

ASK THE CANDIDATES 2022: EDUCATION



“What will you do to ensure all North Carolina children have access to educational opportunities?”

● IN THE CURRENT ITERATION OF THE *LEANDRO* CASE, an expert study recommended North Carolina increase annual education investments by over \$5 billion over eight years to address the ongoing failure to provide a constitutionally adequate education. The plan prioritizes providing resources to schools serving high concentrations of children of color, multilingual learners, students with disabilities, rural students, and those from families living in poverty. **Which investments would you prioritize to address stagnating academic outcomes and growing opportunity gaps? How will you ensure that the state legislature will make these investments?**

● A GROWING BODY OF RESEARCH SHOWS Black students were 160 percent more likely to receive in-school suspension and 84 percent more likely to receive out-of-school

FACTS YOU CAN USE:

Twenty-five years after the *Leandro* case commenced, the state is farther from meeting its constitutional obligation to provide all children with the opportunity to receive a sound basic education.

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suspension than white students. **How would you address these problems?**

● THE STATE'S A-F SCHOOL GRADING SYSTEM HAS BEEN WIDELY CRITICIZED for failing to give parents meaningful information about schools and unfairly stigmatizing schools with high concentrations of students from families with low incomes. **What**

measures should we include in the school grading system that would most reflect whether all children are being given meaningful opportunities?

● **WHAT IS THE BEST WAY TO FUND the state's over-\$12 billion deficit for school construction and other capital improvements?**

FACTS YOU CAN USE:

When adjusting for school costs, per-student funding is down 4.5 percent from 2008-09.

In 2008-09, North Carolina's average teacher salary was 11 percent below the U.S. average. Now, average teacher pay is 16 percent below the national average.

In 2008-09 national average per-pupil spending was 18 percent higher than per-pupil spending in North Carolina; now, it's 25 percent higher.

North Carolina's school funding (total education spending as a share of the state economy) has fallen from 42nd in 2008 to 50th in 2019.

If North Carolina had increased its funding effort to the national average, FY 2018-19 spending would have been \$5.6 billion above actual levels.

Did you get real, meaningful answers to your questions?

If not, here are some follow-up questions that might help you get a more specific answer:

- If you believe there is enough funding to provide resources that meet students' needs, please tell us where that funding is located.
- Can you tell me what principles or values will guide your decisions on funding public education?
- What problems do you see in the current approach to school funding in North Carolina?

Visit www.ncjustice.org/election2022 to share the answers you received.



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