacher shortages, and potentially increasing teacher salaries.



“Technology is not a panacea, but a building block. It allows us to personalize and to be flexible.”
—Joe Freddoso, MCNC

IMPLICATIONS:

1 Use technology to promote collaboration and personalized learning.

One example of online collaboration is *notschool.net*, an online learning community in the United Kingdom created by Professor Stephen Heppell for students who have been removed from traditional schools. Although a majority of the student participants had been retained at their previous school, their performance exceeds that of students in traditional schools. According to Heppell, 58 percent exceed the targets set for them, and 68 percent go on to employment or higher learning.

2 Ensure that the new state testing system incorporates technology and formative assessments.

Schleicher emphasized that U.S. students perform well on exams asking for subject matter facts, but struggle on tests that require constructed responses, such as the PISA. Some of the most successful countries integrate varied types of assessments into classroom instruction to give feedback to teachers and schools. Incorporating more frequent formative assessments in the classroom provides valuable feedback on how well students are learning in real time. While these assessments may be more costly, they provide more substantive results about both teaching and learning.

3 Provide opportunities for teachers to learn about how to incorporate technology in to the classroom.

Students in today’s innovative classrooms are engaging with new technologies like podcasts, video casts, and online collaborations. In this changing environment, both teacher education programs and professional development providers need to offer additional training in technology so that educators are both knowledgeable and comfortable incorporating technology into their practice.

TEACHERS AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

At a time when technology is transforming the classroom experience, it is important to ensure that teachers receive the training and support they need to prepare students to be successful in the 21st Century. Research indicates that children with high-quality teachers are able to make continuous academic progress, while those with less effective teachers struggle to keep up.

Strengthening Teacher and Principal Training

It is impossible to consider improving teacher quality without addressing the university programs that instruct and shape new teachers. *Educating School Teachers*, a recent report by Arthur Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, concluded that as many as three-quarters of the programs that prepare the nation's future teachers have inadequate curricula, low admissions and graduation standards, faculty disconnected from the K-12 schools, and insufficient quality control.⁴ Today, schools need teachers who are not just experts in their fields, but who understand the many approaches students may use to arrive at a conclusion.

In re-thinking teacher education programs, universities must expand their vision beyond traditional coursework and include both non-education university faculty and local schools in their teacher training programs. According to Bill McDiarmid, the new dean of the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 75 percent of pre-service teacher coursework takes place outside schools of education, and that coursework is not necessarily attuned to how teachers will apply content knowledge in the classroom. For example, the traditional university curriculum does not typically address number theory in depth, yet arithmetic, geometry, and algebra are the foundations for math instruction at the elementary school level.

One solution is to create opportunities for math faculty and school of education faculty to collaborate with K-12 schools. McDiarmid shared the example of a university-school partnership at a high school in Washington state where 80 percent of the students were failing 9th grade math. A math

department faculty member and a school of education faculty member observed teachers in the school, and helped them to identify both how students were learning in the classroom, as well as the weaknesses in their own content knowledge. In one year, student performance in 9th grade math improved by 50 percent.

In North Carolina, teacher preparation programs are being reshaped by new standards and rubrics for teachers and principals, adopted by the State Board of Education in 2008. Teacher training curricula are being revised based on 12 critical teacher competencies, and universities will submit plans for the revised programs by June 2009. The new programs are expected to be in operation by the 2010-2011 academic year.



“One could have a stellar teacher preparation program that leaves pre-service teachers full of the necessary knowledge and skills, but if they have learned their practice in schools that are still mired in outdated teaching practices, then it is all for naught.”

— Bill McDiarmid,
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



Teacher Recruitment

No community is immune to the shortage of effective teachers, but students who attend schools in high-poverty or high-minority communities are more likely to be taught by inexperienced and out-of-field teachers than their counterparts. Studies consistently find that teachers who are better trained, more experienced, and licensed in the subjects they teach are more likely to be teaching in affluent schools serving academically advantaged students.⁵

The lack of quality teachers is due in large part to significant turnover rates, which are even greater in high-poverty schools. Across the United States, approximately 1,000 teachers leave the field of teaching every day, with an additional 1,000 teachers changing schools. Research by the National Education Association estimates that approximately 50 percent of new teachers nationwide leave the profession within their first five years.

