

# THE VOICE

**SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION**  
Professional Educators of North Carolina Newsletter

## ★ Be an Educated Voter!

Educators and their communities and schools in North Carolina are significantly impacted by those who are elected to the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, State Treasurer and State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

We encourage you to take time this season to do your homework and to learn about the candidates who are seeking your vote. PENC will not endorse candidates and will not tell you how to vote, but we do believe it is important for you to make an informed decision at the poll. To facilitate your information gathering, we put together a list of questions for the candidates mentioned above to elicit their views on a number of topics of interest to the education community. Their unedited responses have been published in the pages that follow for your review.

Our sincerest thanks to the responsive candidates who have provided you with this valuable information. We encourage you to visit their websites and consider their qualifications and goals on issues that are important to you. Most importantly, we encourage you to get out and vote, either by absentee ballot or in person, on Tuesday, November 8, 2016.

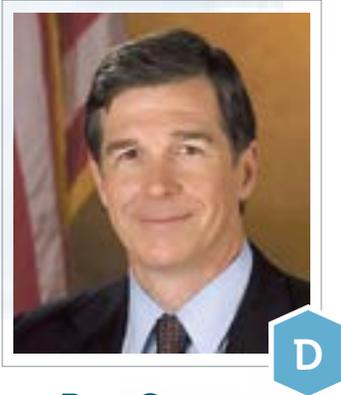
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# ★ ★ Meet the Candidates

## Gubernatorial Candidates:



Roy Cooper  
[www.roycooper.com](http://www.roycooper.com)



Pat McCrory  
[www.patmccrory.com](http://www.patmccrory.com)

## Lt. Governor Candidates:



Linda Coleman  
[www.lindafornc.com](http://www.lindafornc.com)



Dan Forest  
[www.danforest.com](http://www.danforest.com)

## State Superintendent Candidates:



June Atkinson  
[www.juneatkinsonnc.com](http://www.juneatkinsonnc.com)



Mark Johnson  
[www.remarkableschoolsnc.com](http://www.remarkableschoolsnc.com)

# Candidate Questions and Responses

## Question 1: Teacher Attrition

Over the years, many initiatives to recruit and retain teachers have been implemented with mixed results. What would you do to encourage individuals to enter the teaching profession and to keep good teachers from leaving the profession?

**R Dan Forest** | I believe we have to first start at the University level. What I hear from the Deans of Education is that parents are discouraging their children from wanting to join the teaching profession. We need to make teaching a desirable profession once again. Secondly, we need to remove many of the burdens that exist that have nothing to do with teaching. For example: the amount of testing (teaching to the test), paperwork, disciplinary issues, and bureaucratic mandates. Finally, we need to give teachers a pathway to earn more money by taking on more responsibility. For far too long teacher unions and the Department of Public Instruction feel that we should reward teachers by the length of service. The only upward mobility that teachers can attain while remaining a teacher rests solely with their years of service. We need to reward our best and brightest teachers at a rate that's faster than waiting for another year of service to increase their pay.

**D Linda Coleman** | As we grapple with our teacher attrition issues, we need to go back to the root of the challenge. We need leaders who understand that in order to attract new talent and for current educators to be successful, we must restore the cuts that have been made over the past four years and provide ample resources in the classroom.

North Carolina was once a nationwide leader in public education. We can be that North Carolina again; to bring more talented educators to our classrooms I will work with the General Assembly to restore the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program, Principal Fellows Program and Master's Pay. It is also important that each school/department has an experienced educator who can be a guide to first year educators. We can fill our classrooms with bright young adults and retain them with adequate funding by providing Master's Pay, maintaining step increases, affordable healthcare, and adequate support such as teacher assistants and curriculum facilitators.

**R Mark Johnson** | Pay is important, but not the only factor. I applaud the General Assembly for raising teacher pay, but leaders in Raleigh must do more to enhance the teaching profession. We still face over-testing, too much paperwork, lack of options for disruptive students, etc. Here are some examples of problems at the Department of Public Instruction that will not change under the leadership of the incumbent Superintendent, who has been in charge for the last 11 years.

Teachers receive only a fraction of their entitled pay until they obtain their licenses from DPI. Unfortunately, there was a backlog of over 7,000 teachers each waiting for a license from DPI as of March, with some teachers being forced to wait over six months before DPI got their licenses to them. This poor leadership at DPI hurts teachers. Even the CFO of DPI has admitted that some teachers leave North Carolina as a result.

A teacher in Guilford County told me that professional development conducted by DPI "was so boring" that she "wanted to pull [her] hair out." Failing to provide meaningful training hurts teacher morale and skillfulness. As a former teacher now serving on a local school board, I value worthwhile professional development and career advancement opportunities for teachers and principals.

Over-testing will continue under the incumbent Superintendent. She has been promising a new system of testing for years, and now those promises continue into her 2016 campaign. Have you seen results? Nope – just even more testing in the last few years! I am focused on teachers, not testing.

The incumbent Superintendent has been in charge for 11 years. She will not bring the changes necessary for the teaching profession. More of the same is not your only option. Vote for change. Vote for Mark Johnson.

### **D** June Atkinson

1. Work with the General Assembly to implement a comprehensive approach for teacher compensation consisting of the following tiers:

Tier 1 - competitive salaries for all teachers, including extra pay for development of additional teacher learning such as Master's pay. Tier 2 - extra pay for teacher leaders who work with other teachers as mentors, instructional coaches, department and grade level heads, etc.  
Tier 3 - bonuses and extra pay for teachers working in the most challenging schools.

