

For Immediate Release



From Sen. Joyce Waddell <joyce.waddell@ncleg.net>
To <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
Reply-To <joyce.waddell@ncleg.net>
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From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate
Mecklenburg County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chapter VI
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CONTACT: Sen. Joyce Waddell
(919) 733-5650
Joyce.Waddell@ncleg.net
<https://joycewaddell4nc.com/>



Greetings:

The month of February will host many events in honor of Black History Month.

Last week held no vote sessions, and although no session votes were taken committees met to discuss bills heading to the floor for votes.

As a member of the Education Committee, we had a Committee meeting where we heard from the public their concerns of SB 49 the Parents' Bill of Rights bill.

On Thursday, I participated in a community meeting regarding teacher's shortages, academics, free CATS ridership for CMS employees and High School Students, and other issues plaguing CMS.

Joyce Waddell

Curriculum Bill

Once again the Parents' Bill of Rights has been revived. This bill bans curriculum on gender identity, sexual activity or sexuality in multiple elementary school grades. The measure also requires schools to make textbooks and other materials available for parental review at the schools and online.

If a student changes the pronoun the school refers to them by, the bill would require notification of a parent in most circumstances. A previous version of the bill was criticized for potentially outing LGBTQ students.

The new bill, if passed into law, would require "age-appropriate instruction" about gender identity and sexuality for kindergarten through fourth grade. The version that passed the Senate in 2022 would have banned the curriculum in K-3.

To read the full bill [click here](#).

Other parts of the bill address parental involvement in schools, including policies to increase involvement and access to curriculum materials. It would establish procedures for parents to inspect and review "all textbooks and supplementary instructional materials that will be used in their child's classroom."

This bill is over-reaching and removes many parental school consents. Our children are sent to school to learn and the issues identified by this bill are distracting from that. Teachers are already bogged down with enough paperwork, this will add to their burden.

Teacher Pay

A public education advocacy group is urging North Carolina lawmakers to raise salaries for teachers by 24.5% and to follow a court-ordered plan to increase funding for public schools.

By increasing teacher's pay by 24.5%, North Carolina will make teacher pay comparable to other fields and reaching the national average. The proposed pay raise is likely to be met by skepticism from GOP lawmakers who say school districts should use their federal COVID dollars to address more of their needs.

The state's public schools opened this school year with more than 4,400 teaching vacancies. North Carolina ranks 38th in the nation in teacher pay with an average salary of \$53,4581 last school year.

The average teacher salary in North Carolina dropped 11.5% from 1999-2000 to 2020-2021. The national average salary increased by 3% over that time period. Also, North Carolina teachers suffer a pay penalty because they make approximately 24.5% less than similarly educated peers in other sectors.

Public Hearings

Tuesday, Feb. 7

- 1 p.m. | The North Carolina Oil and Gas Commission will meet. Green Square Building, 217 W. Jones St., Raleigh.

Monday, Feb. 13

- 10 a.m. | The state Medical Board holds a public hearing to discuss possible rule changes, 3127 Smoketree Court, Raleigh.

Tuesday, Feb. 21

- 1 p.m. | The Department of Environmental Quality holds a online stakeholder meeting.

Wednesday, Feb. 22

- 10 a.m. | The state Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission meets to discuss possible rule changes, Wake Technical Community College, Public Safety Training Center, 321 Chapanoke Rd., Raleigh.

Covid-19

After several weeks of the COVID-19 Community Level at Medium and High, Mecklenburg County's level is now at Low. Continue to stay vigilant and conscious of your and others' health.

We can reduce the spread of COVID and Influenza by staying aware and putting special emphasis on the steps that keep us safe.



Sen. Joyce Waddell, District 40 | 1106 Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601

[Unsubscribe_sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org](mailto:unsubscribe_sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org)

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