In the 2007-2008 school year, school districts in North Carolina experienced an average teacher turnover rate of 13.9 percent, an increase from the 12.3 percent turnover rate reported in 2006-2007.⁶ The state continues to experience a significant shortage of licensed teachers in the fields of math, science, and special education. Data from the *North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey* indicate that teachers with positive perceptions about their school working conditions and school leadership are more likely to remain.

International Lessons on Teacher Recruitment

A key factor that has helped other countries to outperform the United States is the focus on recruiting talented individuals into the teaching profession. Singapore recruits from the top third of college graduates, while Finland recruits teachers from the top 10 percent of college graduates, and South Korea recruits from the top five percent.

To address the significant teacher shortage in the United Kingdom, education leaders overhauled teacher training to emphasize hands-on work in the classroom. Students were offered stipends to enter teacher education programs, with extra incentives offered to students studying hard-to-staff

subjects. Starting teacher salaries were raised by 10 percent, which resulted in a 30 percent increase in teaching applications.⁷ The United Kingdom also launched a national public relations campaign publicizing the teaching profession with the slogan, *Those Who Can, Teach*. In just five years, the United Kingdom has made teaching the most popular profession among undergraduates.

The United Kingdom's teacher training agency has also launched a *Transition to Teaching* program to encourage employees of companies that are downsizing to move into teaching careers. On the day after the Lehman Brothers office laid off 2,000 staff members in fall 2008, the teacher training program opened an office across the street to offer seminars on how to enter the teaching profession.⁸

Coordinated Support for New Teachers

As new teachers graduate and enter the teaching profession, they need targeted supports like professional development and mentoring. A body of research has found that mentor-based induction programs not only strengthen classroom instruction, but also improve the retention of new teachers.⁹ The most effective programs are comprehensive and include varying degrees of training, support, and assessment during a teacher's first years on the job.

As of 2005, 32 states required mentoring and induction to be in place, although the definition and quality of these programs varies widely. In North Carolina, the *Beginning Teacher Support Program* requires that all teachers with an initial license participate in a three-year induction program that provides a formal orientation, mentor support, classroom observations, and evaluations. The North Carolina General Assembly allocated a total of \$11.1 million for mentor programs during the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Despite this mentoring requirement, the quality of mentor support across districts may vary; local districts are responsible for administering mentor programs. The most recent *Teacher Working Conditions Survey* results indicated that one-third of new teachers never planned during the school day or planned instruction with their mentors.¹⁰



Sustained Support through Professional Development

Teachers need ongoing professional development throughout their careers to deepen their content knowledge and hone their practice; however, professional development is often uncoordinated and does not provide the content knowledge or skills that teachers need to increase student achievement. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, in partnership with the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and *Learn NC*, has created a database of professional development opportunities to make it easier for districts to find professional development providers. Although North Carolina has state standards for professional development, it is the responsibility of individual school districts to select and evaluate professional development offerings. Currently, North Carolina does not have a statewide system to evaluate the quality of professional development programs.

The Collaborative Project, an initiative created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 2007, is an example of a program that provides coordinated high-quality professional development and financial supports to both new and mid-career teachers. *The Collaborative* includes funding for two afterschool programs, a leadership institute for school leaders and central office administrators, and financial incentives to recruit new math and science teachers. Approximately 700 teachers from five participating counties have already participated in intensive professional development sessions that are specifically targeted to new teachers, certification for National Board candidates, and math and science teachers. Teachers receive a \$150 per day stipend for participating in the day-long professional development sessions that are offered during the school

year and in the summer. The program offers a useful model of how targeted, high-quality professional development and incentives can strengthen the practice of both teachers and principals.

Innovative technologies are providing new platforms for teacher professional development and collaboration. Head teachers in the United Kingdom have the opportunity to participate in the innovative *Talking Heads* online community, which is managed by the National College for School Leadership. Users have access to a wide range of virtual activities, including online debates, brainstorming, Web page authoring, and discussion with policymakers and experts. Here, teachers find a community of peers who can support and enhance their practice.

Investing in School Leaders

Quality professional development is needed not only for teachers, but also for their principals. Today, principals are called upon to serve as instructional leaders who understand classroom practice and can identify quality teaching. A recent study by The Wallace Foundation found that among all school-related factors, leadership was second only to classroom instruction in influencing student learning.¹¹ School leadership is particularly critical in high-needs school.