2. Continue to use state superintendent's position to bring attention of North Carolina voters about the the importance of teachers to North Carolina's success. Recent polls show that North Carolina citizens believe that our teachers should be paid more.
3. Restore a recruitment program similar to the NC Teaching Fellows Program.
4. Support teacher exploration and preparation programs for high school students who show interest in teaching.
5. Work with business/industry and civic groups to highlight the contributions of teachers.
6. Continue to share stories about teacher impact with students. Work with teachers, administrators, and other groups to tell the good news about teachers.
7. Expand system of support for new teachers.

## Question 2: Resources for Educators

What do you view as the most important resource(s) for educators to have available during their careers to ensure success? And, how do you ensure those resources are available to all educators?

### **R** Dan Forest

I feel that the best resources should come from their teacher leaders, principals and superintendents. Those groups of people know exactly what is needed for their specific situation. We must train our principals to be impactful and insightful leaders. We need to prepare our teachers to be leaders in the classroom, so that they can mentor new and struggling teachers. We must also hold our local school boards accountable to have the proper leadership in place to run each individual district.

### **D** Linda Coleman

As a former educator and career public servant, I know our educators' needs. They need consistency in curriculum, adequate funding for student supplies, classroom support, and most importantly a sustainable fund for professional development - especially in our rural communities.

As a former three term member of the North Carolina House, I worked across the aisle to secure funding for our educators and as your next Lt. Governor, I will do the same.

We need to reprioritize funding from the Education Lottery to support our teachers and our students.

### **R** Mark Johnson

Professional development and opportunities for career growth. When done well, professional development gives teachers materials, skills, and a morale boost. When done poorly, teachers know that DPI has once again wasted their time. Also, teachers must have options for the career growth they want. In Forsyth County, we focus

on helping teachers become the leaders they want to be. Some may choose to stay in the classroom and become leaders in their subjects or of school teams. Some may choose to set out on a course to become school and district leaders. Some may choose to remain leaders in their classroom. DPI must support local districts in supporting good professional development and career growth opportunities for teachers.

**D June Atkinson** | Ongoing opportunities to grow professionally by learning from other teachers and having access to quality professional development embedded as a part of school day. Teachers must also have outstanding principals who help teachers grow and improve teaching practices. Teachers must have the necessary materials and supplies to teach each child successfully.

## Question 3: Resources for Students

**What do you view as the most important resource(s) for students to have available on their journey from kindergarten to high school to ensure success in their future? And, how would you ensure these resources are available to all students?**

**R Dan Forest** | Before children even start their journey into a classroom each year, the most important resource for them are their parents. If we do not have engaged parents in our education system, then our students will not be encouraged to further their education and enhance what they are taught in schools.

As for within the school system, I believe that connectivity to high-speed broadband will be the most important resource for our students. Over the last three years, through the State Board of Education, I have led the initiative to connect every single classroom to high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi capabilities. This initiative should be complete by next school year. When we connect all of our classrooms we will provide opportunities and resources to our students that they have never been afforded to them before. This will open up the entire world to approved quality content and high class instruction.

**D Linda Coleman** | Making sure our teachers have adequate resources: textbooks, materials, teacher assistants, and administrative support to provide a sound public education for every student. As President of the Senate, I will work to reduce K-3 class sizes and restore essential teacher assistants that we have lost in the classroom. I will also work with my colleagues to ensure funding for the North Carolina Virtual Public School, and work to support our Middle College Programs and Early College Programs. The best way to help our youth is to give them an earlier start. Expanding North Carolina's Pre-K program is a smart investment. Access to a quality Pre-K education will not only increase reading and math skills, but increase a child's lifelong opportunity: decreasing the dropout rate, teenage pregnancy, and compounded student loan debt.

**R Mark Johnson** | I taught 9th grade science at West Charlotte High School. My students were ages 13 to 17, came from poverty, and many faced unimaginable difficulties. I know from my experience that the most important resource at school for a student is the teacher. I will bring the changes necessary to support the teaching profession. More of the same is not your only option. Vote for change. Vote for Mark Johnson.

**D June Atkinson** | As research has shown, a quality teacher each year is the most important resource students must have available. Teachers must also have outstanding principals. In North Carolina, the General Assembly has the responsibility for ensuring that each child has the opportunity to a basic education; therefore, I would continue to work with General Assembly members and those groups who have an influence on legislators.

## Question 4: Teacher Effectiveness

The phrase “effective educator” has been used frequently in recent times. There is a great push to have an effective educator in every classroom. PENC members would like to know how you would measure or determine whether an educator is an “effective educator.”

**R Dan Forest** | The phrase “effective educator” has been used frequently in recent times. There is a great push to have an effective educator in every classroom. PENC members would like to know how you would measure or determine whether an educator is an “effective educator.”

Far too often the determination of an educator’s effectiveness is left up to the results of their EOGs. I would like to see us break that mold and move to a competency based model in our public schools. Teachers know best when their student is struggling, and furthermore, they know when they are ready to move on. The decision of whether or not an educator is effective should be left to the principal and school leadership, and not a bureaucratic mandate or test.

**D Linda Coleman** | We need to review what it means to be an effective teacher. A test score on an End-of-Year test does not adequately reflect the work that our educators and students put forth. We can learn more about the gaps in the education that our students receive by weighing the growth of a student across subject lines more than a test score at the end of the year. Our educators teach holistically, but are measured by a final exam. In North Carolina we must measure the effectiveness of our educators qualitatively by measuring our students’ growth.

**R Mark Johnson** | Unlike the incumbent Superintendent, I won’t sit in an office in Raleigh and think of ways to measure “effective educators.” The leaders in Raleigh need to listen to good local leaders. All learning in school occurs between the student and the teacher. We will get better results when we better support that relationship. Good district leaders can help determine the best ways to work with their teachers in their districts, and I will bring them and you into this conversation.

