


TO: Members, Henderson County Board of Public Education
FROM: David L. Jones, Ed. S., Superintendent 
DATE: October 24, 2014
SUBJECT: Weekly Update

- **Hendersonville Middle School Band to Perform**

The Hendersonville Middle School Eighth Grade Band will perform at the North Carolina Music Educator Association Conference on November 10th in Winston Salem. Mr. Buddy Gudger is the Band Director.

- **School Sponsorship Program through the Education Foundation**

On Tuesday of this week, Graham Fields, President of the Henderson County Education Foundation, introduced the business sponsors to the Principal of their selected school and presented them with a check for the school. I have attached a document with the name of the sponsor for each school, Johnson Farm, and Bullington Gardens.

- **Physical Performance Standards for School Bus Drivers**

For about two years, the Division of Motor Vehicles has worked with the Transportation Advisory Group, which is sponsored by the NC Pupil Transportation Association, on new physical performance standards for school bus drivers. These standards, based on procedures implemented in other states, are designed to test school bus drivers in basic functions of their job to ensure the safety of their student passengers. Once these standards are implemented, new school bus drivers will be tested by the Division of Motor Vehicles as part of the requirements to receive a school bus driver's certificate. Current school bus drivers will be tested at the time of their renewal. A copy of the standards is attached.

- **School Mascots Survey**

The Department of Public Instruction is compiling a list of mascots for public schools across the state. Please note the attached document that we submitted to DPI for the Henderson County Public Schools.

- **Academic Standards Review Commission Holds Second Meeting**

The Commission met this week with the purpose to continue the Commission's comprehensive review of all English Language Arts and Mathematics standards that were adopted by the State Board of Education under G.S. 115C-12(9c), and propose modifications to ensure that those standards meet all of the criteria listed in Section 2(c) of Senate Bill 812.

- **Two apply to run virtual public charter schools**

Lynn Bonner | newsobserver.com

The legislature ordered two virtual charter schools be approved for pilot programs beginning next year. The State Board of Education put out the call for applicants and got two responses.

The North Carolina Virtual Academy, which would contract with the for-profit company K12, and North Carolina Connections Academy applied.

Like traditional charters, the virtual charters would be public schools using taxpayer money to educate students. But class work would be done online.

K12 has tried to get a foothold in the state for years. NC Learns, a nonprofit that would have used K12's curriculum, had a lawsuit to force the state to let it operate. K12 has been controversial other states.

The Tennessee Education Commissioner ordered the Tennessee Virtual Academy run by K12 to close next year because of low student growth.

North Carolina Connections Academy has tried to gain approval through the traditional State Board process. The board rejected its application this year, but there was some talk among members that it might make sense for the Connections Academy to apply as a pilot project.

An education consultant with the charter school office in the state Department of Public Instruction, said the board would still go through its applicant reviews even though there are only two applicants.

The board is scheduled to talk about the applicants in December and vote in January. The approved schools are scheduled to open in August.

- **NC review commission says Common Core too hard for some students**

T. Keung Hui | newsobserver.com

Members of a state commission working to replace Common Core argued Monday that the academic standards are too hard for some students.

Some commission members said that the Common Core standards, designed to increase academic rigor, require children to cover material that they should study when they are older. Some members argued that the Common Core is leaving some children behind by being geared too much toward high-achieving students.

"What I'm seeing right now looks good on paper, but it is not playing out in the classroom," said Katie Lemons, a Stokes County high school teacher on the commission.

North Carolina is one of more than 40 states that adopted the Common Core standards in English language arts and math. But after a backlash largely led by conservatives, the General Assembly created the Academic Standards Review Commission this year to recommend new standards to the State Board of Education.

The 11-member commission's goal is to come up with recommendations next year for the state's public schools. At a second meeting Monday, members reviewed English language arts standards.

Jeff Isenhour, a Catawba County high school principal, was one of several commission members who relayed concerns from teachers that some material wasn't age-appropriate, particularly in the early grades. He told of a kindergarten teacher who complained about having to ask her students to identify the title and title page of books.

"From an instructional standpoint, things have to make sense for how kids learn from the time they enter the school building till they exit," he said.