In a 2005 report, DPI found that nearly 63 percent of current school administrators have at least 20 years of experience, and nearly half are over age 50. Furthermore, the pool of potential principals is generally younger and less experienced, and fewer principals come to the job with assistant principal experience. Given these trends, as well as the increasing demands of national and state accountability

standards, North Carolina has a critical need for improving the supply and quality of school leadership in the state.

In North Carolina, the *Principal Fellows Program* offers 200 merit-based scholarships to students enrolled in Master of School Administration programs at campuses within The University of North Carolina. The number of applicants to this program has dropped from 178 in 2001 to 107 in 2009. Both new and mid-career principals have the opportunity to participate in the *Principals' Executive Program (PEP)*, which supports principals through short-term, intense professional development programs. The initiative also offers separate leadership opportunities for assistant principals and new principals. In 2007, PEP was subject to a Fiscal Research Justification Review which required the program to demonstrate that it was having a measurable impact. Program funding became non-recurring in the 2007-09 biennial budget, and PEP did not receive an additional allocation in the 2008-2009 budget.

International Lessons about School Leadership

Sir Michael Barber credits improvements made in the British school system to greater investments in and accountability for school leaders. In the late 1990s, the government provided training for every principal in a new national curriculum and used publicly published accountability results and school inspections to ensure schools adopted the new reforms. Former principals or district officials led the teams of inspectors, who used a standardized framework to evaluate school leadership quality and management, quality of teaching, and quality of work from students.

The British school system also empowered principals to make fiscal decisions about their own schools' budgets. Principals in the United Kingdom have a three-year school budget based on a published formula, and are able to choose their own books, staff, programs, and curricula. Stephen Heppell also reinforced that schools should have more autonomy so that they are able to give teachers time to reflect on their practice, and to make the appropriate modifications at the school level.



IMPLICATIONS:

1 **Support teacher preparation program renewal through school-university partnerships.**

School-university partnerships are a useful tool to ensure that universities understand current issues in the field, while allowing schools to benefit from the expertise of university faculty. According to John Goodland's theory of "simultaneous renewal," these partnerships create mutual learning opportunities for teacher education candidates and current teachers. Although funding can often pose a challenge to the creation of these partnerships, those that are successful build buy-in from partner organizations through a strong emphasis on student learning.

In the United States, national programs such as *Teachers for a New Era* are working to connect university campuses and schools. Each of the 11 participating institutions received a grant for \$5 million over five years, which the institution must match, for a total commitment at each site of at least \$10 million. Activities at the participating colleges and universities include Web induction programs for new teachers, university-school content design teams, and program and curriculum reforms. Although no North Carolina institutions currently participate in the program, Bill McDiarmid was active in the *Teachers for a New Era* program while at the University of Washington.

2 **Renew teacher preparation programs based on evidence-based practice.**

There is a movement to evaluate and improve teacher preparation programs based on evidence of program graduates' performance in the classrooms. One way to incorporate research into the evaluation process is to collect data on what graduates of teacher preparation programs do after graduation. Do they immediately enter the classroom? How long do they stay, and how well do their students perform? An effective evaluation system can answer these questions.

3 **Ensure high-quality induction programs exist for all new teachers.**

The New Teacher Center found that new teachers in comprehensive induction programs attained student achievement at the same level as third and fourth-year peers. As part of this induction model, a full-time mentor spends dedicated time each week with 15 beginning teachers. Strong induction programs also include ongoing support and training for teacher-mentors so that they can strategically assist new teachers in honing their practice. The New Teacher Center has partnered with the Durham Public Schools to implement an induction program with full-time mentors. The effort has had initial success, with new teacher turnover declining from an average of 28 percent to 19 percent in the program's first year.

4 **Support high-quality training and professional development for school leaders.**

Many of the top-performing countries succeed by recruiting and training excellent school leaders. Singapore has a six-month intensive principal training program, which includes team projects, management and leadership courses from executive training programs, and a two-week internship with a major corporation to shadow top private-sector executives. Candidates also spend one day a week in schools, developing innovative solutions to challenging school problems. The program carefully evaluates the participants, and only those who demonstrate the required competencies proceed to become principals.

COORDINATED SERVICES

Building an effective state education system takes more than just innovative technology and quality teachers and leaders. It requires collaboration among state agencies that focuses on the individual needs of the students being served, particularly those students who have significant health, economic or academic needs.

