

Governor Cooper
North Carolina Office of the Governor
20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

March 3, 2021

Dear Governor Cooper,

On behalf of Communities for the Education of Every Child NC and the undersigned organizations and individuals, we are writing to ask that your Recommended Budget for the 2021-23 biennium fully incorporate all funding and policy recommendations included in the comprehensive remedial plan we anticipate will be submitted to Judge David Lee on March 8.

As you know, this moment in the long-running Leandro litigation and this comprehensive remedial plan offer a once in a generation opportunity to finally deliver North Carolina students the education they are owed under our constitution. It has been 27 years since five school systems sued the state to remedy shortcomings in our schools. Our students – particularly those from underserved and vulnerable student groups who have paid the biggest price for our state's failures – have waited long enough.

Thanks to the efforts of all the parties to resolve the case, we finally have a set of policy and funding guidelines to create the education system our students are owed. The remedial plan will fill in the final details and definitively show the NC General Assembly what is required to provide all students with the education they are owed.

However, we still need your help and continued support to show the plan is achievable. We need you to explicitly request that the General Assembly fully fund the plan. Incorporating the remedial plan into your Recommended Budget will call upon the General Assembly to meet its constitutional responsibility and remedy a debt to students that is already 27 years overdue.

Clearly, the COVID-19 pandemic has created many additional challenges and competing needs across state government. Regardless of the challenges our state is facing, students' constitutional rights are not contingent on economic conditions. Our statewide coalition, led by community members, parents, students, and grassroots policy advocates representing over 40 organizations, have been organizing for over a year around our common goal of securing the policies and funding needed to advance education equity in our state. Our charge is to ensure that all North Carolina students receive the education they are owed under our constitution. We have pledged to hold accountable those lawmakers who fail to fulfill their constitutional duties to our students.

Thank you for your leadership on this issue. We recognize and are eternally grateful for the many constructive steps you have taken to resolve this case and remedy our state's debt to students. The WestEd report and the Commission on Access to Sound Basic Education played pivotal roles in highlighting the challenges facing our education system and detailing a practical path forward to alleviate those issues.

The final step is securing the budgetary and statutory changes necessary to implement these crucial reforms. Your budget request is vital to securing these long-awaited changes. We look forward to your support and would happily welcome any opportunities to meet to discuss how we can support our shared effort to deliver a constitutional education to all students.

Sincerely,
Communities for the Education of Every Child NC

Coordinating Committee members:

[Education Justice Alliance](#)
[Disability Rights NC](#)
[Advance Carolina](#)
[NC Early Education Coalition](#)
[NC Justice Center](#)

Organization members:

[Public School Forum of NC](#)
[ACLU-NC](#)
[NC Association of Educators](#)
[Hoke County NAACP on behalf of the NC State Conference NAACP](#)
[League of Women Voters of Wake County](#)
[League of Women Voters Charlotte Mecklenburg](#)
[ISLA \(Immersion for Spanish Language Acquisition\)](#)
[CREED NC](#)
[Duke Children's Law Clinic](#)
[Public Schools First NC](#)
[Action4Equity](#)
[MomsRising](#)
[Educación Sin Barreras NC](#)
[Save Our Schools NC](#)
[Pastors for NC Children](#)
[NC Families for Testing Reform](#)
[Harvesting Humanity](#)
[The Ari Advocacy Center](#)
[Great Schools in Wake](#)
[Book Harvest](#)
[uCANcomplain, Inc.](#)
[Congregations for Children \(C4C\)](#)
[United Methodist Advocates for Public Schools \(NCCUMC UMAPS\)](#)
[Saint Francis United Methodist Church](#)
[Charlotte Parents for Schools](#)