**D June Atkinson** | Determining the effectiveness of a teacher requires multiple measures and should not rely on one indicator. Regardless of the indicators used, the goal of determining an effective teacher should be for continuous improvement and should include teacher’s own assessment of effectiveness, principal assessment, and student growth artifacts. In some cases, peer input may be helpful.

## Question 5: School Grades

North Carolina communities have come to rely on the A-F school performance grade system that was put into place by the General Assembly in 2012. What specific recommendations do you have for ensuring the school grades accurately reflect the quality of our schools and that communities have the information needed to gauge the true quality of their school system?

**R Dan Forest** | As I have said since the A-F grade system was put in place, the grades given should only be used as a barometer not the be-all-end-all determining the success or failure of each school. All Fs are not created equally. We should take into account the growth of our schools. A school that has shown significant growth, but is an F, should be lifted up and encouraged to keep succeeding. Those schools that have consistently seen failure perpetuate for years, sometimes for decades, need to be targeted and improved.

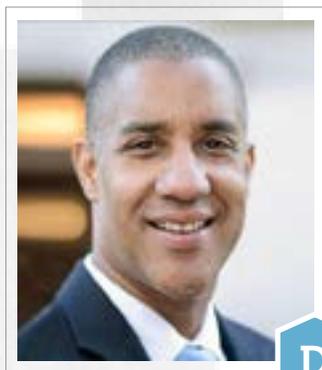
**D Linda Coleman** | We should maintain metrics of performance for our schools, not to embarrass them like the current system does but to improve upon them. By ensuring that the grading process is fair and reliable across urban and rural centers, we can then begin the work of turning our schools around. The North Carolina Constitution guarantees the right to a sound public education and I will work with my colleagues in Raleigh to make sure we provide what's promised to every child. The current administration is attacking teachers, students and communities because of systemic failures. I will lead the charge to improve the grading system by ensuring that we not only have quality teachers and teacher assistants in every classroom, but also quality principals. Together, we can restore the beacon of hope that was once North Carolina's education system.

**R Mark Johnson** | Unlike the incumbent Superintendent, I won't sit in an office in Raleigh and think of ways to measure "effective educators." The leaders in Raleigh need to listen to good local leaders. All learning in school occurs between the student and the teacher. We will get better results when we better support that relationship. Good district leaders can help determine the best ways to work with their teachers in their districts, and I will bring them and you into this conversation.

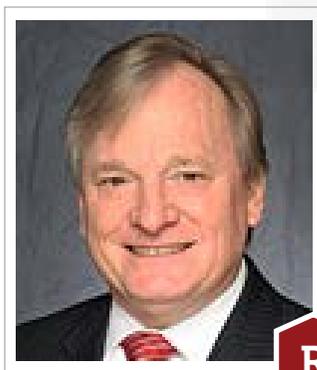
**D June Atkinson** | If the General Assembly continues to require a A-F performance grading system, the formula should be changed to give greater weight to growth rather than proficiency. The elementary and middle grade system should include more than just end-of-grade test scores, as the high school model now does. The formula should include multiple measures and not rely as much on proficiency. The problem with an A-F system is that all of us have a preconceived idea of what an A or F is, but that idea may not correlate to the components of the current A-F formula.

Not averaging the results of several indicators but giving a grade for each indicator would help the public know more about where schools are doing really well and where there needs to be improvements. It is also important to note that the grades are just a snapshot. They do not and cannot measure the long term impact of schooling.

# ★ ★ Meet the NC State Treasurer Candidates



Dan Blue III  
[www.bluefornc.com](http://www.bluefornc.com)



Dale Folwell  
[www.dalefolwell.com](http://www.dalefolwell.com)

## ★ ★ Candidate Questions and Responses

NC State Treasurer Candidates

### Question 1:

What credentials do you bring to the table that make you qualified to serve as North Carolina's State Treasurer?

**R Dale Folwell** | I began my career as a blue collar worker making a living with my hands, feet and back. I worked my way through school, achieving a B.S./Masters in Accounting from UNC-Greensboro. I am a former vice-president/registered investment advisor for Alex Brown as well as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

I served for eight years on the WS/Forsyth Board of Education as well as four terms in the N.C. House of Representatives (Speaker Pro Tempore 2011-12), with six years in the minority. I authored 29 major pieces of legislation that saved money, minds, and lives for North Carolinians.

I have a track record of attacking problems, not people. Three years ago as N.C. Assistant Secretary of Commerce, I inherited the most "broke and broken" unemployment system in the United States. With help from the General Assembly, North Carolina employers and hard-working employees, we were able to pay-off \$2.7 billion in unemployment debt and build a \$1 billion surplus in 30 months. By listening to the creative ideas of hard working state employees and others, we were able to improve processes finding opportunities to eliminate waste, fraud and abuse. This resulted in North Carolina's unemployment system becoming a national leader in debt-repayment, quality, fraud reduction and customer service.

**D Dan Blue III** | The State Treasurer deals with three critical areas: state retirement system, state health plan, and local government finances, including bond issuances.

In addition, the State Treasurer has a significant influence over education within the state as a member of the State Board of Education, member of the State Board of Community Colleges, and Chair of the North Carolina Capital Facilities Finance Agency (NCCFFA), which provides tax-exempt financing to non-profit institutions providing elementary and secondary education, private institutions of higher education and various other entities for special purpose projects serving a public interest.

I have built my career around creating consensus and producing real solutions in the private sector in each of those areas.

I have masters degrees in business and law degree from Duke University, as well as professional experience in investment banking.

