



NC Education Budget

Teacher Pipeline

Public Schools

Charter Schools

Charters & Vouchers

Private School Vouchers

NC'S PATH TO PRIVATIZATION

Teaching Fellows program cut

From 2011-2017, NC's nationally acclaimed teacher education scholarships were eliminated. Strong public reaction led to a "new" smaller, less robust version in 2018.

Lawmakers lift charter school cap

Allowed explosive growth in charter schools across NC, despite research showing that charters increase costs and racial segregation with little to no academic benefit.

Private school vouchers begin

Sold to the public as a way for low-income children to escape "failing schools," NC begins its voucher program with \$15M while the 2013 budget spent \$500M less on public education than in 2008.

Teaching profession debilitated

Budget caps lifetime salary for teachers at \$50K and eliminates their career status and due process rights. Stopped longevity pay and master's pay.

Budget kept at recession level despite growth

7,000 state-funded teacher assistants lost since 2008. Nearly 70% of teachers receive no salary increase, continuing to harm veteran teachers.

Voucher funding increases 129%

Increases by \$6.8 million in 2015-16 and \$14 million in 2016-17. Total taxpayer dollars for vouchers in 2015-16 is \$17.6 million and \$24.8 million for 2016-17.

Education Savings Account vouchers

ESAs provide voucher funds for students with disabilities to attend private schools, even if those schools do not have experience teaching students with disabilities or cannot provide all needed services.

Class Size Chaos

NC lawmakers limit K-3 class sizes without providing funding for extra classrooms and teaching positions. Schools were forced to limit specials and overfill grades 4-5 classes. Public outcry forced some temporary relief in the 2018 budget.

Failing virtual charter contracts renewed

The NCGA renewed contracts for K-12 Inc. & Connections Academy through 2024 despite both these schools being low performing where students failed to meet annual growth goals set by state since they opened.

Increased funding for charters and vouchers

Though traditional public schools perform as well or better than charters and private schools, by 2019 cumulative funding for charters and vouchers are \$5B and \$1.2B respectively while traditional schools remain underfunded and understaffed.

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

NCGA slashes education budget

\$800 million in state education funds cut starting in 2012-13. About 2,282 teaching positions were lost yet student enrollment increased; per pupil funding fell to fourth lowest in U.S.

Local calendar flexibility restricted

NCGA mandated a start date no earlier than the Monday closest to 8/26 with an end date no later than the Friday closest to 6/11. Districts not allowed waivers; charter schools exempted.

Teacher pay ranking drops to 46th in U.S.

Tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations prioritized over teacher pay — a dramatic shift from the early 2000s when NC was recognized for gains in education and ranked as high as 19th in teacher pay.

NC starts giving schools A-F letter grades

Due to a flawed formula of 80% test scores & 20% growth, grades significantly correlate with poverty rates and unduly affect the image of schools in the community. Bipartisan attempts to correct the formula have failed.

Virtual charter schools opened

Despite evidence of failure in other states, NCGA awarded K-12 Inc. & Connections Academy contracts to enroll up to 1,500 students in K-12. Their for-profit structure rewards enrollment, not student success.

Innovative School District created

Low performing schools would have to close or let the state take over. Only one school was forced into the ISD program. Run by a for-profit, out-of-state charter company, the ISD shut down in failure in 2021.

Municipal charter schools allowed

Law passed allowing four majority white suburbs in Mecklenburg Co. to fund & run their own district schools with taxpayer money — setting a dangerous precedent of secession from a more integrated, county-wide system.

Taxpayer \$ for vouchers triples in 3 yrs

Increased from \$15M in 2013 to \$55M in 2018; projected to be at \$145M by 2027. Over 90% of taxpayer dollars spent on school vouchers go to private religious schools-75% biblically-based curriculum.



Vouchers expanded again

Income eligibility raised to \$85,793/yr for a family of four, almost median income according to Census (\$88K). Personal Education Student Accounts for Children with Disabilities increased to allocate from \$9k to \$17K.

