

FISCAL FACTS

The 101 on education needs that North Carolina should be funding during the pandemic



What N.C. needs right now

- 23** Number of years that N.C. courts, under the Leandro case, have found that state leaders are failing to provide all children the education they are owed under our state constitution.¹
- 50th** N.C.'s school funding effort — the share of our economy spent on public schools — ranks dead last among all states.²
- 35%** Share of economically disadvantaged high school juniors achieving the minimum ACT score necessary to gain attendance to UNC schools, compared to 68% of their higher-income peers.³

What it takes to fund these N.C. needs

- \$3.7 billion** Increase in state spending necessary to provide all children with a sound basic education.⁴
- \$427 million** Court-recommended increase this year to put N.C. on an eight-year path toward providing all children with a sound basic education.⁵

What N.C. is actually spending

- \$0** Amount of recurring funding the General Assembly put towards the court-recommended plan to comply with Leandro.⁶

North Carolina dedicates a smaller share of its state economy to public schools than any other state in the country. Public school spending in North Carolina accounts for **just 2.7 percent of our state economy**. In the average state, school spending accounts for 3.4 percent of the state economy. If North Carolina made the school funding effort of the average state, **school funding would increase by \$4.3 billion**.⁷



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Link to related bills

HB 1129 [Ensure a Sound Basic Education](#)

HB 1130 [Invest in a Sound Basic Education](#)

More resources

- 1 <https://www.ednc.org/leandro-litigation/> In 1997, the North Carolina Supreme Court reversed the Court of Appeals in a unanimous opinion authored by Justice Burley Mitchell, stating, “[w]e conclude that Article I, Section 15 and Article IX, Section 2 of the North Carolina Constitution combine to guarantee every child of this state an opportunity to receive a sound basic education in our public schools.”
- 2 Author’s calculations
- 3 https://files.nc.gov/dpi/data-report2019_final.xlsx
- 4 https://www.ednc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/NC_Leandro_Finance_Supplement-1.pdf
- 5 <https://www.slideshare.net/educationnc/leandro-fy2021-planrev06152020-final>
- 6 <http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2020/09/02/general-assemblys-latest-spending-proposal-fails-to-meet-schools-basic-needs/>
- 7 Author’s calculations

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More information

- everychildnc.org
- ednc.org/leandro-litigation/
- wested.org/wested-news/sound-basic-education-for-all-an-action-plan-for-north-carolina/#
- slideshare.net/educationnc/leandro-fy2021-planrev06152020-final
- ncpolicywatch.com/2020/07/16/lack-of-new-investment-moves-nc-even-further-from-delivering-kids-the-education-theyre-owed
- edlawcenter.org/research/school-funding-data
- schoolfinancedata.org