I built a career in the healthcare sector, working at a multinational pharmaceutical company, working closely with pharmaceutical companies and hospital systems as an investment banker, and starting a technology company to improve access to medical information and to reduce cost. I started the Pharmaceutical Institute, a leading provider of education training for healthcare professionals. Also, I sit on the boards of WakeMed (a medical system with 870 beds serving the Triangle region) and the Duke University School of Nursing.

I have served as a bond attorney raising over \$700,000,000 for clients, including the State of North Carolina through the Treasurer's Local Government Commission, and for private universities through the US Department of Education and NCCFFA. Finally, I built a successful education company focused on adult learning for pharmaceutical professionals.

## Question 2:

### What would you do to protect NC's state retirement system for teachers and state employees?

**R Dale Folwell** | The State Retirement System has to be preserved and strengthened. It only works when the employee and legislative contributions grow at the 7.25% assumed earnings rate. It has not achieved this rate for the last 15 year period.

Earnings for the last 12 months were less than 1 percent and it paid hundreds of millions in investment fees and over \$4 billion to retirees. I would protect it by being honest about the plan's performance and, in the first thirty days, find out where the money is and how it's performing.

Also I will:

- Broadcast a "funded" ratio that better reflects current interest rates and more realistic investment returns.
- Pledge to REDUCE fees by \$100 million PER YEAR by the end of my first term.
- Reduce waste and work with the legislature to stabilize the plans.

**D Dan Blue III** | The state's retirement system for teachers and state employees plays a critical role in recruiting and retaining a quality workforce. I believe that we must maintain our defined benefit plan because of the value it offers and the stability that it provides in retirement.

Because of the efforts of the Treasurer's Office, investments by the General Assembly, and regular contributions by the employees, the retirement system is 95% funded. To protect the pension over the long run, I will continue to follow a conservative investment strategy that balances risk with performance. However, in light of the current market environment and low interest rates, I would review the assumptions that we use in managing its investment portfolio and its funding, and to find ways to reduce fees without increasing risk.

I am also committed to bring more transparency in the area of management fees because the public deserves the right to know how the state's pension is being managed.

## Question 3:

### How will you ensure the viability of the NC State Health Plan?

**R Dale Folwell** | The State Health Plan (SHP) is bankrupt and broken. From the open enrollment debacle, to the fact that new teachers have to work one day per week just to afford family coverage is absurd. I will reduce waste and fraud and use those proceeds to FREEZE family premiums for four years.

**D Dan Blue III** | Unlike the state's pension system, the health plan has serious challenges, many of which were inherited in 2011 when the General Assembly assigned management of the state health plan to the Treasurer's Office. The plan has anywhere between a \$27 billion unfunded liability--the estimated costs of the benefits promised outweigh the projected funds received from the state and employees to pay for the benefits. The plan has made strides to reduce the liability by about \$10 billion since 2011 without reducing benefits, but we will need to take a long term approach to resolving the funding issues. Eliminating fraud and abuse is a good start, but there are no clear signs that fraud and abuse are causing the funding issues. Fortunately, the unfunded liability is not a debt payable immediately; instead, it represents the costs of liabilities incurred over the collective lives of plan members.

As Treasurer, I will maintain a health plan for our teachers and state employees that is competitive with sound benefits, while continuing to reduce costs through preventative health care, member engagement, and renegotiating contracts with providers. I will seek to eliminate the unfunded liability over a reasonable time horizon (25-30 years) instead of slashing benefits or hiking premiums and copays for an immediate, but costly, fix. As a husband and father putting my family on the same health plan, I must make sure that it is a quality plan, an affordable plan, and a plan that offers a valuable benefit to its members.

## Question 4:

### What do you view as the threats to public education in the coming years?

**R Dale Folwell** | These are societal and financial threats. Specifically:  
**Societal** - The largest threat to public education is a lack of understanding that "good government" starts at home. The attitude that "these are the kids that parents sent us" has to be adjusted so that there's realistic expectation that the teacher can't be the parent too.

**Financial** - Bill Gates said it best: "The biggest concerns nationwide are the growing cost of state-funded health-care programs and public workers' health-care coverage, as well as the way they account for their pension funding. These obligations threaten the ability to invest in education."

The N.C. state pension and healthcare plans are under and unfunded. Just these two items will consume over \$4 billion dollars per year for the next 16 years if not solved. It will consume over 20 percent of the state budget per year and will divert money from education, roads, etc.

**D Dan Blue III** | The most significant threats facing public education in North Carolina are:  
1. We are losing high quality teachers, whether to retirement, other states, or abandoning the profession altogether as the result of an imbalance between investing in education and containing costs. For example, the state has eliminated the Teaching Fellows Program, an effective and efficient way to bring new teachers in to the profession, and the state has eliminated incentives for teachers to seek graduate degrees and professional development by failing to increase pay for those additional qualifications.  
2. Our school infrastructure is deteriorating. Public education in North Carolina spans the entirety of the state and that must find a better method for investing in buildings for all 100 counties.  
3. There is lack of adequate funding for textbooks and other basic supplies.

In short, I believe we have a funding gap. While I do not believe that we, as a state, can fix all problems by throwing money at them, we should recognize a funding problem when teachers are leaving North Carolina to go work in Texas or other states, or when teachers are paying out of pocket for school supplies.

Our public school system is an asset and we are well served by investing in it, including its teachers and its facilities.

## Question 5:

What impact do you anticipate having on our state over the course of your term if elected?

**R Dale Folwell** | From the time I'm sworn in until the end of my first term I will:

- Cut over \$100 million in investment fees
- Freeze family premiums for state employees; and
- Pledge not to accept outside compensation or employment while remaining loyal to plan participants and taxpayers.

