

For Immediate Release



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

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Greetings:

At the General Assembly
For the Week

We are looking forward to going back in session to vote on the budget. North Carolina deserves a balanced budget so that the branches of the government can continue the business of the state.

Joyce Waddell



**NC International
Minority Coalition
2nd Annual Gala**

*Senator Waddell and Senator
Mohammed are recognized by the NC
International Minority Coalition for
outstanding service.*

Test Scores

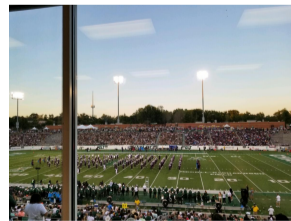
North Carolina’s student test scores continue to rise after hitting rock bottom during the pandemic. But performance remains below pre-pandemic levels. New statewide test scores released at Wednesday’s State Board of Education meeting show that over half of students were proficient on state exams during the 2022-23 school year. That is up from 51.2% passing in the 2021-22 school year and the 45.4% proficiency rate in the 2020-21 school year.

Other signs of improvement include an uptick in the graduation rate, more schools meeting academic growth targets, fewer schools being labeled as low-performing and fewer schools receiving D or F performance grades.

The annual release of test scores also comes with a state-mandated A through F letter grade given to public schools. The school grades are based 80% on passing rates on exams and 20% on student growth on the tests. The percentage of schools with A and B grades was 27%, up from 23% the prior year. But it’s down from 37% in the 2018-19 school year. The percentage of schools with D and F grades dropped to 35% after being at 42% the prior year. It had been only at 22% in the 2018-19 school year.

On average, high-poverty schools have lower performance grades than more affluent schools. Critics complain the grades required by state lawmakers stigmatize high-poverty schools. An effort is being lead to revise the performance grading system to potentially include additional measures such as student attendance and school climate. It would require state legislative approval to change the school accountability formula.

I am in favor of changing this formula because of the simplicity of developing transparency.



UNCC

*Senator
Waddell joins
the Chancellor
and other
legislators at
UNCC's first
home game.*



DMV Staffing

If you had to wait in a long time at a Division of Motor Vehicles office this summer, it may be because there were not enough people working there.

On a typical day, DMV driver's license offices statewide had on hand about 70% of the staff the agency says it needs for them to fully function, according to the director of driver services. The DMV says it needs 638 employees to run all the computer terminals in its 117 driver's license offices statewide, but that with vacancies and absences it usually had about 450.

To fill the rest of the jobs in its license offices, the DMV relies on temporary workers — those who are paid about \$19 an hour, with no benefits, for up to 11 months at a time. Lawmakers have authorized the agency to hire 142 temporary workers. But the vacancy rate for those jobs is 77%.

Allowing the DMV to make more of these temporary workers permanent, with higher pay and benefits, would help to improve those staffing numbers.



Second Ward Gala

Senator Waddell and some members of the National Council of Negro Women discussed memorable events at the Centennial Celebration for Second Ward High School.

Vaccines

Our state is seeing an increase in COVID. Please be careful and get vaccinated. If you have been vaccinated, please get your booster.



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