Commission Co-Chair Jeannie Metcalf, a Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school board member, said Common Core unrealistically assumes every child has equal potential.

"Throw apples at me or rotten tomatoes," she said. "This doesn't mean that they're not good kids."

Commission Co-Chair Andre Peek, an IBM executive from Raleigh, said members want to make sure the standards are realistic.

"We're not going to dumb anything down," he said. "We're having some difficult conversations."

- **Affordable Care Act May Impact Retirees Returning To Work**

Adam Pridemore | NCASA

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), federal healthcare legislation drafted under the advisement of the Obama Administration and approved by Congress in 2010, may have implications for retirees who return to work in North Carolina, even if on a part-time or temporary basis. The ACA requires employers which employ 100 or more people to offer affordable coverage to 70% of eligible employees by January 1, 2015. By January 1, 2016 the ACA requires employers employing 50 or more people must offer affordable coverage to 95% of eligible employees. To meet the ACA requirements the General Assembly has created a new State Health Plan option called the High

Deductible Health Plan, which is equivalent to the lowest level of health insurance benefits under the ACA and has high deductibles, copays and co-insurance.

Under North Carolina law effective January 1, 2015 permanent part-time and full-time employees who work at least 30 hour per week for nine or more months per calendar year must be offered coverage under the North Carolina State Health Plan. Section 35.16A of the budget adopted by the General Assembly this year provides that if a retiree is hired by an employing unit (such as a school system) and is eligible for coverage under the High Deductible Health Plan, the rehired retiree is not eligible for the retiree health coverage during the time of their employment whether or not the retiree elects the High Deductible Health Plan coverage. Under North Carolina law, if a retiree works in a position in which the employer is required to pay health insurance, State Retirement will require the employer to pay for the retiree's health insurance coverage.

As an example, a very foreseeable circumstance in which this may apply would be in a situation where a teacher comes out of retirement to fill in temporarily for another teacher on maternity leave, or other retirees that decide to substitute teach. Substitutes in these situations could easily work 30 hours or more, triggering the loss of their retiree health plan. It is recommended all retirees returning to work, even on a part-time basis, be very vigilant in ensuring they work no more than 29 hours per week, as to not lose their earned retiree health insurance and forced on to the High Deductible Health Plan. Additionally, school systems that hire retirees need to be vigilant that such retirees do not work more than 29 hours per week, as to not incur the additional expense of providing health care coverage to such retirees.

- **AG wants cameras to make NC school buses safer**

Kathryn Brown | WRAL.com

North Carolina Attorney General Roy Cooper wants public school buses across the state equipped with cameras to help capture drivers violating school-bus traffic safety laws.

Cooper said Monday that the equipment - similar to what's being used at traffic lights - would take photos of the license plates of any drivers who illegally pass stopped school buses.

"Careless drivers are putting students' safety at risk when they fail to stop for school buses," Cooper said in a statement. "Adding cameras and issuing automatic citations will help stop law breakers who put students' lives and safety at risk, and it can also pay for itself."

In a letter sent last week, he asked the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force to examine the technology and hear about how it's working in other states - including Georgia, Maryland and Virginia - and then recommend the best way to implement it.

Fines paid by violators, Cooper said, would go to pay for the system.

The proposal comes weeks after several students in the Triangle and surrounding areas were seriously injured while crossing the road to get onto a bus. In each case, buses were stopped, and safety signals on the buses were activated. Another student was killed while waiting for his bus.

Monday marks the beginning of National Bus Safety Week.

As part of the campaign, the North Carolina State Highway Patrol has kicked off its annual "Operation Stop Arm" to promote traffic safety around schools, school buses and school bus stops.

Approximately 1,500 state troopers will focus on school zones, trail buses and target and ticket drivers who don't obey traffic and safety laws.

A one-day survey at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year found that 3,153 vehicles passed stopped school buses in North Carolina, more than double the number of violators in 2000.

- **Emergency Procedure Review**

Given the recent rash of bomb threats in surrounding school districts we are asking all of our school to heighten their awareness of our Emergency Procedure Guide, especially as it relates to bomb threats.