These problems are estimable, probable but solvable. I know because I have and I will.

**D Dan Blue III** | The State Treasurer has tremendous challenges to protect the financial footing of the state, and it also has tremendous opportunities to move our state forward. During my term in office, I intend to both take on those challenges and to embrace the opportunities. Over the course of my term, I anticipate having an impact in these key areas:

**Retirement System** - I will defend the pension plan that has served generations of teachers and state employees in North Carolina, so that future generations of teachers and state employees can count on a strong and safe retirement. I will also use the opportunity as a \$90 billion investor to promote responsible ownership in the larger investment community and financial markets. The state should not be silent on practices that impact our well-being or the financial well-being of our citizens.

**Health Plan** - I will address the funding gap in our health plan by seeking long-term, responsible solutions to reducing the liability without sacrificing the benefits that our teachers and state employees depend upon. I will also use the opportunity as the largest health plan in North Carolina to facilitate a broader conversation with key stakeholders, including the General Assembly, providers, and members, about healthcare in North Carolina and the tools that we can use to reduce the costs and promote health.

**Local Infrastructure** - I will make sure that our local communities have the access to capital they need to build new schools, dams, roads and water treatment facilities. I will use the unique tools of the Treasurer's office to help North Carolina invest in its next 50 years of prosperity while maintaining our AAA credit rating and being a partner with communities across North Carolina.

Our next State Treasurer needs to be more than a competent manager or administrator; the office needs a leader that can bring a vision and perspective to the role. I bring critical and varied experience, built on building consensus and achieving results, from the private sector to the role.

# President's Message

by Tammy Beach, President

## Policies, Not Politics – Preparing for November and Beyond



PENC is a true non-partisan voice among education organizations. We do not endorse candidates and no PENC member dues are used to support campaigns or political agendas. It might seem that we don't engage in the important game of education politics. But, we do, and we do so in a very strategic way.

We keenly recognize that education is political and that education policy is shaped through a process that is run by politicians and lawmakers that are elected by the people – you!

Watching the Hillary and Trump campaigns at the national level may be entertaining and informative as you decide how to vote, but arguably more important are the state and local campaigns that are happening in your communities. Many are under the impression that voting for President of the United States is the most important and patriotic thing they can do. It certainly is important, but voting for your state and local officials is just as important, if not more important. These state and local elected officials are the ones who will approve laws and policies that have a direct impact on you as a citizen of North Carolina and as a North Carolina educator.

In this issue of The Voice, we want to ensure that we provide you with and direct you to resources that will allow you to make a fully informed decision about your state level officials as you prepare to head to the polls in November.

While we had limited space for Q&A with candidates, we invite you to fully investigate your candidates for state House and state Senate. Visit candidate websites to see where they stand on issues important to you and how they plan to address these issues. Attend

campaign events to meet your candidates in person. I think this goes without saying, but don't rely on campaign ads or rely on what the media says about a candidate. Make sure you have fully formulated your own opinion about the candidates, and vote based on what is important to you and your community.

To review Voter History for all current House and Senate members, visit [www.ncleg.net/Legislation/voteHistory/voteHistory.html](http://www.ncleg.net/Legislation/voteHistory/voteHistory.html)

Whoever you elect, PENC stands ready to work with them, regardless of their party affiliation. As issues arise, we will come to the table as the non-partisan voice. But, you can be sure that PENC will never come to the table empty-handed. We will come with solutions, and our solutions will always include your input and will reflect your thoughts, opinions and stories.

After the November election, be on the lookout for PENC's biennium survey of education issues. The feedback we receive from you will be used to draft our 2017-2019 legislative priorities.

***Don't forget to get out and vote!***

### Do Your Homework

Be sure to utilize the following resources to get to know your state and local candidates before casting your vote this November.

**North Carolina Voter Guide:**  
[www.ncvoterguide.org](http://www.ncvoterguide.org)

**North Carolina State Board of Education:**  
[www.ncsbe.gov](http://www.ncsbe.gov)

**North Carolina Voter Information:**  
[www.ncvoter.org](http://www.ncvoter.org)

**Ballotpedia:**  
[www.ballotpedia.org](http://www.ballotpedia.org)

# Renew Today!

by Annette Thomas, Office Manager



The PENC office is very busy processing your renewals and answering emails and questions. My goal is to make new enrollments and renewing your membership as simple as possible.

I have a few reminders for you to make things a little easier to ensure your membership information is up to date. You may be aware that we are no longer enrolling for payroll deduction. However, we do still offer the bank or credit/debit card draft option, which will allow you to split your cost of membership into six payments from November through April. If you are currently enrolled in the draft option and your credit/debit card has expired or if the card number has changed, please update it before October 31. If your bank account information has changed or if you have changed banks please update that information ASAP! The NEW deadline is October 31 to take advantage of the bank or credit/debit card draft payment option. We have added an option to sign up for draft payments online by visiting [www.pencweb.org/join-or-renew](http://www.pencweb.org/join-or-renew) and selecting the "Enroll for bank/credit card draft payments" option.

If you are an existing payroll deduction member, you are grandfathered in and can keep that payment method until it is phased out. However, if you have changed counties and were on payroll deduction with the previous county, you will need to switch payment methods to bank draft or pay-in-full for your membership. Those of you enrolled in payroll deduction will not see a deduction come out until October/November, but you are covered. If you do not see a deduction after November and know you should be on payroll deduction please contact me via email at [Annette@pencweb.org](mailto:Annette@pencweb.org).

Retiree's – please note that if you have an Associate level membership but are substituting, you do not have liability coverage. Please join or renew as a Support level member if you need liability coverage in the classroom while substitute teaching.

