2027 BOARD OF EDUCATION STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Top Priorities

These five priority areas represent Guilford County Schools' most urgent legislative needs for 2027. They focus on safe schools, competitive compensation, services for students with disabilities, access to college courses, and school counseling.

Scan to learn more about GCS legislative priorities and how to get involved.

Safe, Supportive, and Stable Learning Environments

School Safety: Provide Guilford County Schools with $3.5 million in recurring annual state funding to sustain critical school safety systems, including security scanners, cameras, radios, and visitor management systems. Allow funding to cover ongoing maintenance, licensing, repairs, and replacement.

Attracting and Retaining a High-Quality Workforce

Classified Staff

Classified Staff: Increase state-funded compensation for classified employees, including teacher assistants, custodians, bus drivers, child nutrition workers, maintenance technicians, and other support staff. Provide competitive pay that helps districts recruit and retain the employees who keep schools safe, functioning, and ready for learning.

Licensed Staff

Teachers: Increase state-funded teacher salaries to compete with neighboring states and national pay levels. Strengthen compensation for experienced and veteran educators to recognize their expertise and improve retention.

Principals: Reform North Carolina's principal compensation model to provide competitive, predictable salaries that recognize experience, enrollment, student needs, and the responsibility of leading schools with complex programs and significant academic and operational demands.

Serving Students with the Greatest Needs

Exceptional Children Support: Eliminate the 13% enrollment-based cap on state funding for students with disabilities, a limit set in 1993. Fund services based on the actual number of students served and the intensity and cost of their individualized needs.

Expanding Access to Postsecondary Pathways

Calendar Alignment with Community Colleges: Provide local school districts with calendar flexibility to align high school schedules with community college schedules. Ensure students participating in Career and College Promise can attend college courses from the first day of the college term without conflicts caused by differing calendars.

College, Career, and Whole-Child Readiness

School Counselors: Increase recurring state funding for school counselor positions to support a staffing ratio of one counselor for every 250 students (currently 1:301). Expand students' access to academic advising, career exploration, postsecondary planning, and social and emotional support.

Guilford County Schools Also Supports

Accountability and Academic Supports

School Accountability Model Redesign: Redesign North Carolina's school accountability model to provide a more complete picture of school performance. Include measures of academic achievement, student growth, progress across student groups, and readiness for college and careers, with clear reporting that families can understand.

Voucher Accountability: Require schools receiving public voucher funds to meet comparable requirements for student health and safety, academic assessment and public reporting, financial transparency, and protections for students with disabilities. Continue to redirect unspent voucher appropriations to K–12 public schools.

Workforce Supports

Teacher Supplement Inclusion: Preserve Guilford County Schools' eligibility for the state Teacher Supplement Assistance Allotment. Ensure eligibility criteria account for concentrations of student poverty and the district's ability to provide competitive local salary supplements.

See next page for more information

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Guilford County Schools Also Supports

Equitable Funding Formulas: Revise education funding formulas that use county economic-tier designations so funding reflects student poverty and educational needs within districts. Ensure countywide classifications do not prevent districts from receiving support for substantial concentrations of students with significant needs.

NC Pre–K Teacher Assistant Certification Supplement: Establish a recurring annual supplement for NC Pre–K teacher assistants who earn and maintain required credentials to help offset credentialing and renewal costs.

Assistant Principal Funding Formula: Increase state funding for assistant principals by changing the allotment from one month per 98 students to one month per 50 students. This change would provide more funded assistant principal time to address instructional leadership, student support, special education, school safety, and daily operations.

Student Health, Wellness, and Mental Health

School Psychologists: Increase recurring state funding for school psychologist positions to support a staffing ratio of one psychologist for every 500 students (currently 1:1,326). Expand access to evaluations, early intervention, mental health services, and consultation that support student learning and well-being.

Social Workers: Increase recurring state funding for school social worker positions to support a staffing ratio of one social worker for every 250 students (currently 1:784). Strengthen schools' capacity to address chronic absenteeism, connect families with community resources, and resolve barriers to student learning.

State Support for School Nursing Services: Increase recurring state funding for school nursing services so every public school can have a full-time nurse. Support timely care, chronic condition management, emergency response, and coordination with families and healthcare providers.

Telehealth Funding: Establish recurring state funding for school-based telehealth services, including physical and behavioral healthcare. Remove policy and reimbursement barriers that prevent schools and healthcare partners from receiving Medicaid payments for eligible services delivered virtually to eligible students.

Student Funding Protections: Ensure any transition to a weighted student funding model provides additional resources for students based on poverty, disability, multilingual learner status, and other needs that require additional services. Include transition funding and protection against funding losses that would disrupt existing student services.

Access to Career Pathways and Early Learning

Rural Transportation for Career and College Opportunities: Provide dedicated funding for transportation to dual enrollment courses, career and technical education programs, internships, and other work-based learning experiences for rural students.

Pre–K Transportation Funding: Revise state transportation funding and efficiency calculations to account for NC Pre–K and Exceptional Children (EC) Pre–K students transported by public school districts. Ensure districts receive funding that reflects these services and are not financially penalized for providing transportation for eligible pre–K students.

Infrastructure and Sustainability

Technology Access: Establish recurring state funding to replace aging student and staff devices, maintain reliable technology infrastructure, and support digital instruction and digital assessments.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Readiness: Provide state funding, professional development and clear statewide guidance for responsible AI use in public schools. Support AI literacy, appropriate instructional use, protection of student and employee information, and evaluation of AI tools.

Increase Allocation and Expand Allowable Uses of NC Education Lottery Funds: Direct at least 20 percent of annual net lottery proceeds designated for education to the Public-School Building Repair and Renovation Fund. Expand allowable uses to include school technology infrastructure and safety improvements while sustaining support for building repair and renovation.

School Capital: Increase recurring state funding and needs-based grants to renovate, replace, and modernize aging public-school facilities. Support improvements to heating and cooling systems, roofs, school safety, accessibility, and instructional spaces.

Energy Efficiency and Clean Energy: Provide funding for school energy efficiency improvements, solar energy projects, and low-emission school transportation. Prioritize projects that reduce long-term operating costs and improve learning environments.

Cybersecurity and Data Protection: Establish recurring state funding for K–12 cybersecurity personnel, protective technology, staff training, incident response, and recovery. Help districts safeguard student and employee information and maintain essential school operations.

Guilford County Schools, the third largest school district in North Carolina and among the largest of more than 14,000 school districts in the United States, serves more than 67,000 PK–12 students at 121 schools. For more information, visit the district's website at www.gcsnc.com.

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