



RECOMMENDATIONS RE: PRINCIPAL PAY AND S234

The North Carolina Principals & Assistant Principals' Association (NCPAPA) and North Carolina Association of School Administrators (NCASA) thank the General Assembly for focusing on improving school-based administrator pay, which now ranks 50th in the nation and deters recruitment and retention of strong leaders for our schools. Leadership matters, and strengthening our school leadership is the fastest, highest-yielding strategy for a positive impact on student success.

We appreciate the introduction of **Senate Bill 234**, which is the first legislation this session to propose increasing and revamping principal pay. While the bill would dedicate more state funding to principal compensation, which we greatly appreciate, its proposed shift from a set salary schedule for principals to a block grant, allowing all principal salaries to be determined by individual districts, is problematic and counter-productive to efforts to improve school-based administrator pay and morale. We urge consideration of the following concerns, as the General Assembly determines the right solution for this critical issue:

- While the bill would increase total state funds for principal compensation by 7% over the combined amount now covering the current average principal salary of \$64,395, it does not guarantee principals a 7% pay increase, or any pay increase at all.
- Principals will lose their longevity pay under this plan, meaning some could earn less.
- While there is a hold harmless provision for principals contracted through the 2017-2018 school year, there is no assurance their pay will not decrease below the current level in future years. Additionally, any principal whose contract expires at the end of 2016-2017 and is up for renewal could earn less money in 2017-2018.
- The block grant approach, also known as a dollar allotment, may hinder efforts to recruit teachers into principal positions due to a lack of salary predictability and stability.
- Dollar allotment funding could create greater inequities between districts and bidding wars, as there will be no guaranteed pay level based on years of experience, level of school and size of school.
- If the total state dollar allotment does not increase each year from the 2016-2017 level or is decreased, it shifts the burden of responsibility from the state to local districts and counties.
- Requiring each district to negotiate individual salaries and benefits for principals ultimately could land the district in time-consuming and costly lawsuits over pay inequities between principals serving in the same districts. Additionally, this method appears to encourage a move to collective bargaining in a non-union state.
- Although the bill calls for Assistant Principals to earn 13% more than a Bachelor level teacher salary, their increase would be negligible since they are currently paid on a Master level which is 10% more.



In lieu of a dollar allotment for principal pay, a better approach to help attract and retain the strongest school administrators is to reconnect principal compensation to the new salary schedule the General Assembly has provided for the teachers they lead and support. We respectfully ask that you phase in a pay structure for assistant principals and principals similar to the following:

BASE SALARY

- Assistant Principal Monthly Salary = Comparable Master's level teacher monthly salary + 7%
- Principal Monthly Salary = Comparable AP Salary + 15% + 2% for each 400 student increment

COMBINED WITH

- A differentiated incentive plan that would provide school-based leaders the possibility of earning more for performance and leading hard-to-staff schools

Our organizations and our members remain committed to working with the sponsors of this legislation and all lawmakers to improve principal pay in the way that is most-conducive to attracting and retaining the strong and effective leaders our students need and deserve.



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