Please remember to update your information if you have moved or changed email addresses to ensure that you will continue to receive your mailings and email communications from the PENC office.

Each One Reach One and Partner Members – Please email me the names of colleagues that you have recruited in order to receive your discount or FREE membership.

Remember, we no longer mail member packets. Instead, you will receive a confirmation email once your membership has been processed which includes a link to a printable membership card.

As always please feel free to contact me via email at [Annette@pencweb.org](mailto:Annette@pencweb.org) or by phone at 800-542-8844 if you have any problems logging on or any questions regarding your membership.

# State Health Plan Update

by Charles Winkler, Communications Specialist, NC State Health Plan

## State Health Plan Open Enrollment Set for Oct. 1-31, 2016

The State Health Plan's Open Enrollment for 2017 benefits will be held Oct. 1-31, 2016. Now is the perfect time to start thinking about your health benefits. State Health Plan coverage options are changing for 2017, and the Plan wants to make sure you make the best choices for yourself and your family to save money and protect your health.

Watch for more details in the mail soon. In the meantime, here's a quick look at what's new for 2017!

### Actively working employees and non-Medicare retirees:

The State Health Plan will continue to offer you a choice among these three options:

- Consumer-Directed Health Plan (CDHP) 85/15
- Enhanced 80/20 Plan
- Traditional 70/30 Plan

However, this year during Open Enrollment, ALL members and eligible dependents will be enrolled into the Traditional 70/30 Plan for 2017. If you want to reduce your premium or enroll in either the Enhanced 80/20 Plan or the Consumer-Directed Health Plan 85/15, YOU MUST TAKE ACTION DURING OPEN ENROLLMENT.

Each health plan option will offer wellness premium credits to reduce your monthly premiums. Wellness premium credits include the opportunity to:

- Attest during Open Enrollment in eEnroll to the subscriber being tobacco free, or will enroll in QuitlineNC
- Choose or confirm a Primary Care Provider for yourself and all covered dependents
- As a subscriber, complete a confidential online Health Assessment

If you take your Health Assessment online between May 1 and October 15, 2016, not only will it count toward your wellness premium credit for 2017, but you also will be entered into a weekly drawing beginning in September for a \$250 Amazon gift card. One lucky grand prize winner will receive an Apple Watch! To access the Health Assessment, visit the Plan's website at [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org) and click Personal Health Portal.

This year's changes include:

- If you choose to stay in the Traditional 70/30 Plan, in order to receive coverage without paying the employee premium, you must attest that you are either tobacco-free or will enroll in the QuitlineNC tobacco-cessation program. (This does not apply to Retirees).
- Under both the Traditional 70/30 Plan and the Enhanced 80/20 Plan, there are changes to the annual deductible, out-of-pocket maximum and various copays.
- Beginning January 1, 2017, CVS Caremark will be the pharmacy benefit manager for all health plan options.

Watch your mail for information on member outreach meetings statewide as well as Telephone Town Hall meetings, all starting in September.

## Medicare retirees:

Beginning January 1, 2017, the State Health Plan will no longer offer Humana Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Plans. However, it will continue to offer the UnitedHealthcare (UHC) Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Plans and the Traditional 70/30 Plan.

If you are currently enrolled in a Humana Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Plan, for 2017 you will be automatically enrolled in the UHC Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Base Plan unless you choose another option during Open Enrollment.

Your State Health Plan coverage options for 2017 include:

- UHC Group Medicare Advantage Base (PPO) Plan: This option is premium-free for retiree coverage – although you do continue to pay premiums for Medicare Part A (if required) and Medicare Part B. Premiums also apply to other family members.
- UHC Group Medicare Advantage Enhanced (PPO) Plan: This option is available for an additional premium.
- Traditional 70/30 Plan: This plan is administered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (BCBSNC). Coverage for retirees under this option is premium-free, although premiums apply to other family members.

Under the UHC Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) Plans, you can use any Medicare-participating provider who accepts the carrier's Medicare Advantage Plan, accepts Medicare assignment and there is no distinction between in-network and out-of-network benefits. You should still be able to continue using your current providers if you choose.

Need help deciding which plan works best for you and your family? We've got you covered!

- The State Health Plan will be holding Medicare Primary informational outreach events at various locations this fall to tell you about your 2017 health plan options and review changes to help you make the best choice for 2017. An invitation and meeting schedule will be mailed to your home in August, and also posted on the Plan's website, [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org).
- Participate in a Telephone Town Hall meeting. Meetings will be held in mid-September. Watch your mail for details and how to reserve your spot at [www.shpnc.org](http://www.shpnc.org).
- Be on the lookout for your 2017 Open Enrollment Decision Guide in September, which will include a listing of the tools and resources available to help you choose the right plan for you.

All members are encouraged to watch their mail for more details, and stay engaged with the State Health Plan in 2016 and beyond. The Member Focus e-newsletter keeps members up-to-date on pharmacy and health benefits and provides tips on how to stay healthy, save money, prepare healthy recipes and more. [Click here to subscribe.](#)

# PROPS!

## **Peter Bobbe** - Yancey County Teacher of the Year



Peter Bobbe was chosen as 2016 Teacher of the Year for Yancey County Schools. A third generation teacher, Mr. Bobbe earned his B.A. in English Literature from Swarthmore College and his MS Ed. from the University of Pennsylvania. He began his teaching career in 1984 at Westtown School, a Quaker school near Philadelphia. Later, Peter taught English in grades 7-12 at public schools in Pennsylvania and Minnesota. Peter has been teaching at Mountain Heritage High School in beautiful Yancey County since 1992 and is an adjunct instructor at Mars Hill University.

