

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

Last week was full of last minute meetings in preparation for voting in the primary. Thanks to all who came out to vote. No matter who you voted for, voting is important and imperative to democracy.

Joyce Waddell

Advanced Math

It has been reported that the number of students eligible for advanced math courses saw a remarkable increase of over 18% from 2021-22, equivalent to 9,032 exam scores. Impressively, 94% of these eligible students are presently enrolled in advanced math courses, underscoring a substantial uptick in student participation.

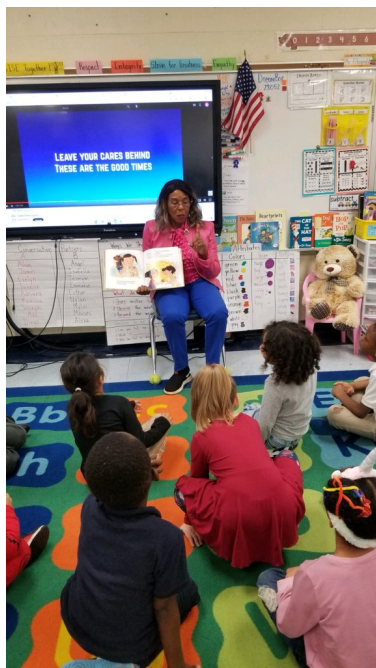
A report was a pivotal component of a broader conversation with legislators concerning advanced math courses and the significance of automatic enrollment policies, which guarantee placement of all qualifying students in advanced courses.

In 2018, North Carolina lawmakers enacted legislation aimed at expanding access to advanced courses. The initiative's objective, as outlined in DPI's presentation, was to ensure that students demonstrating readiness had equal opportunity to access advanced coursework in mathematics, irrespective of their address or demographic background.

North Carolina stands out as one of only six states with automatic enrollment in advanced courses, and it leads the way in actively collecting data to assess the efficacy of this approach. This proactive stance contrasts with national trends, where many high-performing students are not offered advanced learning opportunities despite demonstrating readiness.

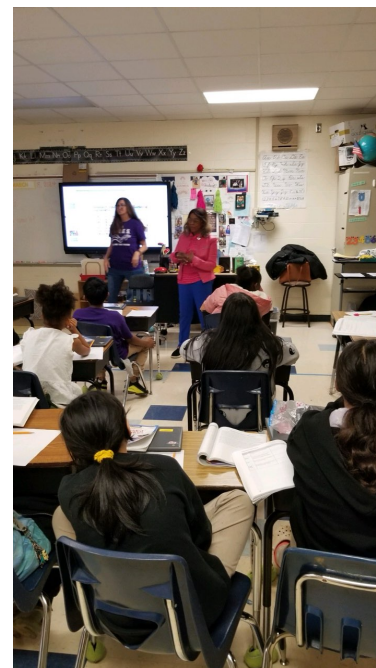
Recent data indicates a steady decrease in the percentage of high-performing North Carolina students not placed in advanced math courses. Some would attribute this positive trend to various factors, including pandemic recovery efforts and the successful implementation of automatic enrollment policies.

North Carolina's proactive measures in expanding access to advanced math courses serve as a model for other states. The state's commitment to equitable education and data-driven policies ensures that all students have the opportunity to excel academically, setting a strong foundation for future success.



Albemarle Road Elementary School Guest Reader

Senator Waddell was the Guest reader at Albemarle Road Elementary School. She reads to a kindergarten class and speaks to a 5th grade class about history.



School Retention

A recent study conducted by Carolina Demography at UNC-Chapel Hill has revealed a concerning trend within North Carolina's public school system: districts with a high proportion of Black students are more likely to retain students for an additional grade.

A research analyst delved into this topic and identified the pattern. She analyzed retention rates across counties' school districts from 2018 to 2022 and correlated them with the racial composition of each county. In counties with multiple traditional public-school districts, retention rates were aggregated at the county level.

While poor performance on end-of-grade exams remains a primary reason for student retention, The findings indicate that the racial makeup of a student's school also plays a role. Schools serving predominantly Black student populations showed higher rates of student retention.

School composition and quality play significant roles in retention rates. So, retention is not solely determined by a student's individual performance but also by the overall performance of the school.

Studies have consistently shown that being held back a grade increases the likelihood of dropping out of high school and results in lower wages throughout life. Rural counties in northeastern North Carolina exhibited the highest rates of student retention, with over three-quarters of students in these districts being Black.

Vaccines

I know I have been encouraging all to get vaccinated, and with good reason. It is important to your health and for the health of family and friends. If you are concerned or not sure, please reach out to your health provider or a trusted source to provide you information so that you can make an informed decision. This can be a life or death decision, so take the time to do your research.



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