



NORTH CAROLINA
COALITION FOR
CHARTER SCHOOLS

Your monthly charter school news & updates

Welcome to the October edition of The Coalition Connection, your go-to resource for the latest NC charter school news.

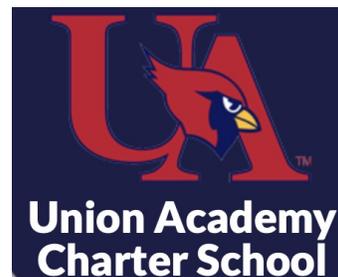
In this issue, we provide a recap of our recent Charter Forum, hosted by Union Academy. We cover new federal survey data assessing the mental health of adolescents in North Carolina--in advance of the State Board of Education's approval next month of a mental health policy. We also update you on SBE's recent Fall Work Session and the latest information on COVID funding allocations.

Thank you for being a Coalition member and allowing us to be your on-the-ground advocate. Please reach out to Executive Director Lindalyn Kakadelis at 704.231.9767 or lkakadelis@nc.chartercoalition.org with any input, ideas or questions.

Visit the Coalition's website!

Here's the recap: ***Charter Issues Forum 2020***

On Tuesday evening of this past week, Union Academy Charter School hosted a 2020 Charter Issues Forum, highlighting issues relevant to charter schools as we enter the final weeks of the 2020 election season. The virtual event was attended by more than 165 charter supporters from across the state. Coalition lobbyist Harry Kaplan, Coalition Counsel Matthew Tilley, and Coalition Executive Director Lindalyn Kakadelis spoke to charter supporters about charters' political fragility as well as the legislative and political hurdles to securing fair funding and maintaining charter autonomy. Columnist and radio talk show host Donna Martinez moderated the event.



Clearly, interest in charter issues is high: More than 300 individuals registered to attend the event. On Thursday, the Coalition reached out to all event registrants to follow up with a link to the recorded event, and to share information about voter palm cards and ways to get involved.

As a reminder, voter palm cards for each of the eight education regions in North Carolina can be found on the Coalition's [website](#). As individuals, please be sure to share these palm cards with family and friends, and post them on your social channels.

We cannot say it enough: Electing leaders and lawmakers who support charters is critical to the sustainability of the charter movement. A recent [post](#) from Dale Chu on the Fordham Institute's Flypaper blog affirms the fragility of charters in this current political moment. Summing up recent comments from Todd Ziebarth, VP at the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, Chu writes: "...Organized opposition to charters is 'wider, deeper, and more threatening than we've ever seen it.'"

If you missed the Charter Forum and would like to watch it--or if you want to share the link with others--you can access a recording [here](#) or click on the image below. John Marshall, Head of School at [Union Academy Charter School](#), launched the evening's session.

Many thanks to Union Academy for hosting such a successful event!

Watch the recording of the 2020 Charter Issues Forum

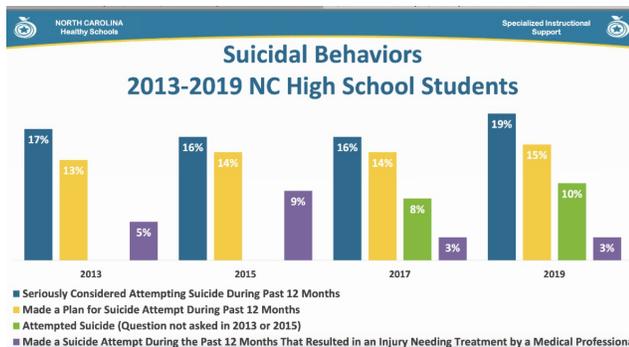


Upticks in depression, suicidal behaviors among NC adolescents SBE hears updates on NC data & draft mental health policy



New mental health statistics on adolescents in North Carolina offer a concerning snapshot on the incidence of depression and suicidal ideation/behaviors. The data, released as part of the 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey--administered by the federal Centers for Disease Control--were reviewed by State Board of Education members during SBE's Fall Work and Planning Session last week. Both state and national numbers are worrisome; data in North Carolina track closely with national statistics. Some findings from North Carolina youth (ages 14 to 18) are as follows:

- 36.3%, or more than one in three NC high school students, said they felt sad or hopeless almost every day for more than two consecutive weeks in the past 12 months.
- 19% seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months.
- 15% had made a suicide plan.
- 10% had attempted suicide.



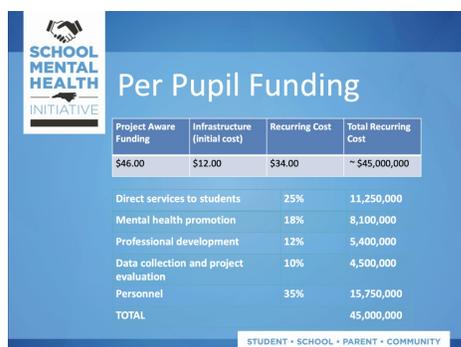
Click [here](#) to access the NC YRBS presentation, or click on the image (above right).

Nationally, 2019 numbers are as follows:

- 36.7% of high school students said they felt sad or hopeless almost every day for more than two consecutive weeks in the past 12 months.
- 18.8% seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months.
- 15.7% had made a suicide plan.
- 8.9% had attempted suicide.

