

For Immediate Release



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

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Greetings:

Last week at the General Assembly we voted on 2 bills. SR 104 - Senate Board Of Governors Elections and SB 115 - General Assembly Appointments.

Joyce Waddell

Education Priorities

Last Thursday, the State Board of Education approved its collaborative 2025 legislative agenda with the state's Department of Public Instruction. The agenda calls for increased teacher pay, additional support for schools in western North Carolina affected by a recent hurricane, and a pause on expanding the Opportunity Scholarship program.

Earlier discussions in January focused on establishing legislative priorities that address teacher retention, greater flexibility in school calendars, improved student health, and a revised pay structure for school principals.

Officials noted broad support for these initiatives, along with suggestions for further measures to strengthen public schools. The overall plan includes securing \$100 million to address facilities needs in the western region, enhancing educator compensation, restoring master's pay for all educators, reforming the principal pay plan, and addressing nearly \$13 billion in school construction requirements. The legislative proposal is organized into four key budgetary areas: student and school support, academic support and coaching, technology, and compensation pathways.

Legislative Information Session

Senator Waddell provides legislative information to members of the breakfast club at meeting held at the Statesville Avenue Presbyterian Church.



Addiction Treatment

Legislators recently announced the launch of a statewide initiative designed to establish a reliable resource for North Carolina residents seeking treatment for addiction. The program, known as the North Treatment Connection campaign, will also aim to raise awareness about patient brokering, a harmful practice in which individuals direct patients to treatment centers that provide inadequate care. The campaign will be managed by a prominent nonprofit organization, which will focus on publicizing ethical treatment providers. The campaign will leverage a network of over 700 providers and practitioners as well as work in coordination with the state's health department and an addiction council. This initiative received substantial funding from a recent opioid settlement, and it seeks to ensure that addiction treatment services in-state are both effective and trustworthy. It aims to prevent patients from seeking care outside North Carolina due to a lack of quality services. The campaign also hopes to empower individuals to report unethical practices, with particular attention to those violating the Stop Addiction Fraud Ethics (SAFE) Act, passed in 2023. The SAFE Act holds providers accountable for false or misleading information related to addiction treatment.

State lawmakers have highlighted that the new law is intended to ensure patients receive the necessary care and are kept safe. They view the campaign as a crucial step in addressing a significant public health issue that results in thousands of deaths each year and imposes billions of dollars in costs on the state.

I believe providing care for those requiring addiction treatment need assistance and we can provide that assistance. The funds recently provided to our state can go a long way to provide that assistance.

NC General Assembly

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