



# ADVOCATING FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

## KEY MESSAGES

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The following talking points have been created using the results of both 2013 and 2015 surveys of North Carolina voters. They can and should be supplemented with local examples of student success and parent involvement that demonstrate the quality of the educational experience and the student outcomes that give parents confidence that public schools are the best choice for their children.

### ➔ **Our local public schools are the best way to prepare each child for life.**

- Our local schools come with a network of professional supports and community accountability to make sure each child gets the instruction and attention he or she needs to succeed in school and life.
- Our local public schools invest in committed and well-trained teachers who know how to help each child excel at every level.
- The diversity in our local schools provides the variety of experiences that are important for success in life—different people, cultures, sports, and extracurricular activities. This variety creates a bigger community and helps children succeed in the real world.
- Every day miracles happen in our local schools—these transforming moments help each child grow into their potential and prepares them for success in college, career and life.
- We are improving local schools with new instruction and interaction that goes beyond standards and rote learning to help teachers create well-rounded students who are prepared for life.

### ➔ **Parents, teachers, administrators and staff in our community partner to provide a complete education for each student.**

- Parents make the greatest difference in each child's life—teachers and staff in our community work with parents to help make sure their child fulfills his or her potential.
- Our goal is to make sure each child is well-rounded, self-sufficient and prepared for success in college, career and life.
- Our parents are welcomed, active and essential to providing a complete education for each child.
- Our schools are a personal growth experience for parents and children that is made possible by smart and compassionate people working together to help each child reach their full potential.

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### ➔ **Our community works together to make sure every public school prepares each child for life.**

- Our schools challenge each child to progress to their next level of potential through dedicated teachers and a supportive school culture that prepares each child for college, career and life.
- Our parents care deeply about their children, their progress and our community schools.
- Each day, we see incredible progress from our students, and are thrilled to help parents grow their children academically and emotionally.
- Though some children and families have unique needs—we work together to help them succeed without holding back the success of others.
- Parents and communities have a strong voice in making school improvements—we expect that voice to be loud and constructive until each child gets what he or she needs to excel and be prepared for life.
- We can and should demand change when change is needed. This only strengthens our commitment to local schools that meet the needs of each child and family.

### ➔ **Providing each child with a quality public education depends on each child having a quality public school teacher.**

- Helping teachers to be the best teachers will ensure each of our children are fully prepared for life.
- We need to increase teacher pay to attract, develop and retain the best teachers for our children.
- Cutting funding for effective teacher development effectively cuts the educational development of our children—leaving them unprepared for life.
- Teachers need instructional assistants in the classroom so classwork can continue as a teacher provides more personalized instruction to students who either need help or want to go to the next level.
- If we want teachers to be accountable for better student outcomes, we need to provide the professional development and support that helps them provide each student with the instruction he or she needs to succeed.
- Mentoring programs, continuing education and professional development are critical to making sure each child has a great teacher.

### ➔ **Public education is a valuable resource—we need additional support from the state in order to continue to provide a complete education to each child.**

- We're committed to providing a complete education to each child, and every year it gets harder with funding cuts, underpaid teachers, cuts in instructional assistants and more standardized testing. It's time for the state to better support our local schools so we can continue to challenge each child and move him or her to the next level.
- We'll never give up on your child, but we need to make sure the state government doesn't either.

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### ➔ **Funding public education is necessary to ensure each child gets the instruction and attention he or she needs to be fully prepared for success in life.**

- Cutting funding will place too much pressure on local teachers and schools, reducing education to the basics when we know that children need much more to reach their full potential.
- Cutting funding will bleed life from our local public schools, reduce diversity, divide communities and force cutbacks in enhanced instruction that provides each and every child with the education necessary for success in life.
- North Carolina can't afford merely adequate public education; the future of our children and the state depends on consistent support for preparing each and every child for success in school, career, community and life.

### ➔ **Public schools are accountable to you and we should expect the same from any charter or private school that receives taxpayer funding.**

- Public schools are accountable for creating, tracking and delivering education outcomes for your child—accountability that isn't required of private schools, even when they receive taxpayer funding through vouchers.
- Charter schools are run at the expense of taxpayers and we need to make sure they are fair and accountable all the way from student applications through their progress and outcomes. Consistency and quality are important ingredients in the complete education each child needs.
- Charter schools should not manipulate who is eligible to enroll, nor should they move struggling students back to local public schools based on deadlines for state testing or other measures of performance. Students' progress and well-being are the priority.

### ➔ **Vouchers will create chaos, an unaccountable mess and poor education outcomes.**

- Education Savings Accounts, Opportunity Scholarships or whatever anyone calls vouchers are just nice names for giving taxpayer money to private schools. Don't be misled—these voucher programs put public school money into private schools.
- Vouchers will create false choices and closed doors instead of opportunity. Vouchers don't provide enough money to attend the top private schools. Private schools in the middle will pick only the best students. Most families will only be able to afford low-quality private schools that will take anyone and have no accountability for providing quality teachers and preparing children for life.
- Vouchers will force taxpayers to hand out money to private schools with no accountability for preparing children for life and making sure they are ready, willing and able to contribute to their communities and the future of North Carolina.
- Any private school—regardless of its standards, curriculum or quality—will be operating with a taxpayer investment. Public money is much better spent on local public schools that are accountable to help each and every child be prepared for life.