



**Red4EdNC**

## **Want to Help Fight the Corrupting Influence of Big Money on Politics? Read and Share this post!**

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Teachers across NC are trying hard not to throw things at their TVs right now. Politicians with deep pockets are running election ads that tell boldfaced (and subtle) lies. We teachers know they are misleading the public, but we don't have the money to buy ads about it. Heck, it's August and many of us have been unemployed and without a paycheck for almost three months, and we no longer get that longevity check in June, so we don't have the money to buy much of anything. Including supplies for our classrooms. So, tempers and temperatures are running high.

We've been working social media outlets in a scattershot fashion as opportunities arise, but we need a more focused effort, a populist alternative to the TV ad. So here it is. **We teachers are David, and big money politics is Goliath. Here's my rock. I'm throwing it as hard as I can. Will you help it gain velocity??**

#1 They say:

**The average teacher in NC earns \$50,000+.**

The TRUTH: **North Carolina teachers made an average of \$47,985 last school year, about \$10,000 less than the average U.S. teacher, who made \$58,064.** Average salaries of North Carolina public school teachers dropped 17.4% in real dollars from 2003-04 to 2013-14. Because the new salary schedule created in 2014 by the General Assembly only provides for salary adjustments once every 5 years, and only gave raises to newer teachers, **only 32 percent of NC teachers received a raise last year under the budget (meaning 7 out of 10 teachers got no increase at all).**

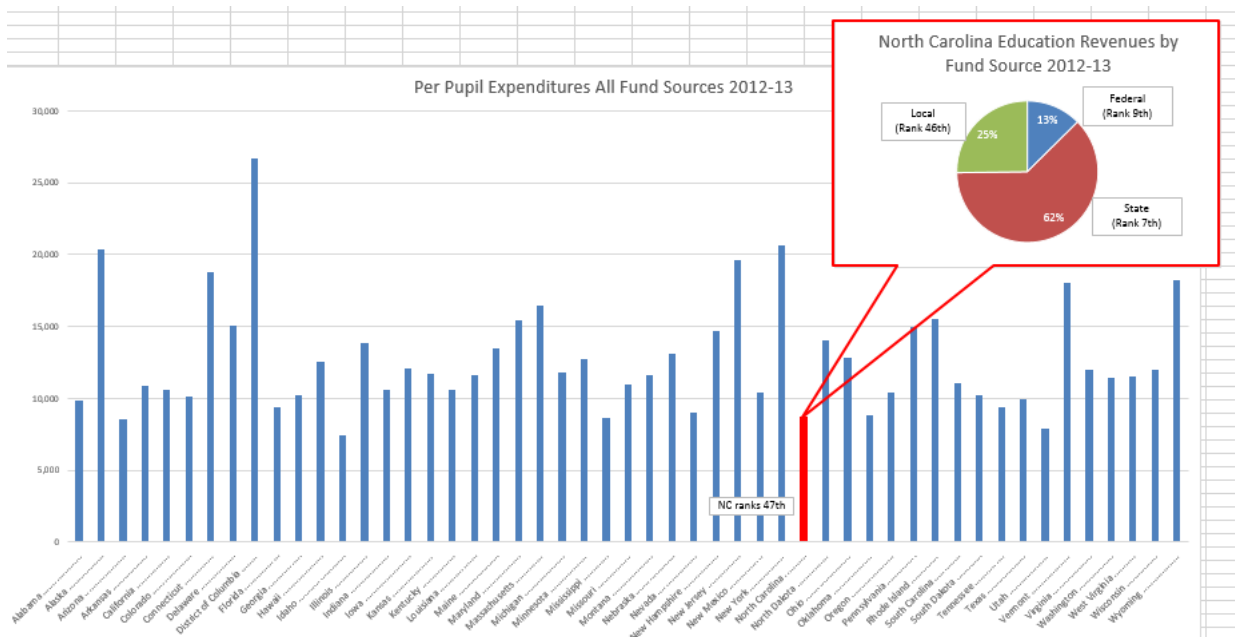
That \$50,000+ number is based on a projection that assumes every veteran teacher who taught last year will continue teaching next year. I assure you that will not happen. Most of the veteran teachers I know are leaving as soon as possible, as we have not gotten a significant pay raise in years and we lost longevity pay. It will be interesting to see how we replace all those teachers with the broken teacher pipeline we now have. When the better paid vets all leave, and new lower paid replacements are hired, average teacher pay will drop, not rise.

#2 They say:

**North Carolina is 9<sup>th</sup> in the nation for education spending.**

The TRUTH:

**We are one of only a few states that puts the burden of funding public schools on the state government through the state constitution.** The rest fund schools more through local funding, which is why their local property taxes are so high compared to ours. The above claim should read something like, "We are 9<sup>th</sup> out of 10 states that rely primarily on state funds to fund education". Not quite as impressive, right?



In case you can't see, **we are 47th in the nation in education funding, with 62% of our funding coming from the state, 25% from local sources and 13% from federal.** 'SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "National Public Education Financial Survey," 2012-13.

#3: They say:

**NC is spending more than they ever have on education.**

The TRUTH: **That is only because our student population has grown. Spending per pupil has gone down 14.5% since 2008. That's \$855 dollars less per student in real dollars. That matters.**

#4: They say:

**We have increased the textbook fund.**

The TRUTH: Textbook funding was increased in 2014, after it was slashed in 2013. The current level of funding is still less than half of what the state invested in textbooks in 2010. **The textbook fund was \$111 million in 2009-10. It was \$52 million last year.** I still don't have adequate textbooks for my classroom, and my students don't have computers. How do I teach? Lots and lots of copies. Paid for by local sources.

Also (bonus fact!), North Carolina has 7,000 fewer TAs in 2015 than it did in 2008.

If you have gotten this far, thank you!!! You are a soldier in a political revolution, in a way. Now, go forth boldly and conquer – share this post!!! NC teachers are counting on you to help our students. The truth is out there, and trust me, it matters.