



News & Trending

NEWS

SMITH ANDERSON PARTICIPATES IN NORTH CAROLINA BUSINESS COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION'S (NCBCE) ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

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In March, Smith, Anderson, Blount, Dorsett, Mitchell & Jernigan attended the North Carolina Business Committee for Education's (NCBCE) annual membership meeting. The program included presentations from key government, education and business leaders as well as a recognition of new NCBCE members.

NCBCE Chair Joe Freddoso of Cisco Systems highlighted NCBCE's accomplishments in its 20-year history of being a committee of action. Over the years, NCBCE has made tremendous contributions to education through its work on Communities in Schools, Education: Everybody's Business Coalition, School-to-Work partnerships, "adopt-a-school" projects, NC Partnership for Excellence "Total Quality in Education" partnerships, and most recently, the Teach4NC campaign to recruit teachers.

In 2004, NCBCE will focus on:

- Teacher recruitment and retention—Sustain Teach4NC.org, pilot the BellSouth/Southeast Center for Teacher Quality toolkit of resources for communities, and identify opportunities to assist with the lateral-entry program.
- Curriculum—Monitor the DPI curriculum update calendar and provide input on relevant subjects and support the CTE curriculum.
- Workforce preparedness—Partner with the NC Science, Mathematics and Technology Education Center in developing math advocacy toolkits, focus on career academies by working with DPI and the New Schools Project, and work with the New Century Scholars program.
- § Issues—Continue to analyze federal and state issues, participate in quarterly briefings with DPI senior staff, interface with the Governor's Office, and provide a resource to NCBCE members through the NCBCE web site.

Senior Assistant for Governmental Affairs Franklin Freeman shared the governor's vision for education in North Carolina. In the past three years, the governor has focused on maintaining accessibility to community college and universities, pre-K and class size reduction, recruitment and retention of excellent teachers, and reforming high schools.

Looking forward at the next legislative agenda, the governor will focus on continuing to serve the needs of 4 years olds through his More At Four Program, class size reduction efforts to include grade 3, teacher quality, and high school reform.

Dan Gerlach, the governor's senior policy advisor for Fiscal Affairs, gave NCBCCE members a detailed look at the state's budget. He outlined the budget issues the Easley administration assumed when it took office and how the state's economic status is affecting education. Gerlach highlighted some of the governor's budget recommendations and actions to ensure education remains a fiscal priority.

The program concluded with a presentation by Tony Habit, Ed.D., the executive director of the New Schools Project. The New Schools Project grew out of a need to decrease dropout rates, suspensions, retention, violence and achievement gaps and the need to increase preparedness for work and college, graduation rates, economic opportunities, and teacher/student satisfaction. With funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the New Schools Project will create smaller high schools through its High School Innovation projects.

These new schools will be school conversions or stand-alone models with 100 students per grade. The schools will be semi-autonomous and self-governing and feature an integrated curriculum that is relevant to the local economy. Key to the success of the schools will be partnerships with local businesses and educational institutions.

