



Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools

The NC State Board of Education has identified the following as a critical budget need:

Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools - \$8,600,000 R

This funding is required to provide intensive support (needs assessment, planning, professional development and coaching) for principals and teachers in the State's lowest-achieving 5% of schools (estimated to be 118 schools) and to superintendents, local school boards, central office staff, principals, and teachers in the lowest 10% of districts (roughly 12, containing an additional 128 schools).

This funding builds on an existing NCDPI program - District & School Transformation - that has 56 FTE (40 State; 16 other federal) and served approximately 66 schools and 4 districts (including another 56 schools) before personnel were expanded with the help of Race to the Top grant funds.

This funding would add 78 positions and operating funds (especially for travel) to enable the State to serve approximately the same number of schools and districts as we have been serving over the past five years.

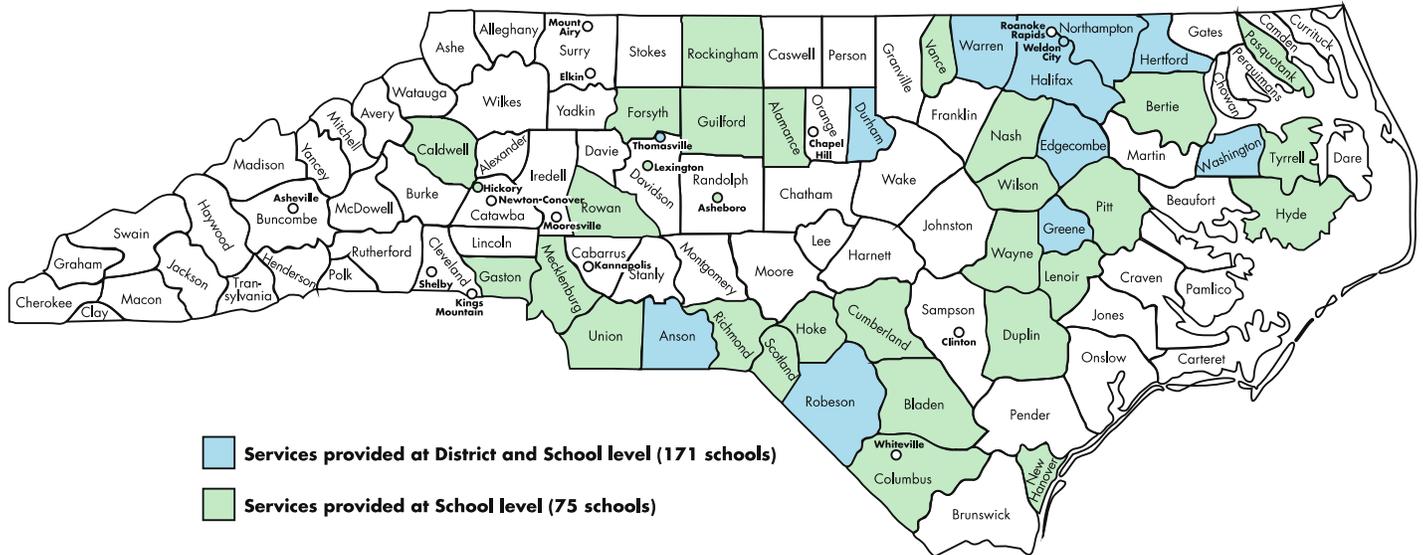
Without these funds, the State Board of Education will not be able to provide the level of support that has been demonstrated to be effective in helping lowest-achieving schools raise student achievement – services will either be lower-intensity or spread to far fewer schools and districts.

Why does it make sense to fund this?

- To get on track for graduating college- or career-ready, students in the lowest-achieving schools often need to grow academically at a rate that *exceeds expectations* – in other words, the teachers and principals will have to create a learning environment that supports *higher than average annual growth*. Since these schools have been identified because they are struggling and may have a history of poor performance, they therefore require a great deal of customized support to improve their performance. The dramatic improvement in leadership and teaching practices that can result from this support is what “turns these schools around.”
- Evidence from the past five years shows that, with intensive targeted support, even struggling schools (those in the lowest 5% of performers) can change and improve...and beat the state average for annual student growth. Here are the results of NCDPI's recent Turnaround of Lowest-Achieving Schools work:
 - On average, between 2009-10 and 2011-12, the schools supported by NCDPI's Turnaround service improved by 7.9 percentage points (as compared to State average improvement of 1.1 percentage points)!
 - Of the 118 lowest-achieving schools receiving intensive support, 88 are no longer in the bottom 5%, and 52 are no longer in the bottom 10%!
 - Of the 102 schools receiving service in 2013-14, 46 met and 25 exceeded student growth expectations – a sure sign that these schools are on the right path

Current Service Level (projected service level if State Board request is funded)

- 246 Schools receive targeted support at school building level
- 12 Districts receive targeted support at district and school levels



Projected Service Level if budget request Not Funded

- 64 Schools receive targeted support at school building level
- 4 Districts receive targeted support at district and school levels