Federal data highlight areas of greatest risk nationally. According to the CDC: "During 2009-2019, prevalence of suicide attempts increased overall and among female, non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, and 12th grade students." Access the 2019 CDC supplement on suicidal behaviors [here](#). Read an *EdNC* article about the NC data [here](#).

School-based mental health policy



[Senate Bill 476](#) (Session Law 2020-7) requires public school units to establish mental health policies outlining training and suicide risk referral protocols. Public school units must adopt and implement mental health plans by July 1, 2021. The State Board of Education must adopt a mental health policy by December 1, 2020.

At the October meeting, SBE members heard a presentation about the School Based Mental Health Initiative. Access that presentation [here](#) or click on the image, above left. Access the School Mental Health Response Mapping report [here](#).

A draft SBE School Based Mental Health Policy was presented for discussion. Access the draft policy [here](#). The policy, which meets requirements of SL 2020-7 and SL 2019-245, will be voted on in November.

State Board of Education Update

In addition to mental health, SBE



addressed a range of issues at its Fall Work Session last week. Access the agenda [here](#) or click on the image to the left. Freebird McKinney, SBE's Director of Legislative and Community Affairs, provided SBE with a legislative update. Access that [here](#).

Other issues included:

- **Reopening:** Elementary schools are permitted to open under Plan A. FAQs from the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), updated October 8, are available [here](#). SBE approved revisions to the Public Health toolkit, outlined in a presentation from DHHS officials; access that [here](#). Additional COVID updates are below.
- **Extra credit grants for families:** Individuals who were 2019 NC residents who have at least one child age 16 or younger will receive a check for \$335 to help with remote learning expenses. Access grant information [here](#).
- **Digital learning initiative grants:** SBE approved grant applications; access the list [here](#).
- **NC ACCESS updates:** SBE approved the NC ACCESS updated subgrant application, rubric, and timeline. Access more information [here](#).
- **Timeline for standards, assessments, and materials adoption.** SBE approved timeline revisions; access that information [here](#).
- **State-level summary of grades 1-3 accountability measures:** SBE approved the report to the NCGA; access that [here](#). Access DPI's presentation to SBE [here](#).

COVID UPDATES

K-12 COVID clusters

Susan Gale Perry, DHHS Chief Deputy Secretary, and Rebecca Planchard, Senior Policy Advisor, provided SBE with an update on K-12 COVID cases. There have been 24 total K-12 clusters and 171 K-12 cluster-associated COVID cases in North Carolina. The [DHHS COVID Dashboard](#) will soon include data on child age, race, and ethnicity. The state's case tracing system now includes questions about in-person school attendance during exposure, according to DHHS.

COVID funding overview

- Alexis Schauss, Chief Business Officer at DPI, provided SBE with an overview of COVID state and federal funds. According to Schauss, \$837.5 million in total state and federal funding has been distributed to 330 public school units, 26 nonprofits, and DPI, in 40 budget line items. Access that presentation [here](#).
- Access a summary document of COVID funding as of 9/28 [here](#).
- Access the allotment policy manual for COVID-related funding [here](#).
- Access the COVID allocation summary as of 9/25 for all public school units, itemized by PRC, [here](#).

LATEST NEWS on COVID ESSER (Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief) Funding (PRC 164)

Beginning in April, the Coalition worked at several policy levels to make sure all charter schools would receive COVID ESSER funding, whether the school received Title I funds or not. We were successful in obtaining \$2.2 million of the reserved funding allotted by the State Board of Education for charter

schools.

The 53 charter schools that did not receive any of the original funding and the 27 charter schools receiving additional funding should apply by **November 30, 2020. This is PRC 164 (Grant year 2020-21) Supplemental ESSER Funding. Please check [here](#) to see if your school is listed for these funds.** If so, you must apply for these funds. If you have any questions, contact your Regional Program Administrators:

North Central: Talbot Troy (talbot.troy@dpi.nc.gov)

Northeast: Freda Lee (freda.lee@dpi.nc.gov)

Piedmont Triad: Dr. Thomas Benson (thomas.benson@dpi.nc.gov)

Sandhills: Toni Warrick (toni.warwick@dpi.nc.gov)

Southeast: Dr. Tina Hinson (tina.hinson@dpi.nc.gov)

Southwest: Timothy Dryman (timothy.dryman@dpi.nc.gov)

Western: Dr. Melissa Nixon (melissa.nixon@dpi.nc.gov)

Northwest: James Popp (james.popp@dpi.nc.gov)

Legislative Update

The Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee met on October 6. Access the meeting agenda [here](#). Committee members heard an update on micro-credentials from Bev Perdue, founder of DigiLEARN, and Angela Quick, Vice President at RTI International. Access that presentation [here](#).



DPI officials shared a report on remote learning plans. Access that [here](#). Maureen Little, Vice President of Economic Development for the NC Community College System, provided the committee with a presentation on the annual report for the Apprenticeship NC Program. Access that [here](#).

Looking ahead ...

The NC General Assembly will convene for its Long Session at noon on January 13, 2021.

Stay connected with the Coalition!

