

Old North State Report



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On Monday, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services announced the recipients of five *Prepaid Health Plan (PHP)* contracts for Medicaid managed care. The four statewide PHP contracts were awarded to AmeriHealth Caritas NC, Inc., Blue Cross and Blue Shield North of Carolina, UnitedHealthcare of NC, Inc., and WellCare of NC, Inc. One regional contract for Regions 3 and 5 was awarded to Carolina Complete Health, Inc. This procurement process is part of a legislative plan for Medicaid transformation first approved in 2015. DHHS will continue to oversee the Medicaid and NC Health Choice programs, while the PHPs will manage certain health services, contract with providers to deliver specific services for beneficiaries, and assume financial risk. This part of the procurement process was for “Standard Plans” only. “Tailored Plans,” which serve far more complex populations, will be procured later. DHHS plans to launch the standard plans in two phases: Phase 1, inclusive of 27 counties, will go live in November of this year, while all other counties will go live as part of Phase 2 in 2020. <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/news/press-releases/dhhs-announces-prepaid-health-plan-contracts-medicaid-managed-care>

Reducing the number of assessments administered to North Carolina public school students continues to be a top priority for state education leaders and advocates. In a statement released by NC Department of Public Instruction officials on Wednesday, it was announced that three state exams could be eliminated as part of an ongoing effort to ease the issue of “over-testing” in the state’s public schools. State Superintendent Mark Johnson is recommending the elimination of the final exams for science in fourth grade and social studies in grades four and five. The recommendation will now go to the State Board of Education for approval. A series of additional new testing changes were announced in January, all of which will take effect with end of grade testing this school year. <https://www.newsobserver.com/news/politics-government/article225610480.html>

House Joint Resolution 36 passed the House on Wednesday and is now in Senate Rules. The Resolution formally invites Governor Roy Cooper to deliver the “State of the State” address to a joint session of the House and Senate. The Governor’s Cabinet is invited to attend, as are the members of the state Supreme Court. The original Resolution called for the address to be held on February 18th, however this will be amended at the Governor’s request, and the address will be given on Monday, February 25th, at 7:00 p.m.

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