For Mr. Bobbe, teaching is about connections: connecting students to their world, their future, and their potential. He believes that an open-minded, determined, and challenging search for truth by both student and teacher is the heart of a dynamic classroom and, for him, the key to a fulfilling career.

In his spare time, he enjoys travel, hiking, cooking, and reading. He and his wife Dorothy have three children.

## **Alisha Washington** - North Harnett Primary School Teacher of the Year



Alisha Washington was born and raised in North Carolina. She graduated from Harnett Central High School in 2006 and was then accepted into Methodist University in Fayetteville, NC. She graduated from Methodist University in 2010 with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education.

She aspires to inspire others. She states, "I believe that teaching isn't just a job - it's a gift. We all have gifts that God gives us, and it's up to us to use them to the best of our abilities."

Ms. Washington first began teaching at Anderson Creek Primary School where she worked for 3 years. She later decided to go back to school to get her Master's Degree in Education at Campbell University where she graduated in 2014. She now teaches Second Grade Dual Immersion at North Harnett Primary School. Alisha works hard to give her students the best education possible.

The faculty and staff at North Harnett Primary School voted Ms. Washington Teacher of the Year for 2016-2017. Alisha plans to continue working with children and inspiring them to grow. She says, "I want people to see me, and be inspired to be the best possible version of themselves. Success isn't just about accomplishments; it's also about how the things you do in your own life, how you motivate and inspire others to do something motivating and inspiring in their lives."

# National Board Scholarship Recipients

## Scott Moore



Mr. Moore was a recipient of one of PENC's National Board Scholarships for 2016. He has been teaching for twelve years. He currently teaches social studies at Ben L. Smith High School in Greensboro. Scott earned his Bachelor's degree in Social Science Education from Elon University in 2004. He then went on to earn a Masters of Science History from North Carolina A&T in 2013. He resides in Greensboro with his wife, an elementary school teacher, son, Haden, daughter, Elizabeth and they are expecting a baby this November.

## Pamela Hyatt



Mrs. Hyatt graduated from North Carolina State University with B.S. in Mechanical Engineering in 1987. After working in the manufacturing industry, she left public work to be a stay home mom in 1991. Fourteen years later, in 2005, she was fortunate enough to land a position as a Teacher's Assistant. Convinced that she was called to teach, she completed the Teacher Licensure from UNC-Charlotte in 2007 and completed her Master of Arts in Teaching Elementary Education in 2010. She taught second grade students for four years, and began her sixth year teaching fourth graders this fall at Locust Elementary School. In 2015, she was awarded Elementary Math Teacher of the Year for Stanly County. She loves teaching and feels very blessed to spend every day with children. She agrees with Lady Bird Johnson, "Children are likely to live up to what you believe of them."

## Nonya Brown Chesney



Nonya Brown Chesney has been teaching for 16 years. She received her Bachelors in Psychology from St. Andrews Presbyterian college, a Masters in Education from Fayetteville State University and her Library Science add on licensure from Eastern Carolina University. She is licensed in Reading K-12, Media Coordinator K-12 and English 6-12. She currently works for Moore county schools teaching a reading intervention class at Southern Middle School. She is married with 3 children and 2 grandchildren. Mrs. Chesney lives in Sanford, loves to read and is a horror movie buff.

***Congratulations! Keep up the great work.***

**Do you or a PENC member you know deserve Props?  
Email us at [communications@pencweb.org](mailto:communications@pencweb.org).**

We want to celebrate your accomplishments with you. Don't forget to include a color photo, name, school name and email address of the person you want to recognize.

# MARK YOUR

# CALENDAR

## ★ ★ Office Closings

- November 11, 2016 (Veteran's Day)
- November 23-25, 2016 (Thanksgiving)
- December 20, 2016 – January 2, 2017 (Winter Break)

## Professional Development Opportunities

### Workshops

#### National Board Workshops

We will be offering numerous FREE National Board Workshops for both initial certification and renewal throughout this membership year. The tentative schedule for 2016-17 National

Board workshops is below. Registration will open 1-2 months prior to the workshop date.

- November 19, 2016 - Wayne County
- December 10, 2016 - Crain's Creek Middle School, Moore County
- February 18, 2017 - Wake County
- March 18, 2017 - East Rutherford Middle School, Rutherford County
- April 8, 2017 - Wake County
- April 29, 2017 - Alamance-Burlington

### **HELPS Literacy Workshops**

The Helping Early Literacy with Practice Strategies (HELPS) Program is an easy-to-use reading program that has been demonstrated in numerous, published research studies to improve students' fluency and comprehension. HELPS can be implemented one-on-one or in small groups, and is shown to be effective when used for only 10 minutes per day, three times per week. To learn more about HELPS please visit [www.helpsprogram.org](http://www.helpsprogram.org). Registration will open 1-2 months prior to the workshop date.

**HELPS One on One** - February 11, 2017 - Eastern NC

**HELPS Small Group** - April 1, 2017 - Piedmont Region

### **Increasing Student Engagement with Reading in the Home and at School**

Learn how to empower families to effectively improve their children's literacy skills with fun, research-supported, and easy-to-use activities. The activities can be used by teachers, as well as by parents in the home. They are designed for children from birth to 6th grade, to support the development of strong reading skills.

November 5, 2016 - Durham County

Please check [www.pencweb.org/workshops](http://www.pencweb.org/workshops) for details, schedules and registration.

