



# 11 Must-Dos When Public Schools Reopen 5 Strategies To Pay For What We Need 11 Ways Government Can Help **#whenpublicschoolsreopen**

When we reopen our public schools, we must not let them suffer the same neglect they did during and after the 2008 recession. The previous funding cuts – made under the excuse of “coping” with the recession – harmed our most vulnerable students, cost many educators their jobs, severely damaged N.C.'s teacher pipeline, and undermined the public’s respect for public education overall. Additionally, the education policy changes previously implemented to gain federal dollars resulted in ineffective teacher evaluations, expansion in high stakes testing, growth in student disparities, and inequitable charter school expansions.

We must reopen our schools to be stronger and more committed to fulfilling our constitutional duty to provide a sound basic education for all children. We also must be prepared to help mitigate the trauma of the pandemic for students, families, and educators using the “lessons learned” from virtual instruction.

Now is the time to invest in fully funding our public schools and reopen them using creativity, compassion, and commitment to meet each student’s unique needs! We must use a balanced approach that addresses the physical, mental, cognitive, and emotional well-being of students and school personnel.

## 11 Must-Dos When Public Schools Reopen

- 1) Increase funding for **Pre-K** to cover **all** income-eligible children
- 2) Provide a full-time **school nurse** (CNA, LPN, or RN) at **every** school
- 3) Provide a full-time social worker at every school, increase number of school counselors to national average, and supplement with school psychologist services and on-site counseling
- 4) Restore **instructional** (teacher) assistant positions, providing one for **every** K-3 classroom
- 5) **Return calendar control** back to local school districts and their elected boards of education
- 6) Provide high speed, reliable internet and devices and software for **all** students and teachers
- 7) Expand funding for **daily cleaning services** for schools and buses
- 8) Allow **local control** in creating flexible schedules for classes, students, and staff
- 9) Recruit more teachers to **help reduce class size** and **help all students get on grade level**, including a targeted focus on students with special education needs
- 10) Fund professional learning specifically developed to help educators **recognize trauma and respond effectively**
- 11) Fund and provide **SEL** programs/activities for students to help them succeed academically and socially

## 5 Strategies to Pay for What Our Public Schools Need to Reopen

**How to fund successful and equitable reopening of public schools.**

- 1) Restore income taxes for large corporations and increase taxes for top individual income brackets to fund increases in per pupil expenditures (**PPE**), including educator pay



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- 2) Allocate significant portions of **federal relief funding** received by states and municipalities to public schools
- 3) Place a **moratorium on charter schools** to stop diverting desperately needed funds that are most cost-effective when spent in traditional public schools
- 4) **End the school voucher** program that wastes millions of public tax dollars in private schools without accountability
- 5) Stop wasting public tax dollars paying for **unproven or ineffective online charter schools**

## 11 Ways Government Can Help Reopen Public Schools

- 1) Federal and state agencies should provide **free/easy access** to regular COVID-19 testing and masks, gloves, sanitizer and other necessary supplies for school personnel and students
- 2) NC should immediately **expand Medicaid** to provide healthcare to children and families
- 3) NC should work with private companies and nonprofits to **provide free high-speed** internet services to our public education students and teachers
- 4) Congress should **expand Lifeline**, the FCC's program to help make telephone services and broadband internet access affordable for low-income citizens, especially in rural areas
- 5) Congress and NC legislature should fully fund public schools to provide **universal school nutrition programs** to reduce childhood hunger and improve students' health
- 6) NC should implement **universal Pre-K** to provide both a head start for all young learners, and increased childcare options for working families
- 7) The U.S. Congress should **raise the federal minimum wage**; failing that, NC should raise the state minimum wage to help reduce the number of students living in poverty and hunger
- 8) NC should **expand unemployment benefits** to help reduce the number of students living in poverty or hunger, or facing homelessness
- 9) NC should **fund free community college programs** that fast-track the training of healthcare workers and other essential frontline skilled workers
- 10) NC should allow **budget flexibility** to allow local governments and school systems address local issues
- 11) Federal and state agencies should **implement programs to end homelessness**, which negatively affects children's ability to learn

We cannot afford to lose a generation of children. As NC parents and citizens – literally the “adults in the room” – we hold the future of our children, and therefore the future of our state's prosperity, in our hands. This is a weighty responsibility. **Now is the time to craft and implement bold and comprehensive plans to ensure we reopen our schools well, educate our children well, and enable our students and teachers to stay well.**