New budget continues to underfund schools

Despite a \$9B budget surplus, Leandro Plan still not fully funded, master's pay not restored, Pre-K waiting lists continued. Cutting corporate tax rate to 0% by 2030 puts education funding at greater risk in future.

Inflation negates teacher pay increases

Teacher salaries rise by 4% this year/3% next year, but inflation offsets the increase. NC teacher pay ranks 36th & new teacher pay is 46th in the nation. Teacher prep program enrollment drops over 30% in 10 years.

Experienced teachers penalized

Budget lacks incentives for educators with 15+ years. The smallest increase (\$1880) over 2 years goes to teachers with 15-24 years of experience. Teachers with 25+ years receive \$1950 over 2 years.

Voucher funding expands w/ no real accountability

Massive voucher expansion allocates >\$500M/year by 2031-32. Some testing required, but it doesn't align with NC standards. No public financial reporting is necessary, and private schools can discriminate in admissions.

Universal private school vouchers

Income limits on vouchers are removed, allowing even millionaires to receive taxpayer-funded vouchers. Previous public school attendance is no longer required; all private school students are now eligible. Funds \$1M marketing budget to recruit students.

"Parents' Rights" legislation

Creates time-consuming requirements to post lesson plans, classroom resources, library books students select, etc. for parental inspection. May require teachers to reveal LGBTQ+ students' status to parents, eroding trust in public schools and educators.

Budget neglects vulnerable students

Despite a surplus, Leandro funding for vulnerable children is ignored. Pre-K class size increased and the large Pre-K waiting list remains. No funding plan for universal Pre-K and free school meals.

New charter laws further undermine public schools

Counties can now use property taxes for charter schools. Impact on school districts isn't considered in the approval process. Admission priority for selected preschools. Out-of-state and foreign-exchange students are allowed with tuition payments.

Charter school expansion accelerates

New laws relax app requirements, moving new approvals from State Bd. of Ed. to a new board; majority appointed by NCGA. Charters can accept more students with few growth limits and can apply to be a regional/statewide virtual academy.

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Voucher funding, eligibility expanded

Income eligibility cap raised, allowing families of four making \$75,000/yr to access. Sold to the public in 2013 as a program for low-income households, the NCGA has expanded eligibility every subsequent budget cycle.

Charters rules change to speed growth

Allowed to expand one grade level each year without approval regardless of student outcomes. Fast-track application added and planning year eliminated. Continue to increase segregation by race and income.

Teacher starting salary 45th in nation

Average teacher salary is about \$10,000 less than the national average (34th). Top salary on the pay schedule, including National Boards bonus, is \$60,480 after 25 years. Between 15-24, the schedule is fixed = zero growth.

Court reverses Leandro funding decision

The NC Supreme Court ordered Leandro funding for years 2 & 3 on Nov. 4th. Elections held on Nov. 8th resulted in a new court majority signaling they would not comply with the order.

Flawed A-F school grading system

Since school grading started, the 80% test scores & 20% growth formula has been widely criticized. Bipartisan bills to improve the formula continue to fail; the formula remains the same.

Voucher funding & eligibility increase again

\$56M added to the base allocation for vouchers, boosts the annual increase to \$15M adding \$500K/yr for marketing vouchers. Income eligibility raised to \$103,000/yr. for a family of 4.

NC'S NATIONAL RANKINGS

(APRIL 2023)

Avg. Teacher Starting Salary

#46

Avg. Teacher Salary

#36

Teacher Pay Gap¹

74¢

Avg. ESP Earnings²

#39

Per Student Spending

#42

¹ Compared to other college-educated professionals with similar experience

² Educational Support Personnel (e.g., Food, Transportation, Clerical, Custodial, Health and Student Services)

SOURCE: [NEA.ORG](https://www.nea.org)

More on Privatizing Our Public Schools

