

Public Schools First NC Celebrates Public Schools Week

Public Schools Week highlights the importance of public schools to the success and future of our students and communities.

RALEIGH, NC, UNITED STATES, February 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- During National Public Schools Week (February 23 to February 27), Public Schools First NC celebrates the many

accomplishments of North Carolina's public schools. This year's theme—Building Stronger, Fairer, and More Resilient Public Education Systems—highlights the essential role public schools play in strengthening communities, expanding opportunity, and preparing all students to thrive in school and beyond.



“

Public schools welcome every child – celebrating students of every ability, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, economic background, language, or country of origin...”

North Carolina Governor Josh Stein

Public Schools Week is a time when our students, parents, educators, business and community leaders can work together to highlight the strength and potential of our state's public schools and our students' futures.

As Governor Stein stated in his [declaration on Public Schools Week](#), “North Carolina’s public schools are essential to our state’s prosperity and are the foundation of our communities, providing opportunities for all children and ensuring that our state has a strong, well-educated workforce and well-informed people.”

In North Carolina, the vast majority of K-12 students are enrolled in public schools. Throughout the state, there are about 2,700 public schools and more than 1.5 million students.

Public schools bring students together from diverse backgrounds, welcome all students, and give them an opportunity to receive a quality education. They provide a strong economic foundation for our local communities by preparing citizens who are equipped to fully participate in society and in our nation’s democracy. High-quality public schools [bolster real-estate values](#) and help

businesses thrive. Public schools are a huge part of our communities.

Public Schools First NC celebrates North Carolina's public school educators; they are doing their part to keep our public schools strong. North Carolina has the most highly qualified teachers in the nation, with the [most National Board Certified teachers](#) and more in the National Board certification process. At the same time, due to high attrition rates, North Carolina is relying more and more on teachers coming to the profession through alternative pathways that allow teachers to "learn on the job" as they work to become fully licensed.(1)

North Carolina public schools are recognized for working hard to prepare students for college and careers. There are 138 early college high schools in North Carolina—at least one in every district—that allow students to earn college credit while in high school. (2) In 2024-25 North Carolina beat the national average for the second year in a row in the percentage of students achieving a qualifying score (3, 4, or 5) on an advanced placement test. A qualifying score earns students college credit at most colleges and universities.

Students looking to go directly into a career also get a boost in public schools. Every district in the state has a career tech (CTE) program that connects students with real-world job experiences and career pathways.(3) In 2024-25, North Carolina's CTE students earned a record-breaking 382,964 industry credentials. (4) Only one state (NE) has a higher percentage of students enrolled in CTE courses.

Public Schools First joins Governor Stein in encouraging "everyone across the state to observe this week by supporting our public schools and educators, sharing the great work happening every day in our public schools, and advocating for strong, fully funded public schools in every county."

1. NC teacher turnover is down, but the profession has changed, new data shows:

<https://www.wral.com/news/education/nc-teacher-turnover-down-but-profession-has-changed-new-data-shows-april-2025/>

2. Cooperative Innovative High Schools: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/students-families/enhanced-opportunities/advanced-learning-and-gifted-education/cooperative-innovative-high-schools>

3. CTE Regional Services: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/classroom-resources/career-and-technical-education/regional-services#CTEAdministratorsbyDistrict-1021>

4. North Carolina CTE Students Earn Record-Breaking 382,964 Industry Credentials in 2024-2025: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/news/press-releases/2026/02/04/north-carolina-cte-students-earn-record-breaking-382964-industry-credentials-2024-2025>

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