

40
YEARS OF



2024–2025 Impact Report

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF IMPACT

NCFORUM.ORG

Illustrations by Montgomery
County Early College Student,
Dewone Wright

my
LOCAL
PUBLIC
SCHOOL

Every child in North Carolina deserves a high-quality public education—one that is well-funded, well-resourced and led by well-qualified teachers who empower students to reach their full potential.

Right now, in North Carolina, the State is not fulfilling its constitutional duty to adequately fund our local public schools. At the Forum, we know that thriving public schools are at the heart of thriving communities. And we will keep working toward realizing our vision of a North Carolina where every child—regardless of their race/ethnicity, identity, legal status or ZIP code—has the opportunity to thrive in their local public school.

As we go into our 40th year, the Public School Forum of NC remains an indispensable champion of better public schools and the most trusted source in the state for research and analysis on vital education issues. We engage communities, legislators, business leaders, and educators to inform, build consensus, and drive action to shape education policy that centers on the needs and success of students.

As the Forum celebrates 40 years of impact, we share these spotlights on our work over the past year, beautifully illustrated by student artist Dewone Wright. You will find a year in review of the Forum's policy, research and convening efforts as well as spotlights on the three Centers housed at the Forum: the NC Center for Resilience and Learning, the Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity, and the NC Center for Afterschool Programs.

We are in a critical moment for public education in our state. Fortunately, such moments can be used as fuel for necessary progress. Despite the state's disinvestment in public education, we know that North Carolinians value their local public schools and care deeply about the future of our state. With such care from our communities and the Forum's continued commitment to students, protecting and uplifting public education is within reach.

We remain unwavering in this belief: **Together, we can realize the promise of excellent public education for every student in North Carolina.**

Bringing leaders and communities together to shape policies that expand opportunity, access, and success for all learners



Scan to learn more

[2025 Local School Finance Study](#) presents data on the local funding levels and effort across the state

[Policy Corner](#) provides updates throughout the legislative session on the most important issues for public schools

[School Vouchers in North Carolina](#) report explores access, affordability and accountability of NC's Opportunity Scholarship Program

 “I gained so much from this program. This opportunity gave me a seat at the table and allowed me to share my experiences and expertise with policy makers where I felt heard and listened to. The program set everyone up for success as we navigated North Carolina’s history in education and then learned what advocacy is and how to be the best advocates for our students.”

NC Education Policy Fellow

Engage

Delivered over 40 presentations to help community members in 25 counties learn about education policy and finance to prepare them as advocates for local public schools

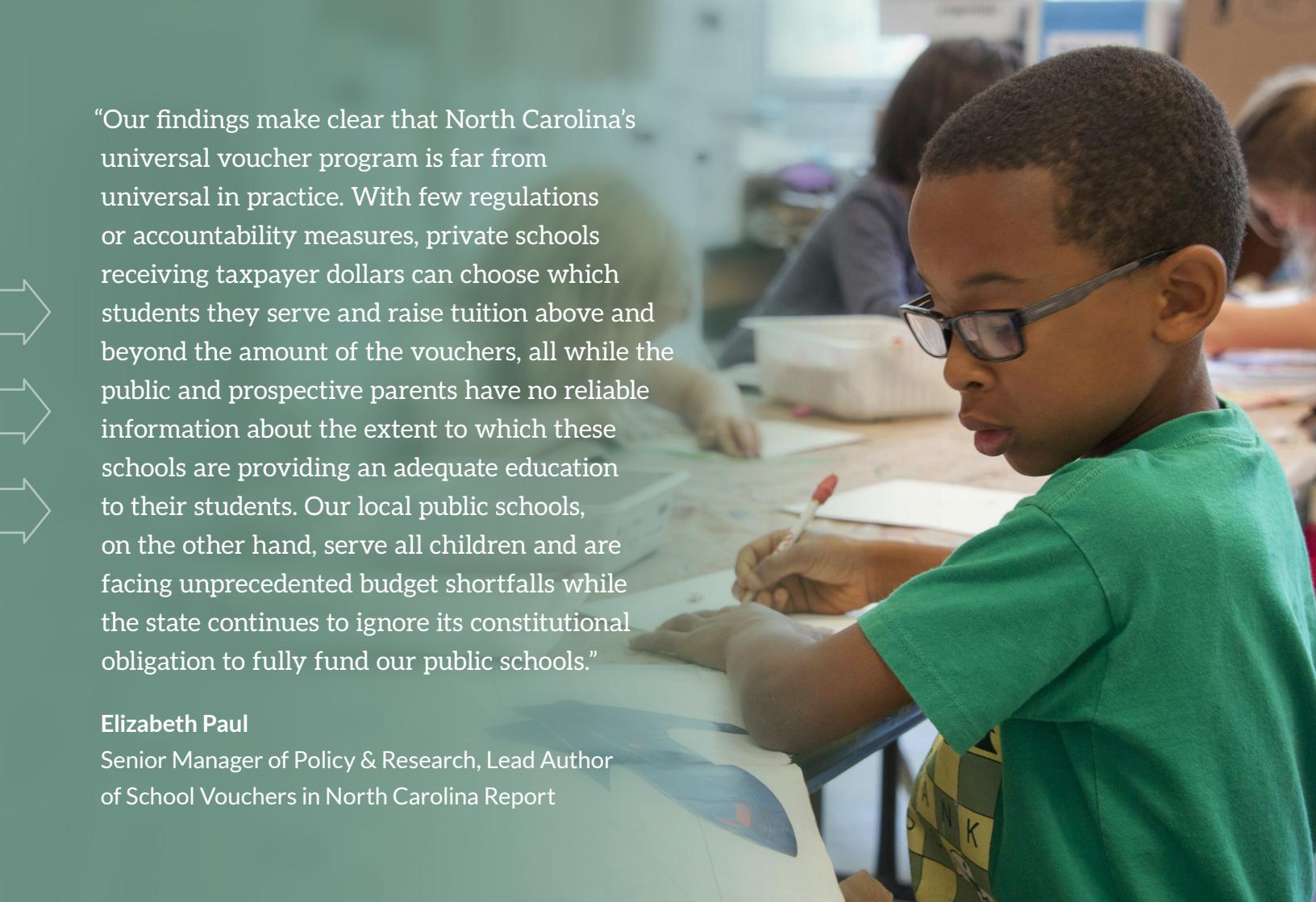
Trained 62 fellows in the 2024–25 cohort of [NC Education Policy Fellows](#)

