



NCMEA Newsletter

April 2018

The General Assembly, through its many committees in these interim months, has been very busy studying and reporting on important public education issues as it leads up to the 2018 Short Session which will officially begin on Wednesday, May 16. Thankfully, NCMEA accomplished its top state priority this year by securing funding and a phased-in approach to the Class Size mandate: House Bill 90 which is now state law ([Session Law 2018-2](#)). This law sets forth the following on Class Size solutions and state funding:

1. Maintains the status quo of 2017-18 by keeping the average class size for K-3 grades at 1:20 for 2018-19.
2. In 2018-19, “program enhancement” teachers for K-5 will be funded at \$61,359,225.
3. Phases in K-3 class size reductions over a 4-year period through 2021-22. Funding will increase by 25% each year so that the 1:191 ratio for K-5 “program enhancement” teachers will be 100% funded by 2021-22.

School Year	Grades	Class Size Average	Individual Class Size Cap
2018-19	K-3	20	23
2019-20	K-3	19	22
2020-21	K-3	18	21
2021-22 & beyond	K	18	21
	1	16	19
	2-3	17	20

4. Effective July 1, 2018, K-5 “program enhancement” teachers will have their own separate Position Allotment under NC General Statute 115C-301(a1)(2).
5. Positions allocated for K-5 “program enhancement” teachers may be converted to positions for K-12 classroom teachers, but no other transfers out of the K-5 Program Enhancement Teacher Allotment will be allowed.
6. Between now and July 1, 2021, K-12 Classroom Teacher funds can include funds for K-12 “program enhancement” teachers. However, after July 1, 2021, funds for K-5 “program enhancement” teachers will only be allotted through the K-5 Program Enhancement Teacher Allotment.
7. The K-3 Class Size requirements of maximum class size and individual class size caps do not apply to either “program enhancement” classes or dual language immersion classes.
8. For the 2018-19 projected new positions (estimates only) by LEA, please see [NCDPI’s Financial & Business Services webpage](#) for more information.

NCMEA encourages you to thank your legislators for HB 90 and to convey that NCMEA will be monitoring the implementation of this new law, funding, and the boots-on-the-ground effects for students and educators.

Of the other big ticket items that NCMEA is working on and/or monitoring, they include:

- [Public School Building Bond Act of 2017](#) (HB 866/SB 542)

According to NCDPI, our public school buildings have \$8.1 billion in needs over the next 3 years. This bond bill, which is eligible for action in the 2018 Short Session, is part of the answer. If passed, this statewide bond would go before all NC voters on the November 2018 ballot. Polling indicates that NC voters will pass this bond bill, but it has to be enacted by the General Assembly first. Significantly, this bond bill will help toward building new schools and classrooms to accommodate the Class Size requirements. For more information, please see <https://www.ncschoolbond.com>

- [Arts Graduation Requirement](#) (HB 97)

This bill has been introduced for many years by the House, courtesy of Representatives Linda Johnson, Jeffrey Elmore, and Becky Carney. It would enact an Arts graduation requirement. The bill has successfully passed the House but has not passed the Senate. NCMEA will continue to support and advocate for full passage of this bill.

- [House Select Committee on School Safety](#)

This Committee is intent on enacting legislation to make schools safer, and it has 2 active subcommittees: 1) Student Health; and 2) Student Physical Safety & Security. Also, on April 19, 2018, the Governor announced his \$130 million proposed budget provisions on improving School Safety. On April 20, the Superintendent of Public Instruction held the first meeting of his School Mental Health Initiative Working Group. All state leaders are understandably focused on making our schools safer and the 2018 Short Session holds promise for solid improvements.

- [Joint Legislative Task Force on Education Finance Reform](#)

The General Assembly set up this Task Force in its 2017 Budget and several meetings have already occurred. Currently, it is tasked with studying and recommending a “weighted student formula” for all public schools to employ statewide – a formula that would be a significant move away from how schools are currently funded. According to Co-Chairs Representative Horn and Senator Lee, however, it is likely that they will move their October 2018 report deadline to a later date given the complexities of the task. To see the Co-Chairs discuss this Task Force and its goals, watch them on the April 14th episode of [Education Matters](#).

- Joint Legislative Study Committee on the Division of Local School Administrative Units

This Study Committee did not recommend the division of any LEAs. Instead, its [Final Report](#) of April 11, 2018, recommended a review of prior studies that address the possible

consolidation of school support functions, such as Child Nutrition and Technology, among others. Additionally, the Committee found that 60 LEAs' costs for Exceptional Children programs exceed the state allotment cap, therefore requiring funds from local sources. The Committee recommended that this information be shared with House and Senate Education Appropriations Committees.

- [Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee](#)

This Committee is the most comprehensive one regarding public education: K-12, Community Colleges and Universities. It has met several times during the off-session months and is expected to meet at least one more time in order to give its Final Report before the Short Session begins on May 16. NCMEA will be monitoring this next Committee meeting closely and reporting any relevant developments.