

North Carolina Eta State
The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International
International Society for Key Women Educators
May 2017

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International (DKG) is a professional honorary society of women educators. The Society promotes professional and personal growth of its members and excellence in education. North Carolina's division of DKG (Eta State) currently has approximately 4,000 members across the state.

The Eta State Educational Law and Policy Committee conducted a 2017 survey of members who attended the state convention in Wilmington and of a number of chapters across the state. We ask for your serious consideration of the following prioritized statements as identified by our membership:

1. **DKG encourages the General Assembly to increase salaries for all educators.** *The membership of DKG encourages permanent pay raises, not bonuses, for educators at all levels of the experience continuum. We continue to be concerned not only about the 30% decline in education majors at UNC campuses since 2010 (Raleigh News & Observer, "Enrollment Plunges at UNC Teacher Preparation Programs" by Lynn Bonner) but also the loss of valuable veteran teachers who are leaving to find better salaries and benefits in other states.*
2. **DKG feels strongly that NC must continue to provide medical and retirement benefits for all teachers and state employees.** *Together with competitive salaries, DKG believes that comprehensive state funded medical and retirement benefits will attract and retain highly qualified teachers to NC schools. NC has a number of high quality teacher preparation universities supported by state funds. Currently, NC loses many of its new teachers from these institutions to other states due to NC's weak and changing benefits package.*
3. **While we believe in accountability, our members strongly encourage a reduction in the amount of testing.** *The NC testing program has become more burdensome rather than productive in yielding information to inform instruction. It has taken away an incredible amount of instructional time in most NC classrooms. Sufficient information about student knowledge and progress can be gathered from much less testing and used to develop necessary instruction.*
4. **Our membership believes that any schools that receive state tax dollars should be held equally accountable to the state for student learning.** *Students whose private or religious school education is provided in part or in full by taxpayer funds should demonstrate to the state adequate growth in a meaningful accredited curriculum. To expect less is to squander valuable funds on an "unknown product" while NC's public schools struggle with inadequate budgets to prepare the citizens of tomorrow.*
5. **DKG encourages the General Assembly to increase per-pupil funding.** *Members note that school systems, especially poor systems, have insufficient funds for textbooks, technology, materials, supplies, and equipment. To provide the space and much of the personnel to successfully educate our youth, but not the tools and materials to do so, is not a good use of taxpayer funding. NC is now ranked 44th in per-pupil funding, more than \$2,800 below the national average.*
6. **Our membership opposes the allocation of public funds for private and religious school vouchers.** *Taxpayer funds should not be used for private and religious school education. Every dollar of state funding that goes toward private and religious education results in fewer dollars per public school pupil. At this time, public schools are already underfunded. Dollars used for private school vouchers should be redirected back to the public schools.*
7. **DKG is opposed to the current A-F system of grading public schools.** *If a system of grading schools is to continue, we believe that far more emphasis needs to be placed on the statistical element of student growth, rather than a raw score (proficiency). Scholarly research shows that the current system does little more than to distinguish upper socio-economic populations from needy populations. ("Why School Report Cards Deserve a Failing Grade" by Kenneth Howe & Kevin Murray)*
8. **Our members urge that the number of charter schools in North Carolina be limited to 170.** *Public charter schools were introduced as a way to offer greater flexibility in how students are educated in hopes of finding and sharing with other public schools more effective ways to teach. This idea has gotten lost over time and now some charter schools are even being run by for-profit corporations whose bottom line is of greatest concern.*

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