

*Public Schools First NC supports one unified, equitable, inclusive, fair, innovative and accountable public education system that nurtures and prepares each child for success in school and life. We believe legislators should fulfil their constitutional obligation as stated in the Leandro decision and work to provide **every child** with a sound, basic education. With this constitutional mandate in mind, we are advocating for adequate, equitable education funding that, at a minimum, reflects the national average by 2023. In hopes that adjustments can be made to public school funding during the legislative short session, we present our legislative agenda for 2022 ([see detailed version here](#)).*

1. Fully Funding all components of the Leandro [Comprehensive Remedial Plan](#).

- A system of teacher development and recruitment that ensures each classroom is staffed with a high-quality teacher
- A system of principal development and recruitment that ensures each school is led by a high-quality principal
- A finance system that provides adequate, equitable, and predictable funding to school districts and adequate resources to address the needs of all North Carolina schools and students
- An assessment and accountability system that reliably assesses multiple measures of student performance
- An assistance and turnaround function that provides necessary support to low-performing schools and districts
- A system of early education that provides access to high-quality prekindergarten and other early childhood learning opportunities
- An alignment of high school to postsecondary and career expectations, as well as the provision of early postsecondary and workforce learning opportunities

2. Using public tax dollars exclusively for public schooling with consistent accountability and polices

- Place a moratorium on funding school vouchers.
- Require private schools receiving vouchers to demonstrate student performance, similar to public school accountability.
- Increase accountability and transparency in all charter schools.
- Restore a cap on the number of charter schools allowed.
- Allow local school boards the same flexibility as charter schools including calendar flexibility.
- Support instruction integrity based on following the NC Standard Course of Study in all schools receiving taxpayer dollars.

3. Increasing teacher salaries to at least the national average and increasing salaries and wages for additional school personnel.

- Reinstate supplements for teachers who earn advanced degrees.
- Increase supplements and/or pay for high-vacancy positions including school psychologists, school social workers, and special education teachers.
- Pay livable wages and full benefits to all school support personnel.
- Restore full-time teacher assistants for each K-3 classroom.
- Fully fund the class size mandates for grades K-3 and restore class size caps for grades 4-5.
- Increase per pupil funding to the national average.

4. Strengthening and diversifying North Carolina's teacher pipeline

- Expand the Teaching Fellows Program to include more HBCUs and increase the number of fellowships for rural schools and other high-needs schools/areas.
- Recruit more teachers of color.
- Evaluate teachers fairly using a variety of tools; eliminate the A-F grading system or improve it to fairly consider student growth.
- Invest in teacher and principal training programs to address shortages and improve retention.
- Provide incentives for college students to select education as a major.
- Increase mentoring support and professional development, especially for new teachers.
- Respects curriculum integrity and teachers' professionalism and decision-making authority.

5. **Increasing numbers of helping professionals in schools and adopting universal trauma-informed curricula/programs that focus on social and emotional learning.**
 - Increase funding to hire more helping professionals such as school psychologists, school social workers, school counselors, and school nurses to meet nationally recommended ratios.
 - Provide better healthcare and mental health services and access for children and families.
 - Provide trauma-informed training for all school staff with an emphasis on social and emotional learning.
6. **Providing universal access to high-quality Pre-K**
 - Implement universal Pre-K for all eligible children.
 - Improve and invests in the early childhood educator pipeline.
7. **Increasing funding for special education students**
 - Remove the cap on special education funding to allow coverage of all eligible children.
 - Increase spending levels at federal and state level to fully fund special education service costs.
8. **Improving integration and the equitable distribution of resources**
 - Work to provide equitable and adequate distribution of highly qualified teachers.
 - Support integrated, equitable schools.
 - Ensure resources go to students who need them the most.
9. **Creating safe and supportive learning environments for all students and teachers**
 - Support policies that ensure safe, secure, inviting, and respectful schools for all of our diverse students and educators.
 - Implement positive approaches to discipline such as restorative justice programs.
 - Keep guns off school grounds.
 - Implement required violence prevention and threat-reporting programs at all schools.
10. **Eliminating the Digital Divide**
 - Support access for K-12 students and educators to high-speed broadband internet and devices for at home use.
 - Create high-quality professional development opportunities for integrating tech in instruction.
 - Improve infrastructure for broadband in rural and low-income communities.
 - Provide free hot-spots for WIFI for homeless school-age children/families.

We will monitor the NC General Assembly's 2022 Legislative Session for legislative actions that impact public education. To ensure that you receive up-to-date information about legislative actions, sign up for our newsletter via our web site where we post our legislative updates called [Week in Review](#).

We will also alert our public as important legislative actions happen on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Follow us on social media to make sure you know when critical public education issues are impacted by legislative actions.

We invite you to join us in this advocacy work for our children. By large margins, North Carolinians support fully and fairly funding our public schools and making sure that students have the classrooms resources and well-qualified teachers they need to develop critical thinking skills and be prepared to fulfill their role as productive and contributing members of our society.