

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Cabarrus met for a Joint Meeting at the Cabarrus County Board of Education, 4401 Old Airport Road, Concord, North Carolina, on Monday, February 17, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

Present - Chairman: Laura Lindsey
Vice Chairman: Ian Patrick
Commissioners: Kenneth Wortman
Jeff Jones

Absent - Commissioners: Larry Pittman

Also present were Kelly Sifford, Deputy County Manager; Douglas Hall, County Attorney/General Counsel; and Ariadne Olvera, Clerk to the Board.

The following Cabarrus County Board of Education and State Legislative representatives were also present:

Cabarrus County Schools Board of Education - Pam Escobar, Melanie Freeman, Shannon Lancaster, Catherine Moore, Sam Treadaway, and Rob Walter, Chairman.

Cabarrus County Schools Staff - Dr. John Kopicki, Superintendent for Cabarrus County Schools; Michael Williams, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dustin Shoe, Chief of Staff; and Amy Lowder, Student Safety and Well Being.

State Legislative Representatives - Jonathan Almond, North Carolina House of Representative District 73; Brian Echevarria, North Carolina House of Representative District 82; and Chris Measmer, North Carolina Senator for District 34.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Rob Walter, Cabarrus County Schools Board of Education Chair, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Agenda

The Cabarrus County Schools Board of Education approved the agenda upon motion and approval by their board.

Cabarrus County Schools staff presented the organization's legislative priorities:

Recruiting and Retaining Quality Teachers

Competitive compensation is essential for North Carolina to compete in the educator labor market and ensure students have access to highly qualified teachers.

- **Significantly increase teacher compensation across all salary steps**, including reinstatement of master's pay and cost-of-living adjustments.
- **Remove barriers to experienced educators** by expanding licensure reciprocity and allowing retired teachers to return to the classroom without loss of earned benefits.

Strengthening Education Funding

Adequate and predictable funding is essential to meeting student needs, reducing reliance on costly contract services, and sustaining high-quality instructional programs.

- **Increase per-pupil funding statewide** to better align with the true cost of educating students and improve North Carolina's national standing.
- **Increase weighted and cost-based funding for Exceptional Children services** to reflect service delivery costs and support recruitment and retention of qualified EC educators and providers.

School Safety

Sustained investment in personnel and prevention measures is **essential to maintaining** safe and secure learning environments.

- **Increase state funding for School Resource Officers** to ensure every campus can maintain SRO coverage.
- **Expand school safety funding** to support staffing, training, and preventative safety measures.

Increasing Flexibility and Regulatory Reform

Greater flexibility allows districts to maximize instructional time and respond to local community and workforce needs.

- **Grant local school districts full authority over academic calendars**, including school start and end dates.

Reforming the School Accountability Model

A growth-focused and holistic accountability system more accurately reflects school impact and supports continuous improvement.

- **Support ongoing state efforts to reform the accountability model**, including the work of the State Superintendent's accountability task force.
- **Adjust the weighting of school performance grades** to better balance proficiency with student growth and additional measures of school success.

State Representatives, school staff and County Commissioners engaged in discussion throughout the presentation.

Adjourn

The Cabarrus County Board of Education Joint Legislative Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.


Ariadne Olvera, Clerk to the Board

