

NC GOVERNOR RELEASES 2023-2025 BUDGET PROPOSAL



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North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper released his office's 2023-2025 state budget proposal, entitled "First in Opportunity," on Wednesday, signaling the beginning of the formal state budget process. The proposal makes major investments in education, including \$4.5 billion to fully fund years 2,3,4, and 5 of the Leandro Comprehensive Remedial Plan, as well as significant employee pay increases.

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[Postsecondary and Career Alignment, Revise Funding for NC Virtual Public School, Sen. Phil Berger \(R-Rockingham\)](#)

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Leandro Comprehensive Remedial Plan, as well as significant employee pay increases. "The budget includes an average 18% teacher raise over the biennium, a \$1 billion plan to support mental health, the largest investment in state employee compensation in 50 years and critical funding for child care, job training, and economic development," the Governor's office said in a [statement](#).

Like teachers, the budget gives principals, assistant principals, and non-instructional support personnel at least a 10% pay increase in FY 2023-24 and an additional 6% increase in FY 2024-25. Central office and non-certified employees would receive a 6.5% raise in 23-24 and another 3% in 24-25. Qualifying state and local education employees, regardless of funding source, would also receive a \$1,500 job retention bonus if their annual salaries are less than \$75,000. Higher-earning employees would receive a \$1,000 bonus. Other major proposed investments in the education system include the following:

High Quality Teachers (\$69,860,000 in FY 2023-24; \$100,560,000 in FY 24-25) — Master's Pay Restoration; Teacher Residencies for High-Need Districts; Advanced Teaching Roles; National Board Certification; Recruitment Bonuses for Low Wealth and High Needs Schools; Teaching Fellows Program (would support up

to \$2,800 additional Fellows); Grow Your Own Teacher Recruitment Programs; NC New Teacher Support Program; College Advising Corps.

Finance System (\$914,558,779 in FY 2023-24; \$1,541,858,779 in FY 2024-25) — Children with Disabilities Funding Cap and Funding (removes the funding cap and increases the allotment); Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding; Low-Wealth Schools Funding; Limited English Proficiency Funding Cap Funding; Professional Development; Teaching Assistant Formula and Funding; Classroom Supplies and Textbooks; Assistant Principal Allotment; Central Office Staff Allotment; Specialized Instructional Support Personnel; Principal and Assistant Principal Pay.

Assistance and Turnaround (\$59,766,904 in FY 2023-24; \$81,663,733 in FY 2024-25) — District and Regional Support; Community Schools; Reduced-Price Lunch Co-Pays.

Early Childhood Learning Opportunities (\$333,220,000 (R) + \$750,000 (NR) in FY 2023-24; \$611,220,000 (R) + \$250,000 (NR) in FY 2024-25) — NC Pre-K; Early Intervention; Birth-Age 3 Learning Pilot and Evaluation; Smart Start and Child Care Subsidy Rate Floor; Family Connects Expansion; Child Care WAGE\$; Child Care Workforce Recruitment; Pre-K to K Transitions; Collaborative Family Engagement Plans; Early Childhood Data Systems and Technical Assistance.

Postsecondary and Career Alignment (\$38,500,000 in FY 2023-24; \$63,500,000 in FY 2024-25) — Revise Funding for NC Virtual Public School; Career and Technical Education Credentials; Career Development Coordinators in Grades 6-12.

While state lawmakers have been working for weeks behind the scenes on their own budget proposals, the release of the Governor's plan can be seen as the "official" start to budget negotiations between his office, the state House of Representatives, and the state Senate. Seemingly ahead of its typical schedule, the House is expected to release its budget proposal in the next few weeks, with the Senate proposal hopefully to follow shortly thereafter.

It is not yet known how much of the Governor's budget proposal will ultimately be included in the final state budget package, as the Governor's plan greatly exceeds the spending limits recently agreed upon by Republican legislative leaders in light of the

[forecasted](#) \$3.1 billion revenue surplus. The House and Senate [agreed](#) to spend no more than \$29.7 billion in FY 2023-24 (a 6.5% increase over the current fiscal year's budget) and no more than \$30.8 billion in FY 2024-25 (another 3.75% increase). In comparison, the Governor's plan would spend almost \$33 billion next year (an 18% increase) and \$34.2 billion the following year (an additional 3.9% increase).

Senate leader Phil Berger (R-Rockingham) called the proposal "an irresponsible, unserious proposal from a lame-duck governor who wants future North Carolinians to pick up his tab." House leader Tim Moore (R-Cleveland) also criticized the Governor's proposed spending, [stating](#), "The General Assembly will continue on the fiscally responsible path that has made our state attractive to so many."

Regarding the Governor's latest budget proposal, NC Association of School Administrators (NCASA) Executive Director Katherine Joyce shared, "Our organization and members are encouraged by the Governor's proposal for significant and focused investments in our public schools and their personnel. We hope that he and General Assembly leaders can reach a bipartisan agreement to include many of these recommendations in the final budget to enhance the state's overall support of K-12 education in North Carolina."

Resources

- [Full Governor's FY 2023-2025 Budget Recommendations](#)
- [Governor's Proposals 'Ensuring a Sound Basic Education'](#)
- [Governor's Budget Focus Area: Education](#)
- [Governor's 2023 Budget: Special Provisions](#)