

Office of the Majority Leader
North Carolina
House of Representatives

2301 Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601-1096
(919) 733-2962 – Paul.Stam@ncleg.net

Representative
Paul Stam



NEWS RELEASE

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(As revised)

General Assembly's Actual Public Education K-12 Budget Compared with Governor Bev Perdue's Proposal for 2011-2012

Raleigh -- Governor Perdue has criticized the state budget for "extreme cuts" to public education. She insists that a ¼ percent regressive sales tax increase (a 16% increase in the state's share) was and is necessary to avoid dire consequences to the public schools. The ink was not even dry on the state budget before she denounced it as destroying and devastating public education.

However, Governor Perdue's proposed budget for K-12 public education was only about \$15 million more than the 2011-12 budget the legislature actually adopted. Let's examine the facts:

There is less than 1 percent difference between the direct appropriations for K-12 public education budget than the Governor proposed. The nominal difference is 1.43 percent directly appropriated in the ratified budget. But after taking into account that the More at Four Program was shifted to the Department of Health and Human Services (\$65,011,651 was taken from the Department of Public Instruction and used by the .Health and Human Services) for prekindergarten programs the adjusted difference is 0.57 percent.

But another adjustment needs to be made: The General Assembly provided \$28,261,830 more to counties in lottery money for a final difference of \$14,947,374. This is 0.19 percent out of a total appropriation of \$7,707,586,791 for the Governor and \$7,692,639,417 for the General Assembly.

In providing a balanced budget during an extraordinary difficult economy, the Assembly provided only about \$15 million less than the Governor even requested. That is less than a rounding error. But the Governor wanted to raise \$850 million in new taxes to cover this \$15 million difference.

The Republican leadership in the General Assembly also enacted a number of other notable legislative accomplishments for education in 2011.

1. Removed the cap on charter schools and provided for enhanced enrollment growth.
2. Reduced End of Grade testing, leaving only tests required by federal law while using true assessments of our schools to measure student achievement with ACT tests in 8th, 10th and 11th grades. These are based on national norms.
3. Teachers were provided liability insurance by state government at no expense to them. This can save them between \$120-\$400 a year.

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