

Mecklenburg County

2018 Draft Legislative Agenda

Support Continued Efforts to Eliminate Pre-K Waiting List and Increase Statewide Childcare Subsidy Market Rate for ages 3-5	
BACKGROUND	<p>Legislation passed during the 2018 long session provided advancement toward elimination of Pre-K waiting lists statewide. The County received funding for 174 new slots in FY 2018 and will receive funding for an additional 234 slots in FY 2019. The state budgets \$5400 annually per slot versus Mecklenburg's annual reimbursement of \$7710.</p> <p>Child care market rate adjustments for ages 0-5 have been implemented in Tier 1 and 2 counties. Tier 3 counties only received a market rate adjustment for ages 0 – 2.</p>
OBJECTIVE	Support legislation and regulations to fully fund the elimination of Pre-K waiting lists statewide and pursue a subsidy market rate adjustment for ages 3-5 in Tier 3 counties.

Support Increasing Magistrates in North Mecklenburg	
BACKGROUND	<p>34 magistrates currently provide legal and civil services for all Mecklenburg law enforcement agencies and the County's one million residents. Two primary issues prompt the need for additional magistrates - population increase and safe access of services for domestic violence victims. The statewide average for services is approx. one magistrate for every 15,000 people. In Mecklenburg the current ratio is almost one magistrate for every 31,000 people.</p> <p>The lack of coverage in the northern part of the county creates safety and service issues for citizens and law enforcement. Specifically, victims of domestic violence need safer options for 24/7 access to pursue protection measures.</p> <p>5 additional magistrates are needed. Mecklenburg County has committed to funding one and the northern towns have committed to also funding half the cost of one position. Addressing the need for additional magistrates is a collaborative effort that includes several surrounding towns. The estimated cost per magistrate including benefits and equipment is \$67,000.</p>
OBJECTIVE	Secure funding for three additional magistrates to enable safer and more adequate service in the northern portion of the county.

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Support Clarification and Implementation of Raise the Age Legislation	
BACKGROUND	During the 2017 legislative session, lawmakers raised the juvenile age of prosecution for nonviolent crimes from age 16 to age 18. Additional provisions are needed to clarify the transfer process back to juvenile justice oversight for juveniles currently in the adult system and operational costs related to required ten-day hearings for juveniles in custody.
OBJECTIVE	Support efforts to provide resources to fully implement the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Act.

Support Increasing Public Education Teacher Pay	
BACKGROUND	Recruitment and retention of highly qualified educators continues to be a critical priority. North Carolina currently ranks 35 th in teacher pay. Mecklenburg County offers a supplement to teachers however, primary funding comes from the state budget.
OBJECTIVE	Support Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' efforts to increase state funded pay increases for public school teachers, teacher assistants, principals, assistant principals and non-instructional staff.

Support HB866/SB542 School Capital Bond	
BACKGROUND	The Public School Bond Act would place a \$1.9 billion school construction bond on the ballot in November 2018. The last statewide bond approved in 2016 did not provide any funds for school construction. Counties urgently need a bond to address over \$8.1 billion in needs for new facilities and renovations at public schools throughout North Carolina. It is estimated that CMS would receive over \$100 million from the bond.
OBJECTIVE	Support enabling legislation for a school capital bond.