

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

Lawmakers lift charter school cap
Allowed explosive growth in charter schools across NC, despite research showing that charters increase costs and racial segregation without little academic benefit.

Teaching profession debilitated
Budget caps lifetime salary for teachers at \$50K and eliminates their career status and due process rights. Stopped pay for longevity pay and Masters pay.

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.

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 overflow 4-5 classes. Public outcry forced some temporary relief in the 2018 budget.

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



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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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, it shut down in failure in 2021.

Taxpayer dollars 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.

NC'S NATIONAL RANKINGS

(FY 2020-21)

Avg. Teacher Starting Salary¹
#45

Avg. Teacher Salary
#38

Teacher Pay Gap²
77¢

Avg. ESP Earnings
#30

Per Student Spending
#41

¹ As compared to minimum living wage of \$48,346 for a family of one adult and one child
² Compared to other college-educated professionals with similar experience

SOURCE: **NEA.ORG**

Vouchers expanded again

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

For updates and more information on these developments, go to our website and follow us on social media!



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.

Promise of Leandro denied again

NCGA continues 25 years of legal fights over funding public schools per Leandro v. State. Analysis ordered by NC Supreme court shows 45% of the first two years of the Comprehensive Remedial Plan remains unfunded.

The cost of insufficient Leandro funding

Leandro funding would help increase educator pay, add teaching fellows, expand Pre-K and after-school programs, and provide K-3 teacher assistants, school nurses, social workers, psychologists, counselors.

Mismanaged charter schools close

Many charters, after years of financial mismanagement and irregularities, are forced to close (44 charters closed since 1997). Most still lack sufficient oversight and accountability.

Innovative School District (ISD) ends in failure

After 5 years and only one school takeover, NC's ISD failed to improve outcomes for students. Lawmakers discontinued funding for it, as it was a waste of taxpayers money.

Teacher pipeline worsens

Between 2012-2021, enrollment in bachelor's programs dropped 35% and master's programs 9%. NC has 45th lowest starting teacher pay nationally and the lowest benefit contributions combined compared to surrounding states.

Teacher salaries stagnant

Average teacher salary is about \$10,000 less than the national average. Top salary on the pay schedule, including National Boards bonus, is \$59,000 after 25 years. Between 15-24, the schedule is fixed = zero growth.



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