- **Retirement Reception for Trish Allen**

We hope you will be able to join us on Thursday, October 30th at Mills River Academy between 4pm and 6pm to recognize and honor Trish Allen.

- **Meetings this Week**

Monday we held our Senior Staff meeting. Monday afternoon I attended the Chamber of Commerce Board meeting. Tuesday we held a Principals and Curriculum and Instruction meeting at Mills River Academy. Tuesday afternoon I went to the bus accident. Wednesday morning I visited Clear Creek Elementary School to follow up on bus accident. Wednesday afternoon I spoke to all the second graders at Mills River Elementary School. Thursday morning I attended the United Way Board meeting. Thursday afternoon Senior Staff was provided an overview from the Technology Department regarding Goggle Apps. Thursday evening I met with the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee (SPAC) at the Central Office. Friday was an optional workday for the Traditional Calendar.

DLJ/spw

Attachments: Education Foundation School Sponsors, 10 22 2014
The NC Bus Driver Physical Performance Standards DRAFT
School Mascots Survey

c: Senior Staff
Chris Campbell
Dean Shatley
Paula Lovitt

SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP PROJECT

School	Sponsor
Apple Valley Middle	Tire Master of East Flat Rock
Atkinson Elementary	Stuller Power Solutions
Balfour Education Center	Hunter Automotive
Bruce Drysdale Elementary	First Citizens Bank
Bullington Gardens	Horizon Heating & Air
Clear Creek Elementary	Champion Comfort Experts
Dana Elementary	Legal Shield
East Henderson High	Southeastern Sports Medicine
Edneyville Elementary	PSNC Energy
Etowah Elementary	Farm Bureau (Mills River)
Flat Rock Middle	Flat Rock Farmers' Market
Fletcher Elementary	Fletcher Area Business Association
Glenn C. Marlow Elementary	Pardee Hospital
Henderson County Early College High	Chick-Fil-A
Hillandale Elementary	Morris Broadband
Hendersonville Elementary	Pardee Hospital
Hendersonville High	Boyd Chevrolet, Cadillac, Buick
Hendersonville Middle	Bank of North Carolina
Johnson Farm	Horizon Heating & Air
Mills River Elementary	Mills River Business Association
North Henderson High	Southeastern Sports Medicine
Rugby Middle	Pardee Hospital
Sugarloaf Elementary	Duke Energy
Upward Elementary	Triangle Stop Food Stores
West Henderson High	Park Ridge Health

Physical Performance Standards for School Bus Drivers



Transportation Advisory Group

A subcommittee of North Carolina Pupil Transportation Association

Physical Standards Committee Members

Eric Eaker - Chairperson

*Director of Transportation
Lincoln County Schools*

Al Miller

*Executive Director of Transportation
Cumberland County Schools*

Derek Graham

*Section Chief Transportation Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction*

Don Johnson

*Former School Bus and Traffic Safety Section Manager
North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles*

Scott Denton

*Executive Director of Transportation
Durham County Schools*

Will Thomas

*Director of Transportation
McDowell County Schools*

Purpose: Physical Performance Standards as a Requirement.

In the pages that follow you will find processes, procedures, and physical performance standards that will be part of the requirements to become a North Carolina school bus driver.

Guidelines

All school bus drivers must pass the physical performance standards test to demonstrate their physical ability to operate the school bus and to carry out the evacuation of students. Any certified school bus driver must at all times, while holding a valid school bus certification, meet the physical performance standards.

The following criteria apply to all North Carolina school bus drivers:

A. The school bus driver must meet Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations vision standards (49 C.F.R. § 391.41(10)):

- Visual Acuity- at least 20/40 for each eye and both eyes together, with or without corrective lenses
- Field of Vision- at least 70 degrees in each eye
- Color Vision- demonstrated ability to distinguish colors that pertain to driving and traffic control.

B. The school bus driver must be able, without difficulty or restrictions, to scan the roadway and mirrors for potential hazards and problems.

C. The school bus driver must be able to communicate with all passengers and give oral warnings or instructions quickly, loudly if necessary, while maintaining control of the bus.

D. The school bus driver must be able to exercise good judgment and react quickly in any adverse situation.

E. The school bus driver must be able to maintain control of both the bus and the passengers under normal and adverse circumstances.

