

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Presnell Reacts to Central Elementary School Study
State Continues Funding, Offers Support

Haywood County, NC – On Monday, Haywood County School Board approved a course of action that could lead to the closure of Central Elementary School in Waynesville.

“It is disheartening that Central Elementary has seen such a decrease in its student body,” Rep. Michele Presnell (R-Haywood) stated in response. “The State has increased education funding across the board: more money for textbooks, digital learning tools, principal preparation, but funding is tied to the number of students. The State has not cut funding from Central Elementary.”

Both federal and state funding is linked to the Average Daily Membership (ADM) of a school district – so as student enrollment declines, so does the allotment.

The final state budget for 2015-2017 increased K-12 education funding by five percentage points. The budget included an additional \$21.8 million in FY15-16 and \$31 million in FY16-17 for textbooks and digital resources, alone. The budget also preserved and protected Teaching Assistant jobs across Haywood County.

“Why is Central’s student body dwindling? Many point to the Charter schools, but it is important to ask – ‘what are these other schools able to offer that Central cannot?’. I’d like to help get to the bottom of this, and help Central avoid closure,” added Rep. Presnell.

Rep. Presnell has been in touch with House education leaders and Speaker Tim Moore (R-Cleveland) to consult and offer the local school district and board support.

"We understand the seriousness of closing any school and understand the impact on the students, their families and the local community. Our goal is to insure that every public school meets the needs of its students, both academically and socially. It is critically important that we implement the highest performance standards and provide the support necessary to meet the needs of the students," stated Rep. Craig Horn (R-Union). Horn serves as Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee on Education, and Chairman of the House Education Committee on K-12 Education Policy.

“The changing demographics in our state are going to result in families moving and student needs changing. We are closely reviewing the recent studies that reveal how our rural areas are suffering population loss and understand the impact on the schools in those areas. I believe that our traditional North Carolina public schools can meet the needs of the great majority of our kids and their families,” added Horn. “I am hopeful that the study that Haywood County Board of Education has approved will provide an insight into how we can help Central Elementary remain open and provide the highest quality of education for its students. I particularly look forward to working with Representative Presnell to keep Central Elementary open and providing for the best education option for Haywood County students.”

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