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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **WNC SUPERINTENDENTS STAND UNITED IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES FOR K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION**

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(ASHEVILLE)- At the last leg of a four-stop tour of North Carolina, superintendents from across Western North Carolina stood side-by-side at a press conference this morning in support of the North Carolina Association of School Administrators' (NCASA) legislative priorities for the 2016 short session. Today's hosts were Jack Hoke, Executive Director of NCASA's core affiliate the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association and Dr. Tony Baldwin, Superintendent of Buncombe County Schools. The assembled superintendents outlined long-range goals for K-12 public education and supplementing NCASA's short-range legislative priorities. Previous press conferences were held in Wilmington, Raleigh, and Mooresville.

"I strongly believe having superintendents across western North Carolina joining our colleagues from every corner of the state sends a powerful, united message to our legislative bodies about the immediate need to refocus our attention and resources for the benefit of the 1.5-million students who depend on public education every day," said Dr. Baldwin.

The 2016 priorities called for by the superintendents include:

- Rewarding academic improvement and lifting morale of the teachers and administrators working hard to ensure student success in struggling schools by removing all schools that "meet growth" standards from the definition of, and penalties for, low-performing schools.
- Increasing compensation for all school personnel, in particular, providing all school-based administrators a salary increase which, at a minimum, mirrors the average of the teacher pay increase provided in 2016. This is especially important as N.C. principal pay ranks 50th out of 51 counting all states and Washington, D.C.
- Restoring public school funding to 2008 pre-recession levels to increase the per-student investment necessary to ensure each student has the resources and personnel needed for a high-quality education, preparing them for college and careers.
- Halting the expansion of the state's private school voucher system and any other program sending public tax dollars to private, for-profit entities not held to the same high

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accountability standards as public schools.

- Addressing N.C.'s teacher shortage by reforming teacher licensure in the state to include: (1) true reciprocity with other states, (2) reinstating an emergency teacher licensure process, (3) creating an expedited military and spouse licensure system, (4) and reducing overly burdensome and costly testing requirements that are barriers to recruitment of potential teachers trained in North Carolina.

“Over the last week, superintendents stood united urging our lawmakers and other state leaders to take the necessary steps this legislative session to move our public schools to the next level and to work with us in outlining the path of progress for all North Carolina students,” said Hoke.

The press conference included several resource materials including an overview of the *NCASA 2016 Legislative Priorities* and the recently updated *N.C. Guide to Strengthening Public Schools* outlining long-range goals for K-12 education. This guide promotes a proactive education reform plan to create a public education system that better prepares North Carolina's students for success in globally competitive jobs and in higher education. The guide contains six key goals and areas of strategic focus, which are Prepared Graduates, Assessment, Instructional Delivery, Digital Learning, Human Capital, and Funding Public Education. A copy of the NC Guide is found [HERE](#) and the handy Legislative Priorities handout is [HERE](#).

The entire press conference can be viewed [HERE](#).

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