F. The school bus driver must be able, during practice drills or an actual emergency situation, to conduct an evacuation of the bus and get the passengers to a place of safety. An evacuation may necessitate the driver's carrying or dragging passengers as well as quickly and repeatedly exiting and entering the bus.

North Carolina school bus drivers must take and pass the Physical Performance Standard Test (PPST). Physical Performance Standards are a measure of the driver's ability to fulfill the responsibilities of his or her job. We can never forget that at any time the passengers of the school bus may be children ages from three to twenty-one years of age, with a variety of special needs.

The PPST will be used to evaluate the ability of an individual to meet the physical demands of conducting an emergency evacuation of a school bus and of driving, handling, and maneuvering a school bus safely. **A driver's failure to fulfill any requirement of the PPST will result in no issuance or immediate loss of the school bus certification.**

PPST IMPLEMENTATION CRITERIA AND DATES

The PPST is used as part of the initial, renewal, or post certification process. Once a school bus driver has passed the PPST, he or she will be required to take it again every renewal and/or as requested by the school transportation representative.

The effective date for this proposal for all new school bus driver candidates and all school bus certification renewals is to be determined.

A. New Drivers

New drivers entering or participating in the school bus driver's training program will be required to take and pass the PPST. The PPST will be administered and all requirements of the PPST met prior to receiving certification. No new candidate who fails the PPST or any one of the individual standards will be allowed to complete a school bus driver class until he or she has retaken the PPST and passed all the standards. Only one retest per student will be administered for each school bus driver class for a maximum of two attempts per class.

B. Certified School Bus Drivers

A certified school bus driver, who fails any one of the required standards as part of the renewal process or because of a request by a school transportation representative, will not be allowed to drive and their school bus certification will be suspended, effective immediately. A driver will be allowed to retest a maximum of two times should they fail. The retest will be scheduled by the Driver Education Program Specialist (DEPS). All renewals conducted prior to the implementation date will not be subject to the PPST. All renewals conducted on or after the implementation date will be subject to the PPST. A renewal may be conducted a maximum of 180 days prior to the expiration of the school bus certification.

BUSES USED FOR THE PPST

The PPST should be conducted on the largest capacity (minimum capacity 66 passenger) school bus assigned to that LEA. If the school is not part of an LEA (charter, parochial, private, head start), the test must be administered on the largest bus assigned to that school.

WHO ADMINISTERS THE PPST

Only a School Bus and Traffic Safety representative (DEPS) is authorized to administer the PPST.

PPST RECORDS KEEPING

Driver Education Program Specialists will be responsible for any written documentation and PPST test forms. After the test administrator has completed and signed the PPST score sheet, he or she must make two photocopies of the document: one copy must be given to the driver and the other copy must be given to the local School System Representative. The original must be put in the driver's permanent folder at the DEPS's office.

Physical Performance Standards

STANDARD 1:

Beginning at the passenger door of the bus, the driver must walk around the school bus, as to simulate a pre-trip inspection, and return to the passenger door. The driver will then demonstrate the ability to completely ascend and descend the bus steps three times. All aspects of Standard 1 must be done within 75 seconds.

PURPOSE:

Standard 1 evaluates the ability of the driver to enter and exit the vehicle effectively. Beginning and ending their route is not the only time that drivers must ascend and descend the bus steps. They may also be required to perform this action to check for students around the bus, to operate a wheelchair lift, or to assist a child outside the bus. They will be required to perform the action multiple times when evacuating children during practice drills or in an actual emergency.

DRIVER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before starting the test, the test administrator will explain to the driver that he or she

- must walk around the bus
- must have both hands in contact with the handrail(s). However the arms must not be straight or used for support unless the driver starts to slip or fall,
- must not use his or her hands to pick up a leg,
- must not jump or skip over a step while ascending or descending,
- must turn around at the top of the steps (i.e., must not attempt to descend the steps backwards),
- must alternate feet as he or she ascends and descends the steps,
- must have only one foot on a step at any given time.

