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**North Carolina's Innovative Secondary Schools
Show Continued Progress in Reducing Dropout Numbers**

37 NCNSP-affiliated schools had no dropouts; no 9th graders dropped out from 78 schools

North Carolina's growing number of innovative secondary schools continues to demonstrate strong results by ensuring that students want to stay in school.

The latest dropout data released this month by the State Board of Education show that schools developed in partnerships with the NC New Schools Project lost comparatively few students last school year. More than a third of the 106 schools affiliated with NCNSP had no dropouts from any grade, and nearly three quarters of the schools had no dropouts from 9th grade, when students are most susceptible to quitting school.

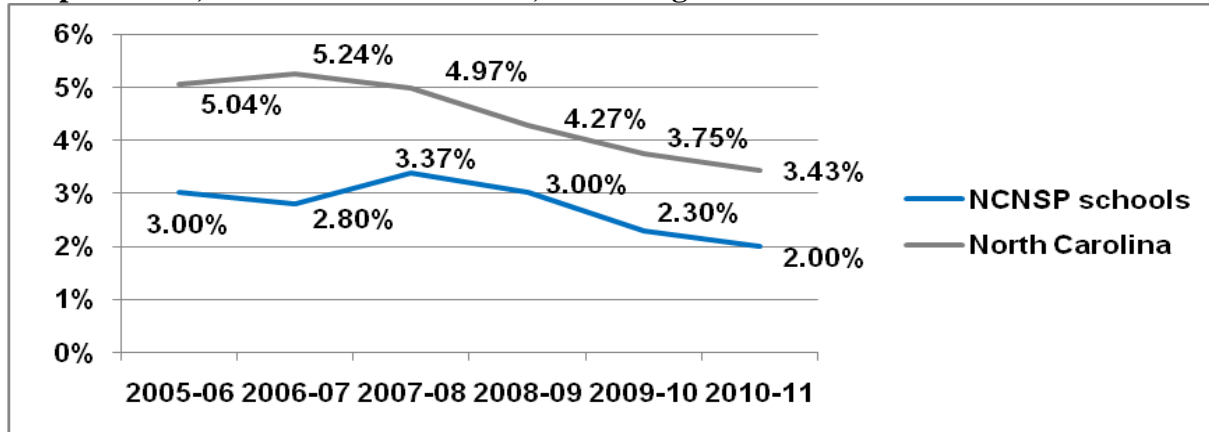
Key findings in the state data for 2010-2011 include:

- 37 NCNSP-affiliated schools lost no students to dropping out (*see attached list*)
- 73 of the schools lost no more than two students as dropouts
- 78 schools lost no students from 9th grade
- The 106 schools had a combined dropout rate of 2 percent, compared to 3.43 percent for the state as a whole.

The annual dropout rate measures the percentage of students who quit school in a given year. Student attrition is also measured by the graduation rate, which tracks students from 9th grade to graduation four years later. While that "cohort graduation rate" is considered a more comprehensive indicator of schools' performance in keeping students in school to completion, the annual dropout rate does provide an index for comparison among schools and over time.

"Students drop out for many reasons, some of which are very challenging for schools to address," said Tony Habit, president of the NC New Schools Project. "But these numbers show that schools that really engage students with relevant instruction and supportive relationships are key to dropout prevention. Students who want to be in school and see a reason for being there don't quit. They stay."

Dropout rates, 2005-2006 to 2010-2011, all NC high schools and NCNSP-affiliated schools



The state's 71 early college high schools in 2010-11, representing most of the 106 innovative high schools, had a combined dropout rate of just 0.54 percent, with 32 of the schools losing no students as dropouts. With a combined enrollment of 12,241 students, early colleges last year lost just 66 students to dropping out.

Nine STEM-focused schools that were developed in 2007 as turnaround strategies for low-performing high schools, also showed strong results. Three of the nine schools had no dropouts, and four others had lost no more than three students. Together, the nine schools had a combined dropout rate of 1.6 percent.

The overall NCNSP dropout rate includes two dozen "redesigned" schools that the organization helped develop but was no longer supporting in 2010-2011 with coaches for teachers and principals and other such services as professional development. The combined dropout rate for those schools, most of which were created by subdividing large, comprehensive campuses into smaller schools, was about 4.2 percent.

The North Carolina New Schools Project is a statewide public-private partnership that sparks sustainable innovation in North Carolina secondary schools. Its vision is to ensure every student graduates ready for college, careers and life. The North Carolina New Schools Project partners with school districts, businesses and higher education to link innovation in education to the emerging economy.

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NCNSP-affiliated schools with no dropouts in 2010-2011

Anson County Early College High School
Anson County New Technology High School
Cabarrus/Kannapolis Early College High School
Newton-Conover Health Science High School (The Newton School)
Tri-County Early College High School
Early College EAST (Eastern Applied Science Technology High School)
Cross Creek Early College High School
Howard Health and Life Sciences High School
Davidson Early College High School
Josephine Dobbs Clement Early College High School
Southern School of Engineering
Hillside New Technology High School
Early College of Forsyth
Granville Early College High School
Greene Early College High School
Middle College at Bennett
Early/Middle College at NC A&T State University
Roanoke Valley Early College High School
Henderson County Early College High School
Hertford County Early College High School
SandHoke Early College High School
Iredell-Statesville Visual and Performing Arts Early College High School
Blue Ridge Early College High School
Jackson County Early College High School
Johnston County Early College Academy
Madison Early College High School

Mayland Early College High School
Nash-Rocky Mount Early College High School
Isaac Bear Early College High School
Wilmington Early College High School
Pender Early College High School
Rutherford Early College High School
Stokes Early College High School
Surry Early College High School of Design
Wake Early College of Health Sciences
Wayne Early / Middle College High School
Wilkes Early College High School