

## For Immediate Release



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From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate  
Mecklenburg County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Greetings:

*We are expecting to have session this month to continue wrapping up business for this year. Committee meetings are continuing and I will still be attending events in the district.*

*Joyce Waddell*

## School Calendar

Students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools started classes Monday, along with most other North Carolina districts, because that is what state law requires. For the next school year, Charlotte Mecklenburg School System is planning to following Gaston County’s lead and will be starting earlier.

In 2004, North Carolina’s General Assembly set a mandatory late August start date to ensure the tourism industry would have a uniform schedule for family travel and summer labor. That calendar forces high school students to take first-semester final exams after winter break. Districts have been grouching about that and lobbying for calendar flexibility for years.

This year school boards in other counties voted to start Aug. 17, regardless of the law, with winter break falling between the two semesters.

Starting two weeks earlier would mean the first semester could end at winter break. Which means it would also mean a shorter summer stretch to prepare for next year’s opening.

So far the state Senate has never agreed to relax or revoke the law. The General Assembly could take up the school calendar law in 2023 — either to grant the flexibility that districts have long requested, or to spell out penalties for violating the law. This year, the districts that started early have not been penalized.



## Labor Day Parade

*Senator Waddell marched in the Labor Day Parade of Charlotte. The rain came, but the parade continued.*



## DNA Evidence

Sitting on shelves in storage rooms all through the state of North Carolina, more than 16,000 sexual assault kits contained the keys to solving decades-old crimes. Two of these kits stored by the Durham Police Department yielded their secrets, and earlier this month, two men pleaded guilty to separate sexual assaults after law enforcement identified them using the DNA they left in crimes committed years ago.

North Carolina is methodically working through those kits after having the largest backlog of untested kits in the entire country. A statewide initiative in 2019 to eliminate the rape kit backlog culminated with the Survivor Act, which requires any entity that collects a rape kit, such as a hospital, to notify law enforcement within 24 hours.

The act also requires testing of each rape kit in order to submit DNA profiles into the federal Combined DNA Index System, or CODIS, database. The state legislature has provided millions of dollars to test the untested rape kits. So far, several men have been convicted of multiple sexual assaults, each after the state tested rape kits containing their DNA.

## Queen City Television Program

*Senator Waddell discusses the importance of community service at a Queen City television show and shares the work of the Black Women's Caucus including the history of female bonding and outstanding work.*



Senator Waddell is working tirelessly for Senate District 40, but she cannot do this alone. Many of her precincts have changed which makes the election much more competitive. In November she will have an opponent running against her. Can she count on your help to continue working for the district?

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*Senator Waddell participates in the hat contest.*

## **2022 Blackberry Brunch**

*Senator Waddell participates in the 2022 Blackberry Brunch. The Brunch was an event that honored women in the community that hold leadership positions.*



*Senator Waddell was presented with the Political Award at the Brunch.*



*Senator Waddell is pictured with the other honorees at the brunch.*

*The weather is breaking and our mornings are getting cooler. Fall is arriving in what seems like a slow speed. It appears that they have expanded the qualifications of getting the Monkey Pox Vaccine, so if you fall within the risk categories, go get your vaccine. Please do not forget to get your COVID booster.*

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