

For Immediate Release



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From the Office of Sen. Joyce Waddell, NC Senate
Mecklenburg County

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Greetings:

We are preparing to go back into session which begins on January 11, 2023. I am looking forward to rolling up my sleeves and getting to work.

Joyce Waddell

READING GAINS

It has been discovered that North Carolina elementary school students are showing reading gains. Test results released on Thursday show a higher percentage of K-3 students were on track in reading at the start of this school year compared to the start of last school year.

In addition, the data shows that nearly 28,000 more K-3 students were performing at or above benchmark levels on the assessments compared to last year.

This is great news for the NC Public School System. The results offer positive news after test scores and grades dropped sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LEANDRO JUDGE

In case you have not been following this case, a new trial judge is presiding over a long-running North Carolina school funding case — in particular compliance with a recent state Supreme Court ruling that declared the judicial branch correctly ordered funds be spent to address education inequities. The Chief Justice assigned a Superior Court Judge last week to oversee what is known as the “Leandro” case, named after an original plaintiff in a lawsuit filed in 1995. Among the new judge’s first duties will be to determine how much additional government money must be spent to comply with a 2021 order that found the state was still falling short of giving all children the “opportunity for a sound basic education.”

In a 4-3 ruling on Nov. 4, the Supreme Court declared it had been legitimate to order the movement of \$1.75 billion from state coffers to agencies to implement two years of an eight-year education remedial plan that he approved earlier. The justices in the majority — all of the court’s registered Democrats — said it was appropriate to direct the transfer without a specific General Assembly law.

The chief deputy state budget director filed an affidavit on Dec. 19 calculating the gap at \$678 million. A briefing schedule was presented last month by key parties in the case giving everyone in the litigation, including Republican legislative leaders, until Jan. 20 to respond.

My office has moved. For all constituents that travel to Raleigh and would like to stop by my office, please note my new office is 1106 in the Legislative building. I would love to see you and welcome all to come by.

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