

## Charlotte History Teacher James Ford To Chair Teacher Advisory Committee

By Administrator  
Wednesday, 11 March 2015 04:56 -

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RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - He was featured in the Gov. Pat McCrory's State of the State address and now Charlotte public school teacher James Ford has been named chairman of the state's newly reconstituted Teacher Advisory Committee.

The group held its first 2015 meeting in Durham on Tuesday.

The governor addressed the group and discussed his budget proposal for the new fiscal year.

"Our budget continues my commitment to teachers for the tremendous work they do every day for our students. We continue our commitment to modernizing our teacher pay scale; an overall investment of over \$1 billion since I took office. We follow through on our commitment to raise the base pay for North Carolina teachers to \$35k and are frontloading the salary schedule so that teachers can earn more money faster. We are also calling for \$15 million for a differentiated way to pay teachers for their leadership and impact on student achievement," said the governor in a statement recapping the meeting. "These proposals, combined with the recommendations discussed today, will form an approach to educating in our state that puts student achievement first."

The new members of the committee:

James Ford (Mecklenburg County) – Ford is the 2014-2015 North Carolina Teacher of the Year. Ford is a ninth-grade history teacher at Garinger High School in Charlotte.

Maria Topliff (Onslow County) - Topliff is the 2014 North Carolina Virtual Public School Online Teacher of the Year. Topliff teaches with NCVPS's Occupational Course of Study (OCS) program, where she teaches OCS Blended English 2 and is an instructional leader for American history.

Maurice Atwood (Davie County) – Atwood is a teacher at Parkland Magnet High School in Davie County where he teaches Social Studies. Atwood was the 2010-2011 Parkland Magnet High School Teacher of the year.

Kathy Blackwell (Henderson County) - Blackwell is a third grade teacher at Dana Elementary School in Henderson County. Blackwell worked as a teacher assistant for nine years.

Arthina Blanchard (Wake County)- Blanchard is a math teacher at East Cary Middle School in Cary, North Carolina. As a 2014-2015 Kenan Fellow, Blanchard works with NC State University and the NC Museum of Natural Sciences to collect and decipher DNA sequence data from a diverse array of organisms.

G. Neil Bolick (Catawba County) – Bolick is a Spanish teacher at Mill Creek Middle School in Newton, North Carolina. Bolick has been teaching for 25 years.

Tonya Kepley (Rowan County) – Kepley is an elementary school math teacher in China Grove, North Carolina. She is a recipient of the 2014 Presidential Award for Excellence in

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### Mathematics and Science Teaching.

Karen Koonce (Cumberland County) - Koonce is a third grade teacher at Van Story Elementary school in Cumberland County. She is a National Board Certified teacher and was the 2008 Cumberland County Teacher of the Year.

Susan Mills (Cumberland County) – Mills is a family and consumer science teacher at Midway High School. While her daughter was in school, she volunteered with various groups, including serving two years as PTA president.

Noreen Naiman (Durham County) - Naiman has been teaching at NCSSM since 1992. She primarily teaches the molecular courses (classical genetics, molecular genetics, and molecular and cellular biology) in the biology department.

Kathy Saunders (Randolph County) - Saunders is a high school English teacher in Asheboro, North Carolina. She is a 2014 Regional Teacher of the Year.

Kristen Smith (Sampson County) – Smith is a high school English teacher in Clinton City Schools. She is a Teach For America corps member and a former Leadership for Educational Equity Policy and Advocacy Summer Fellow in the Governor's Office.

Chris Weaver (Buncombe County) – Weaver is a third grade teacher at Evergreen Community Charter School in Asheville, North Carolina. He is a 2014 Regional Teacher of the Year.

Reappointed members include:

Karyn Dickerson (Guilford County) – Dickerson is the 2013-2014 North Carolina Teacher of the Year. She is an academic coach for Guilford County Schools.

Jennifer Currin (New Hanover County) – Currin is the 2013 North Carolina Virtual Public School Online Teacher of the Year, and is a finalist for the 2013 National Online Teacher of the Year. Currin is an Instructional Leader and Online and Blended Learning Teacher at North Carolina Virtual Public School.

Rebecca Bishop (Franklin County) – Bishop is a third grade teacher at Franklinton Elementary in Franklin County. At Franklinton, she is a grade-level chair, PTA representative, School Improvement Team member and mentor teacher.

George Brunetti (Pender County) – Brunetti is a kindergarten teacher at Burgaw Elementary School in Pender County. Brunetti specializes in working with English as a Second Language students and has been teaching since 1979.

Dot Case (Henderson County) – Case is a United States history teacher at North Henderson High School in Henderson County. She has taught in Henderson County schools for 44 years, and was chosen as Region 7's Teacher of the Year in 2009-2010.

DeAnna Foust-Platt (Alamance County) – Foust-Platt is a middle school English language arts teacher at Ray Street Academy in the Alamance-Burlington School System. She is

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Alamance-Burlington School System's 2013 Teacher of the Year.

Brett Noble (Halifax County) – Noble is an 11th grade American literature teacher at KIPP Gaston College Preparatory in Halifax County. He is a KIPP National Network Featured Teacher, KIPP National Network AP Literature Lead Teacher, and 11th grade and English Department Chair at KIPP Gaston.