



Advocating for every child's constitutional right
to a sound basic education.

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Communities for the Education of Every Child NC Commends Ruling to Provide NC Students the Education they are Owed

Every Child NC would like to commend the parties involved in the *Leandro* case for working to resolve the long-running constitutional right to education case. Judge Lee, the plaintiffs, and the defendants have provided resources for a plan of action that will finally move North Carolina towards providing its children with the education they deserve.

Since at least the case's beginnings in 1994, the State of North Carolina has failed to provide students with the education they are owed under our constitution. That failure has disproportionately been borne by students of color, students from families with low incomes, English learners, students with disabilities, and rural students. We commend Judge Lee, the plaintiffs, and the defendants in developing a resolution. Our students have waited far too long.

Ordering the state to use available resources to fund the next two years of the Leandro Comprehensive Remedial Plan is a pivotal first step towards repaying the debt owed to our students. The Leandro Plan is "sound": it stems from the careful research of top education experts and from listening to the needs of our communities. It is also "basic," setting the minimum conditions allowing all students the *opportunity* to prosper. We know that further steps will be necessary to create a truly world-class system where race, ethnicity, economic background, regional location, disability, gender identity and sexual orientation, immigration status, and language are no longer barriers to educational opportunity.

We join Judge Lee in calling upon the Governor, the Treasurer, and the Controller to ensure our student's rights are honored without further delay. These resources belong in our classrooms, supporting our students. We cannot afford another year of inaction as the needs in our classrooms and communities continue to mount.

While we are encouraged by the actions of the court, it is important to note that today's order should have been unnecessary. Legislative leaders entered office by taking an oath to uphold the State Constitution. Had they simply lived up to that oath and provided all students with access to "sound basic" schools, the past years of legal actions could have been avoided.

Today is an unambiguous victory for North Carolina's 1.5 million students, their families, and the communities across the state that all benefit from strong, inclusive public schools and early education. However, more victories are still needed to fully deliver schools that meet the promises made in our Constitution, and see those promises sustained for generations to come.