## **Scholarships & Grants**

- **NCCAT Subs on Us Grants:** PENC now offers grants to cover the cost of a substitute teacher for up to five school days while members attend a program at NCCAT.
- **New Teacher Grants:** PENC awards up to sixteen \$250 grants for members in their first three years of practice who demonstrate a need for instructional supplies that will have a direct impact on student learning.
- **School Leadership Scholarship:** PENC offers one \$1,000 scholarship to a PENC educator level member who is pursuing their Masters degree in School Administration.
- **Professional Development Scholarships:** PENC offers four scholarships of up to \$250 each to members who plan to pursue professional development opportunities.
- **National Board Scholarships:** PENC offers two scholarships of \$500 each to members who are pursuing their initial National Board Certification.
- **Scholarships for Children of PENC Members:** PENC offers up to four scholarships of \$500 to applicants who graduate from a high school or GED program, and are enrolled as a full-time college student by the fall semester of the calendar year in which they earn the scholarship.

Scholarship and grant applications will open this September and deadline information can be found on our website at [www.pencweb.org/scholarships-and-grants](http://www.pencweb.org/scholarships-and-grants).

# FIND YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE!

Benefits made available by:



PENC has now partnered with Association Member Benefits Advisors (AMBA) to give members exclusive access to a variety of great discounts. Check out the newest vacation and travel benefits available to you through AMBA!

- Rental car discounts: Through major brands like Avis, Budget and Hertz
- Orlando Vacations: Exclusive pricing on Orlando area hotels, theme parks, and attractions!
- Cruise and Vacation Benefits: Worldwide escorted tour and cruise discounts, plus rewards back
- AMBA Travel Perx: Even more international cruise and vacation discounts!
- Road Scholar: The leader in educational travel. First time travelers get \$200 towards international trips!
- Restaurant.com dining discount program



To find out more about these and other benefits, visit  
[myAMBAbenefits.info/association/PENC](http://myAMBAbenefits.info/association/PENC)

# ★ ★ Young Artists Competition

The winners of PENC's 10th Annual Young Artists Competition have been chosen. Their artwork will be displayed at the PENC office in Raleigh and will appear in future publications. A North Carolina art teacher submitted each piece of visual art on behalf of a student. PENC received submissions from students of all ages and from all regions of the state. The nine winning artists received a monetary award and a certificate of achievement from PENC. Additionally, each winner and their art teacher were recognized at the PENC Executive Board meeting on September 24 in Raleigh.

PENC is committed to recognizing the hard work and dedication of North Carolina's visual art educators and students. We look forward to continuing the Young Artists Competition in years to come!

## Elementary School



Hayley Hartley

### Tess Caron

Second Grade (Brunswick County)  
Jessie Mae Monroe Elementary School  
Theresa Reiter – Art Teacher

### Hayley Hartley

Fifth Grade (Caldwell County)  
Sawmills Elementary School  
Brad Wright – Art Teacher

### Sydney Strader

Fifth Grade (Rockingham County)  
Lincoln Elementary School  
Donna Moore – Art Teacher



Sydney Strader

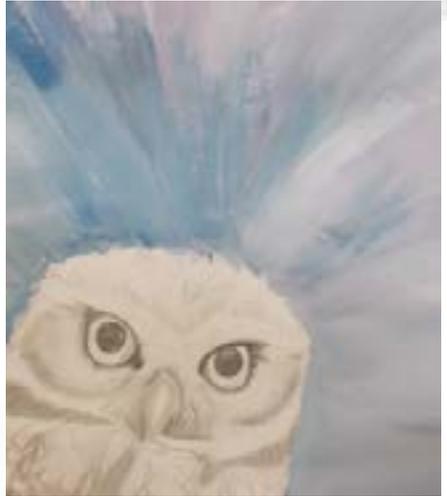


Tess Caron

# Middle School

## Jackie Paniagua

Eighth Grade (Wayne County)  
Mt. Olive Middle School  
Karen Helms – Art Teacher



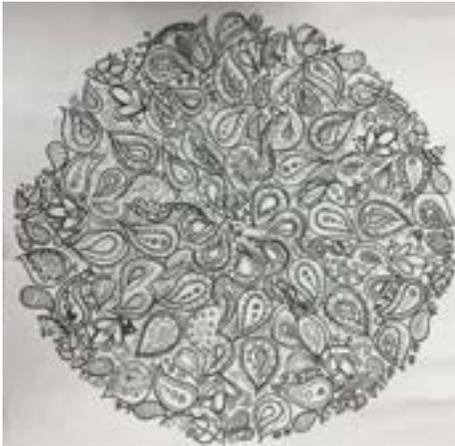
Jackie Paniagua

## Daniella Calderon Lacayo

Eighth Grade (Forsyth County)  
Clemmons Middle School  
Katherine Adams Howard – Art Teacher

## Makaiya Davis

Eighth Grade (Dare County)  
First Flight Middle School  
Jennifer Stewart – Art Teacher



Daniella Calderon Lacayo



Makaiya Davis

# Honorable Mentions

Sydney Hodges, Third Grade at Lincoln Elementary School, Donna Moore – Art Teacher  
Raquel Bolin, Eighth Grade at Harris Road Middle School, Kerrilou Carpenter – Art Teacher  
Mallory Pote, Eleventh Grade at Athens Drive High School, Thomas Volkman – Art Teacher

## High School

### William Wagner

Eleventh Grade (New Hanover County)  
Longleaf School of the Arts  
Grace Franklin – Art Teacher

### Natalie Wong

Nineth Grade (Wake County)  
Longleaf School of the Arts  
Grace Franklin – Art Teacher

### Haewon Song

Twelfth Grade (Wake County)  
Eugene Ashley High School  
Angela Hewett – Art Teacher



William Wagner



Natalie Wong



Haewon Song



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Would you and your fellow staff members be interested in having a PENC representative visit your school? Email Alex at alex@pencweb.org to set up a visit.