Michael F. Easley
Governor

State of North Carolina
Office of the Governor

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GOV. EASLEY ANNOUNCES NEW PROGRAM TO HELP AT-RISK SCHOOL CHILDREN

School-based Child and Family Support Teams Seek to Intervene to Help Students Succeed

RALEIGH – Gov. Mike Easley announced today that school-based Child and Family Support Teams are now in place in 100 North Carolina schools to help at-risk children avoid failure in school by coordinating services among education, health and social service agencies. Elementary, middle and high schools in 21 counties across the state received money for a nurse and social worker. These school-based teams work with liaisons at local mental health agencies and departments of social services to ensure students and families receive the services they need to support their success in school.

"Every school child in North Carolina must have the opportunity to succeed," said Easley. "These teams, led by trained nursing and social work professionals, are working with teachers, school administrators and parents to make sure at-risk kids receive the help they need so they can focus on learning."

The General Assembly approved the Governor's proposal for 100 school-based support teams with $11 million annually, beginning in the 2005-06 budget and for local social service and mental health liaisons with $945,000 in the 2006-07 budget. The state Child and Family Leadership Council, chaired by the Secretary of Health and Human Services and Superintendent of Public Instruction, approved pilot programs at 45 elementary, 32 middle and 23 high schools in 21 school districts across the state. The Council also includes the Secretary of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the chairman of the State Board of Education and the director of the Administrative Office of the Courts.

A key goal of the program is to have human services professionals in the school setting, where teachers and these workers often are able to spot potential problems for students. Better coordination between the public schools and social service agencies supports student success in the classroom. In addition, the school-based nurses and social workers can provide the initial screening to determine if students are at-risk for academic failure due to any physical, social, legal, emotional or developmental problems.

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