



2007 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND TEACHER RECRUITMENT

PENC believes that North Carolina should do everything possible to encourage new persons to enter the teaching profession – and to retain good teachers.

- PENC supports efforts to reduce the six month break between retirement and eligibility for rehiring for teachers who seek to return to the classroom.
- PENC supports funding to develop incentives to encourage teachers to delay retirement.
- PENC supports lateral entry programs to recruit new teachers to serve in the classroom. Funding should support five weeks of training for lateral entry teachers.
- PENC supports mentorship's for new teachers at a rate of one full time mentor for every 15 newly hired teachers.
- Funding should be provided to ensure that teachers have appropriate time to plan for their classes.
- PENC supports increasing the differential for teachers who have a master's degree from 10 to 12 per cent – the same as the differential for gaining national certification.

FUNDING AND REVENUE ISSUES

PENC supports efforts to ensure that sufficient funds are available to continue the state's commitment to providing the highest quality education to our students and to provide the support necessary to our teachers. At the same time, school systems must be accountable for prudent use of the funds they receive to assure taxpayers that they're getting the best value for their dollars.

- PENC members support use of lottery revenues for school construction. Lottery funds should not supplant current resources in any way.
- PENC supports a statewide bond referendum to provide funding for new schools' construction.
- PENC members believe that technology facilitators/technicians should be provided in every school and that funds should be available to ensure technology services.
- PENC supports reinstating tax relief for public schools by exempting them from and refunding any state sales tax.

PROMOTING CLASSROOM SUCCESS

PENC supports efforts to encourage students' success through excellence in teaching and creativity in the classroom. Students should be given every opportunity to learn and teachers should be given sufficient time and resources to provide quality instruction.

- PENC supports revisiting school calendar issues:
 - PENC supports efforts to move the start of the school year to a date earlier than August 25 to enable schools to deal with, among other things, state testing requirements. PENC believes that giving school systems the flexibility to deal with this issue is in the best interests of families and teachers.
 - PENC supports restoring the five teacher workdays and supports considering them as teacher planning days interspersed throughout the school year.
 - PENC supports the restoration of local flexibility to cope with inclement weather policies and other unexpected issue.
 - PENC supports allowing the end semester/EOC exams to be administered before the holidays and enabling longer breaks over the holidays.
- PENC supports an increase in the number of guidance counselors funded by the state.
- PENC supports an increase in the number of teacher assistants in elementary school grades. Shifting resources from teacher assistants to funding more teaching slots is not always the most effective or appropriate approach.
- PENC members support assessment of the effectiveness of the ABC testing program in terms of its stated goals and how it is administered.
- PENC supports efforts to focus on safe schools.