

July 17, 2008

Governor Mike Easley just signed into law the NC General Assembly budget for 2008-2009, which includes for state employees a raise of either 2.75% of their salary or \$1,100, whichever is higher.

Full-time teacher assistants are eligible to receive the full amount of this increase. Our legislators and DPI have confirmed that according to the North Carolina General Assembly Fiscal Research staff, there is no proration for less than 12 month employment - that is, 9, 10, or 11 month employment. Teacher assistants will be prorated if their work week is less than the hours designated as full time by their local board. Check with the human resources professional in your school system to confirm they will abide by the intent of the State's budget.

-Melinda Zarate, NCATA Legislative Chair

June 13, 2008

Friday Morning Update

the desk of Joanne Stevens

The Senate leadership and Chairs of committees worked with the senior appropriation chairs all week on their version of the budget. The rumor in the halls at the beginning of the week was that the Senate was trying to find an extra \$60 million and by the end of the week it was down to \$20 million. The Senate Chairs plan to work through the weekend in order to have a printed version of the budget for the committees by Monday afternoon. The Senate's version will be seen first in the sub committees and then to the full Finance and appropriation committee, hopefully on Tuesday of next week.

A couple of things are expected in the Senate's budget that are different from the Governor's budget and the House's budget. First the pay increases for state employees and teachers should be more in line with the House's budget. In review the House provided an average 3 percent pay raise for teachers and the greater of 2.75 percent or \$1,100 for state employees. Easley's budget had

raises for teachers of 7 percent and 1.5% for state employees with a \$1000 bonus and 5 extra vacation days. The money for Easley's employees increase would come from taxes on cigarettes and alcohol, the "sin tax".

The second large item to expect in the Senate budget that will be different from the House's budget will be the universities enrollment money of 28 to 34 million dollars. The Senate is expected to provide that money for the university system

Hopefully we will see the Senate's budget and understand where the 21 billion dollars will be allocated with clearer eyes by the middle of next week. The subcommittees will meet on Monday June 16 and the Finance committee and full appropriation committees plans to meet on Tuesday June 17.

-Joanne Stevens

June 10, 2008

House Budget Update 2008-2009

SECTION 26.19 NONCERTIFIED PERSONNEL SALARY The annual salary increase for all permanent full-time Central Office personnel shall be the greater of one thousand one hundred dollars (\$1,100) or two and seventy-five hundredths percent (2.75%) beginning July 1, 2008. Local board shall increase the rates for employees who were employed for all or part of fiscal year 2007-2008 and who continue their employment for fiscal year 2008-2009. Part-time employees shall receive a pro rata share based on the number of hours worked.

On Monday (June 2), the House began their work by reading in HB 2436 Modify Appropriations Act of 2007 and then referring it to House Finance to include the fees and taxes proposed by the House. The salary highlights in the budget include: Teachers receive an average increase of 3% (step plus \$470.00), School Administrators an average increase of 2.69% (step plus flat increase), Public School employees- Non Certified will receive an annual increase of \$1,100 or 2.75%, whichever is greater. Certified personnel (school administrators) at the

top of the salary schedule will receive a one-time bonus equal to 2.0% and teachers 1.8%. Another change to education was made at the last minute, by providing State paid teachers (only) one personal leave day without requiring the substitute pay deduction (\$50.00). An additional \$5 million dollars was added to cover the funds in the budget for this provision.

On Tuesday, the House Appropriations Committee began meeting at 11:00 AM to review the proposed budget with committee members and to take amendments. They had more than 79 amendments (44 passed 8 failed and the remaining were withdrawn or ruled ineligible).

On Wednesday, the House had the budget bill on the floor for second reading. They spent hours reviewing the entire budget and then began taking floor amendments. The House worked until 6:00 PM at which time they passed the bill on second reading. The third reading was on Thursday morning and the House bill passed Senate Education Subcommittee on Appropriations met Wednesday afternoon to give members an opportunity to talk about their appropriations bills with the committee. At this point the Education Chairs will begin to meet behind closed doors to try and develop recommendations to make to the Senate Appropriations Chairs for the education funding in the budget. One major change that will occur in the Senate education budget will be a major increase in funding for the universities, which the House did not do. It is very likely there will be substantial differences in the House and Senate education budget, which will then require some serious compromises. The Senate still plans to work on their version of the budget over the weekend and through next week, then approve it and send it back to the House in the next two weeks.