Supporting Inter-Agency Collaboration

Although many state agencies focus on issues affecting children, like health, education, and social services, too often their work is uncoordinated. The families with the most significant needs must navigate a complicated system of administrative processes and programs to receive services. It is critical to make early interventions in the lives of children a priority in order to help them compensate for the disadvantages they face. Research shows that low-income students enter school behind their middle and upper-income peers on dimensions of cognitive and social development and are in poorer health.

The *Child and Family Support Teams* project provides a full-time nurse and social worker to selected schools to help link families to needed services. This initiative addresses the

needs of struggling students through a partnership between the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Teams are currently serving at-risk students in 21 counties and in 101 of the state's 2,452 schools.

According to Jackie Kaye of The Atlantic Philanthropies, the most effective place to coordinate services is at schools, where programs can build on the school day and wrap around non-academic supports. Instead of simply adding services at schools already strained by uncoordinated programs, services must be integrated to provide for the needs of students holistically and bring together supports for students in a coordinated fashion.

Concerns were raised about the use of time during the academic year, including issues of year-round schools and the number of school calendar days. Research certainly affirms that what happens outside the school day matters to student success. Analysis from a John Hopkins study shows that two-thirds of the achievement gap can be explained by what happens during the summer before third grade.¹²

A state might address this need by funding high-quality summer programs that combine a health and education focus.



Using Cabinets to Collaborate

A number of states have implemented children’s cabinets to develop a shared state vision for improving child outcomes, as well as highlight areas for agency cooperation and collaboration.¹³ Children’s cabinets are typically comprised of senior state officials and department heads representing state agencies that serve children. These cabinets serve an important role as “barrier busters,” by breaking down redundancies and administrative barriers in the system that prevent the state from effectively serving the needs of children. State leaders, including the governor, agency directors, and education board presidents benefit from regular meetings where they are able to align state policy and budget priorities.

Although North Carolina does not have an inter-agency children’s cabinet, the North Carolina Education Cabinet was designed to facilitate strategic planning among the

state’s education providers. The Cabinet includes the governor, the president of The University of North Carolina, the president of The North Carolina Community College System, the K-12 state school superintendent, the state school board chairman, the president of the Independent Colleges and Universities, and the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. In previous years, the Cabinet and the North Carolina Education Research Council released the *First in America* Progress Report. The Report, last published in 2002, graded the state on its progress towards five goals: high student performance; every child ready to learn; every child with access to quality child care; safe, orderly, and caring schools; quality teachers and administrators; and strong family, business, and community support. While the Education Cabinet has been less active in recent years, Governor Beverly Perdue has pledged to reinvigorate the group.

CHILDREN’S CABINETS		
	Arizona	New Mexico
Year Established	2003	2003
Chair	Governor Janet Napolitano*	Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish
Membership	Directors of 10 state departments, 6 governor’s policy staff, and 1 judicial representative	15 cabinet secretaries and representation from three agencies and judiciary
Staffing	2 part-time staff members	1 full time staff member
Legislative Mandate	No	Yes: established in statute in 2005
Annual Report Card	Yes	Yes
Annual Children’s Budget	No	Yes

* Governor Napolitano has recently been appointed U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, and Jan Brewer now serves as Governor of Arizona.

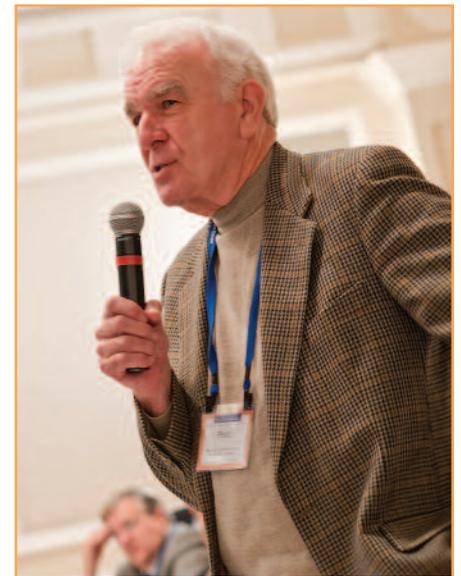
Cabinets in Other States

Currently, 23 states have created inter-agency cabinets focused on serving children. Diane Denish, the Lieutenant Governor of New Mexico, highlighted the successful elements of the New Mexico Children's Cabinet, and emphasized that investments made in children are the best investments for the taxpayers. The work of the New Mexico Children's Cabinet includes a children's report card, a children's budget, town hall meetings, a legislative institute, and annual legislative priorities. The Children's Report Card is produced annually and uses student indicators to mark how students are progressing on five goals: students are involved, educated, safe, supported, and healthy. The Children's Budget identifies the total amount of state and federal money being invested in children's programs, allowing state leaders and the public to examine state funding streams in light of its priorities for children.

