



Roy Cooper | Governor

Pamela B. Cashwell | Secretary

TO: Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on General Government  
Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Education

FROM: David Elliott, Deputy Secretary, Department of Administration

DATE: August 1, 2022

**RE: Report on Home School Data Accuracy & Verification**

In accordance with G.S. 143-341, the Department of Administration hereby submits the following report, as directed by SL 2021-180, including:

- a) An assessment of the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the number of home schools in the State, including whether the increase in the number of home schools experienced during the pandemic is likely to continue to rise or decline and the factors contributing to those decisions.
- b) An assessment of the accuracy of current data on the number of operational home schools.
- c) An update on efforts undertaken to determine which home schools are no longer operational.
- d) Any changes made to the way in which the annual statistical report is compiled, including any completed database improvements and changes to the statistical report methodology.
- e) Recommendations on ways in which the collection and compilation of data on the number of operational home schools can be further improved.

## REPORT

### **An assessment of the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the number of home schools in the State, including whether the increase in the number of home schools experienced during the pandemic is likely to continue to rise or decline and the factors contributing to those decisions.**

- 2019-2020 Newly Opened Home Schools - 9,481
- 2020-2021 Newly Opened Home Schools - 19,294
- 2021-2022 Newly Opened Home Schools - 14,602
- The difference in the number of new home schools opened within the last school year was 4,692

As of August 1, 2022, new home school administrators have opened a total of 1,103 home schools for the 2022-2023 school year. Based on these numbers the number of home schools will likely be in line with pre-pandemic years.

### **An assessment of the accuracy of current data on the number of operational home schools.**

As of August 1, 2022, there were 98,848 open home schools in our database. The Division on-boarded four time-limited staff in late June - each acting as home school program coordinators. They have been tasked with attempting to contact all home school administrators directly to verify that the school is operational, while also collecting enrollment numbers and attendance data.

Approximately 28,030 home school inquiries have been sent, resulting in the closing of 1,827 schools from our database. An additional 2,000 emails were undeliverable. We anticipate completing our work by the end of this fiscal year and look forward to providing a more complete picture of home school growth.

### **An update on efforts undertaken to determine which home schools are no longer operational.**

In addition to onboarding the four time-limited FTE in late June 2022 - following budget passage and certification, the Division is also working closely with DIT on database improvements to allow:

1. Quick and easy access by Home School Administrators to account information with improved capability to upload information.
2. Ease of communication between our staff and administrators/parents
3. Creation of custom reports on enrollment per county and per year, number of new home schools, number of closed home schools, and a listing of

home schools that routinely provide an annual enrollment number with attendance and testing data for each student.

**Any changes made to the way in which the annual statistical report is compiled, including any completed database improvements and changes to the statistical report methodology.**

To date as database improvements are underway, no change has been made to the Statistical Report methodology for FY 2021-2022.

Below, you will find a timeline outlining our efforts in conjunction with DIT to date:

- DIT began their work on June 15, 2022
- Programming is currently being written and tested before going into production
- Anticipate completion by March 2023

**Recommendations on ways in which the collection and compilation of data on the number of operational home schools can be further improved.**

Under the current statutory framework in G.S. 115C-560, our ability to collect accurate data on the number of operational home schools is limited.