By Administrator Monday, 24 August 2015 05:29 -

RALEIGH, (SGRToday.com) - As more than a million North Carolinia kids head back to the traditional public school classroom Monday,

Gov

. Pat

McCrory

is praising the contributions of teachers as he reflects on his own student teaching experience at North Rowan High School.

In the video, released over the weekend, the governor walks the schoolhouse halls and talks about the day he was given the charge to teach history.

The video is available at the governor's You Tube channel, https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCISC7ZV6T9pt6b07kvTH2qg

.

The school year opens as the legislature and governor continue to negotiate over a general operating budget for the fiscal year that began July 1.

One of the most hotly debated items is whether the state should fund teacher assistants. Some legislators believe they're important. Other say data shows they don't improve student achievement. Still others believe they should be funded in the lower grades.

More than half of the state's operating budget is devoted to education -- 56 percent. The legislature and governor have presided over an average 11 percent teacher pay raise. Over the past four years, spending on education has increased by \$1.2 billion.