The Children's Cabinet in Arizona was created by Governor Janet Napolitano in 2003. The Children's Cabinet produces an annual report highlighting children's indicators in health,

safety, and education. Arizona also has a P-20 Education Council, created and chaired by Governor Napolitano, which brings together the boards for early childhood, the K-12 State Board, the Board of Regents, and the Arizona Community College Association. The four boards work in eight policy areas, including early childhood, education alignment and assessment, and data and graduation.

The work of the Arizona Children's Cabinet has included a focus on the children of incarcerated parents. An analysis of prisoner re-entry found that 60 percent of ex-offenders were relocating in six zip codes. As a result, the Arizona Department of Corrections and the Arizona Department of Economic Security worked together to examine what happens to prisoners as they re-enter society. With support from the Soros Foundation, these agencies collaborated with the state department of education, faith-based associations and non-profits to create a Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents. The Bill of Rights outlines principles needed to insure the well-being of these highly at-risk children.¹⁴



Additional Concerns

Legislators also discussed the role of the family in supporting students for academic success. In New Mexico, a community-parent advisory committee to the Children's Cabinet has created a toolkit for parents about how to encourage their peers to be involved in schools. Lieutenant Governor Denish acknowledged that the single most difficult task is to continue to educate parents about their responsibilities, aligned with education opportunities in communities.

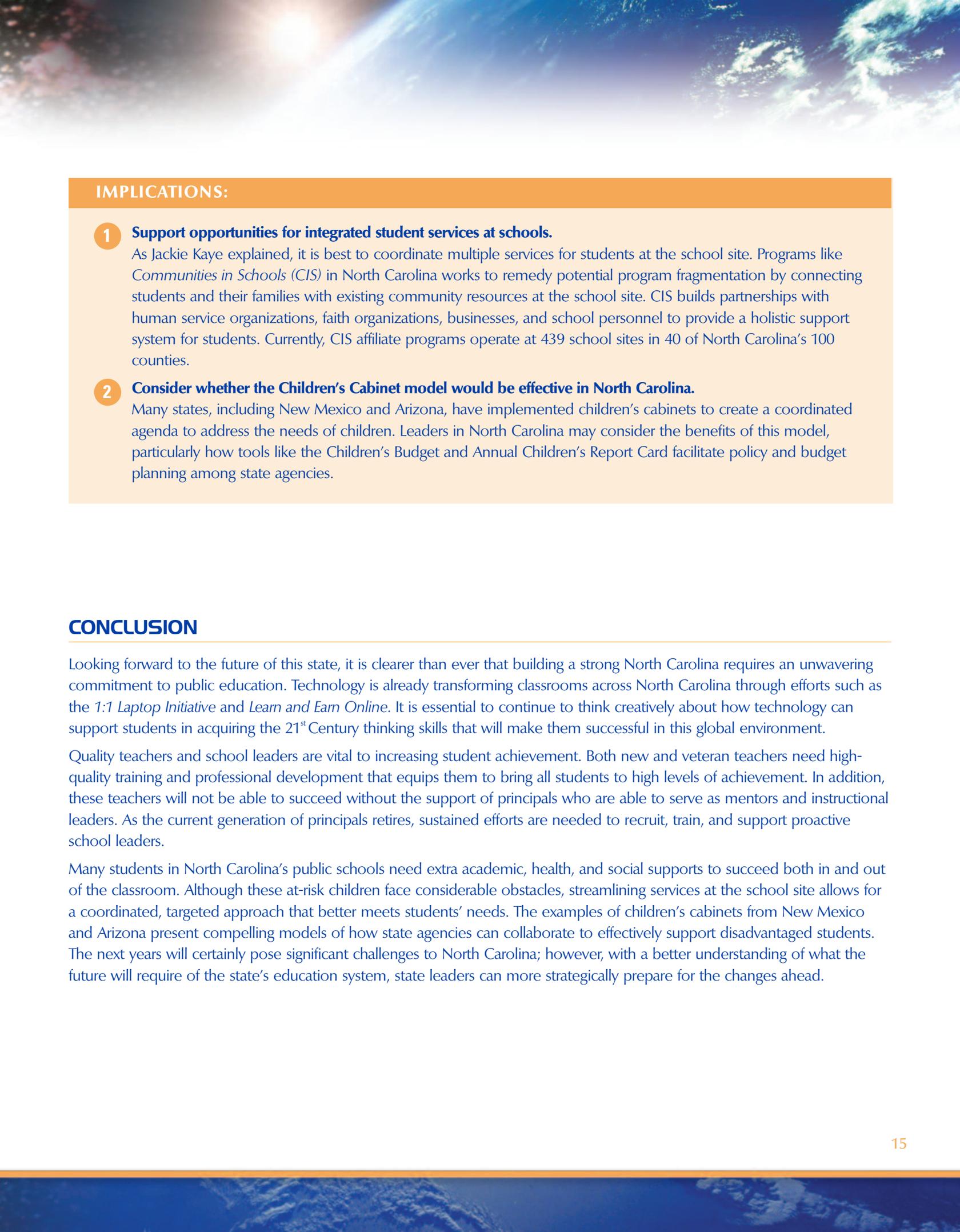
Throughout the Retreat, concerns were also raised about issues of governance and leadership in education. Lieutenant Governor Denish explained that New Mexico formerly had a superintendent of education, but later changed the state constitution to create a secretary of education. The state board of education now serves in an advisory rather than policy making capacity. The secretaries for higher education and workforce development also participate in education policy, specifically focusing on policies that relate to workforce development needs. In Arizona, the governor chairs both the Children's Cabinet and the P-20 council, and the state secretary of education serves in an elected position.