TEST PROCEDURE:

1. The test begins with the driver standing on the ground, facing the steps. The test administrator will give the driver the **“start” command**.
2. The test administrator will **activate the stopwatch** on the driver’s first movement.
3. The driver will make one full circle around the bus, returning to the entrance door. The driver will then walk up all of the steps, turn around at the top of the steps, walk down to the ground, turn around, and repeat the ascending and descending task two more times.
4. When the driver has descended the steps the third time and has both feet on the ground, the test administrator will **stop the stopwatch** and record on the test score sheet the **number of seconds** that have elapsed.
5. If 75 seconds have elapsed and the driver has not met the standard, the administrator must continue timing until the driver completes the three repetitions and must record the **number of seconds** that the driver has taken to complete the task.

Start Position instructions to the driver for the remainder of the test:

“You must have your seat adjusted so you can depress the brake pedal with your right foot to its fullest extent, both feet must be flat on the floor, your hands must be in the 10 and 2 position on the steering wheel, your seat belt must be fastened without using a seat belt extender.”

STANDARD 2:

In a properly seated position with seat belt fastened, only the driver's hands may contact the steering wheel while making a hand-over-hand turn.

Purpose:

Standard 2 ensures the bus can be steered in a hand-over-hand fluid motion without hesitation or obstruction. The standard will ensure a driver's capability of steering the bus to avoid a collision or obstacles in the roadway.

Driver Instruction:

Before starting the test, the test administrator will instruct the driver to assume the starting position and

- must depress the brake pedal with right foot to its fullest extent and then the accelerator,
- must then start the bus and turn the steering wheel one full turn to the right and return the wheel to center and then turn the steering wheel one full turn to the left and return to center,
- must demonstrate hand-over-hand turning without hesitation or obstruction by any part of his or her body.

Test Procedures:

The test administrator must be in a position to clearly see the steering wheel and that the driver, with seat adjusted, can depress both the brake and accelerator.

1. The test administrator will instruct the driver to assume the start position.
2. The test administrator will ask the driver to depress both the brake and accelerator with his or her right foot.
3. The test administrator will ask the driver to start the engine and then turn the steering wheel one complete turn to the right and back to center and then repeat by turning the steering wheel to the left.
4. The test administrator will record a pass or fail on the score sheet once the driver has turned the wheel one complete turn right and one complete turn left.
5. If the test administrator is unclear if the wheel was obstructed or there was hesitation in any way, he or she may ask the driver to repeat the motion.

STANDARD 3:

The bus driver must be able to alternate quickly between the accelerator and the service brake, 10 times within a 10 second period.

PURPOSE:

Standard 3 evaluates the driver's ability to operate the brake and accelerator effectively. In any number of situations while driving a school bus, the driver is required to quickly move his or her right foot from the accelerator to the brake and back again. A driver must repeat this action constantly during normal driving.

DRIVER INSTRUCTIONS:

Before starting the test, the test administrator will instruct the driver to assume the start position and

- must use only his or her right foot to accomplish the standard (using the left foot will constitute an automatic failure of the standard),
- must move his or her right foot from the accelerator to the service brake and back to the accelerator, repeating this 10 times within 10 seconds,
- may depress the accelerator and service brake only slightly.

TEST PROCEDURE:

The test administrator must be in a position to clearly see that each pedal is at least briefly depressed and that the required number of repetitions is done.

1. The test must start with the driver seated and secured in the driver's seat, with the right foot on the brake pedal. Once the driver is in position, the test administrator will give the driver the **"start" command**. The driver is to move his or her right foot from the brake pedal to the accelerator and back to the brake pedal.
2. The test administrator must **activate the stopwatch** when the driver first depresses the accelerator.
3. At the end of 10 repetitions (when the driver has depressed the brake pedal for the tenth time), the test administrator must **stop the stopwatch** and record the test score.
4. If 10 seconds elapse and the driver has not met the standard, the administrator must continue timing until the driver has completed the 10 repetitions and must record the time.

STANDARD 4:

In a properly seated position with seat belt fastened, a driver must be able to demonstrate that he or she can place both feet flat on the floor and with the right foot depress the brake pedal to its fullest extent for one minute.