Education governance remains a matter of concern to legislators. The North Carolina State Appropriations Act of 2008 directed the Program Evaluation Division of the General Assembly to study the governance structure of the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the DPI. The results of the study were released in January 2009, and the consultants recommended that the responsibilities of the Executive Director of the State Board be delegated to the State Superintendent. The report also recommended that the job description of the Chairman of the Board be amended to include oversight for the DPI. Governor Perdue has responded to the issue of education governance by appointing Dr. Bill Harrison, superintendent of Cumberland County Schools, to serve as CEO of Public Schools and to chair the State Board of Education.



“At a time when every state is challenged economically, we believe that the most effective economic recovery plan is an investment in human capital.”

—Lt. Governor Diane Denish, New Mexico



IMPLICATIONS:

1 **Support opportunities for integrated student services at schools.**

As Jackie Kaye explained, it is best to coordinate multiple services for students at the school site. Programs like *Communities in Schools (CIS)* in North Carolina works to remedy potential program fragmentation by connecting students and their families with existing community resources at the school site. CIS builds partnerships with human service organizations, faith organizations, businesses, and school personnel to provide a holistic support system for students. Currently, CIS affiliate programs operate at 439 school sites in 40 of North Carolina's 100 counties.

2 **Consider whether the Children's Cabinet model would be effective in North Carolina.**

Many states, including New Mexico and Arizona, have implemented children's cabinets to create a coordinated agenda to address the needs of children. Leaders in North Carolina may consider the benefits of this model, particularly how tools like the Children's Budget and Annual Children's Report Card facilitate policy and budget planning among state agencies.

CONCLUSION

Looking forward to the future of this state, it is clearer than ever that building a strong North Carolina requires an unwavering commitment to public education. Technology is already transforming classrooms across North Carolina through efforts such as the *1:1 Laptop Initiative* and *Learn and Earn Online*. It is essential to continue to think creatively about how technology can support students in acquiring the 21st Century thinking skills that will make them successful in this global environment.

Quality teachers and school leaders are vital to increasing student achievement. Both new and veteran teachers need high-quality training and professional development that equips them to bring all students to high levels of achievement. In addition, these teachers will not be able to succeed without the support of principals who are able to serve as mentors and instructional leaders. As the current generation of principals retires, sustained efforts are needed to recruit, train, and support proactive school leaders.

Many students in North Carolina's public schools need extra academic, health, and social supports to succeed both in and out of the classroom. Although these at-risk children face considerable obstacles, streamlining services at the school site allows for a coordinated, targeted approach that better meets students' needs. The examples of children's cabinets from New Mexico and Arizona present compelling models of how state agencies can collaborate to effectively support disadvantaged students. The next years will certainly pose significant challenges to North Carolina; however, with a better understanding of what the future will require of the state's education system, state leaders can more strategically prepare for the changes ahead.

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