PURPOSE:

Standard 4 evaluates the driver's ability to operate the vehicle's brake pedal effectively and to its fullest extent. In the normal operation of a school bus, the driver uses firm, continuous brake pressure frequently (passenger stops, railroad crossings, and traffic signals). The driver is always required to hold the brake pedal for one minute while performing the LAB test.

DRIVER INSTRUCTION:

Before starting the test, the test administrator will instruct the driver to assume the start position and

- depress the brake pedal with his or her right foot to its fullest extent and hold for one minute.

TEST PROCEDURE:

The test administrator must be in a position to clearly see that both feet are flat on the floor and that the brake pedal is then depressed to its fullest extent.

1. The test must start with the driver seated and secured in the driver's seat. Once the driver is in position, the test administrator will confirm that both feet are flat on the floor.
2. The test administrator will then give the driver the **"start" command**. The driver is to move his or her right foot to the brake pedal and depress the brake to its fullest extent for one minute.
3. The test administrator must **activate the stopwatch** when the driver first depresses the brake pedal.
4. At the end of one minute, the test administrator will give the driver the command to release. The test administrator must **stop the stopwatch** and record the score.
5. If the driver fails to hold the pedal down for one minute, the test administrator must record the time when the brake pedal was released.
6. If the driver depresses the brake pedal with his or her left foot or both feet, the test administrator must continue timing the test. At the end of one minute, the test administrator will give the driver the command to release. The test administrator must **stop the stopwatch** and inform the driver that he or she did not complete the standard because they used the left foot or both feet on the service brake. The test administrator will record this on the score sheet.

STANDARD 5:

Beginning in a properly seated position, the driver must release their seat belt, walk to the rear-most emergency exit door, and fully open the emergency exit door. The driver must be able to complete this test within 20 seconds.

PURPOSE:

Standard 5 evaluates the driver's ability to move freely throughout the bus and to use a secondary exit, as might be required during an emergency evacuation of the bus.

Driver Instruction:

Before starting the test, the test administrator will instruct the driver to assume the start position and

- the ignition should be off;
- must release the seat belt system when the test administrator gives the **“start” command**;
- must then stand up, walk through the interior of the bus to the rear-most exit door, and open the exit door fully. The driver should not open and swing the door violently (because it may rebound and hit him or her).

Test Procedures:

The test administrator must be positioned inside the bus to begin the standard and follow the driver to the back exit door.

1. The test administrator must confirm that the rear-most exit door is closed.
2. The test must start with the driver seated and secured in the driver's seat. Once the driver is in position, the test administrator will give the driver the **"start" command**. The driver is to release the seat belt, walk to the rear-most emergency exit door, and open the emergency door.
3. The test administrator will **activate the stopwatch** when the test administrator gives the **"start" command**.
4. The test administrator must **stop the stopwatch** when the driver has completed the required action. The administrator must record on the test score sheet the **number of seconds** that have elapsed.
5. If 20 seconds elapse and the driver has not met the standard, the administrator must continue the test until the driver has completed the required action and must record on the test score sheet the **number of seconds** the driver has taken to complete the task.

Henderson County Public Schools

School(s):	Grade Span	Mascot
Atkinson Elementary	K-5	Cougars
Bruce Drysdale Elementary	K-5	Bear Kitten
Clear Creek Elementary	K-5	Cubs
Dana Elementary	K-5	Wildcats
Edneyville Elementary	K-5	Yellow Jackets
Etowah Elementary	K-5	All Stars
Fletcher Elementary	K-5	Fox
Hendersonville Elementary	K-5	Cubcats
Hillandale Elementary	K-5	Huskies
Glenn C. Marlow Elementary	K-5	Mustangs
Mills River Elementary	K-5	Falcons
Sugarloaf Elementary	K-5	Mountain Lions
Upward Elementary	K-5	Eagles
Apple Valley Middle	6-8	Knights
Flat Rock Middle	6-8	Eagles
Hendersonville Middle	6-8	Bearcats
Rugby Middle	6-8	Raiders
East Henderson High	9-12	Eagles
Hendersonville High	9-12	Beacats
North Henderson High	9-12	Knights
West Henderson High	9-12	Falcons
Balfour Education Center	6-12	Bulldogs
Henderson County Early College	9-12	Roadrunners