Convened more than 80 stakeholders to envision an improved school funding model for NC

Hosted a public debate for the candidates for NC Superintendent of Public Instruction with thousands in attendance or viewing online

Brought together over 400 people from across NC at [Eggs and Issues](#) to talk about policy changes to advance the Forum’s Top 10 Education Issues





“Our findings make clear that North Carolina’s universal voucher program is far from universal in practice. With few regulations or accountability measures, private schools receiving taxpayer dollars can choose which students they serve and raise tuition above and beyond the amount of the vouchers, all while the public and prospective parents have no reliable information about the extent to which these schools are providing an adequate education to their students. Our local public schools, on the other hand, serve all children and are facing unprecedented budget shortfalls while the state continues to ignore its constitutional obligation to fully fund our public schools.”

Elizabeth Paul

Senior Manager of Policy & Research, Lead Author of School Vouchers in North Carolina Report

Advocate

Rooted in research and what we hear from educators and communities across the state, the Forum released our [2025-26 Top Education Issues](#)

Launched a new local advocacy strategy, the **Forum Local Ambassadors Coalition**, to lead local base building and organize a robust network of public school champions in regions across NC

The NC House and Governor Josh Stein proposed teacher pay increases of more than 8% and 10% respectively in their 2025 budget proposals, in line with our recommendation in the Top Education Issues

Superintendent Mo Green’s strategic plan incorporates many of the Forum’s policy priorities including increasing teacher pay, expanding the community school framework, increasing support for grow-your-own teacher programs, expanding training on trauma-informed practices for educators and school staff, revising the school accountability model, considering shifting to a weighted student funding model, and building stronger relationships between schools, families, and communities.

Building resilience and success for all North Carolina students and educators

Launched and deepened partnerships and programs

- ✓ **Western NC Post-Helene support and expansion** included introducing R&L coaching to 3 districts hit hardest by Hurricane Helene and a partnership with the new WNC Resilience Project
- ✓ **NC Principal Fellows Program** partnership to provide training to new principals, faculty and staff from programs across the state
- ✓ **CORE Collaborative** is a new cohort to build leadership capacity for educators to build their own resilience teams and serve as trauma-informed leaders in their schools
- ✓ **Community Schools** partnership includes R&L coaches delivering R&L's full model in most community schools statewide

Released new resources

- ✓ Released [Trauma-Informed Educator Preparation Toolkit](#)
- ✓ New **Virtual Learning Series** in Spring 2025 reached 480 people. Additional series will take place in the fall and spring open to educators across the state

“I was able to connect more with students this year, even the more challenging ones. Remembering that students are humans just like we are, and they go through things that may be hard for them to process was really important. I found myself being more open and patient, and that has helped me be more empathetic and supportive for all students.”

In one district, schools receiving R&L coaching saw discipline referral rates decrease by an average of 27%, while comparison school rates increased by 6%. The reduction was the greatest for Black students.

See R&L's full impact report and learn more about the Center [here](#).



22 Districts
received some level
of trauma-informed
training or coaching



43 Schools
received our full model
of intensive ongoing
training and coaching



5.2K+ Staff
participated in
trauma-informed
training



17.5K+ Students
benefitted from full
model partnership
schools

THE DUDLEY FLOOD CENTER

2024-2025 Pipeline & Leadership Development Impact Spotlight



Dudley Flood Center for
Educational Equity and
Opportunity

WHAT IS THE DUDLEY FLOOD CENTER?

The Flood Center exists to disrupt systemic inequities in education by supporting educators, building district and state capacity, and aligning efforts across communities. Born out of the Public School Forum's Study Group XVI, the center is a statewide hub for advancing equity through policy, practice, and research. Guided by the **Framework for Change**, we cultivate leadership, inform equitable policy, and promote access and opportunity for every child in North Carolina.

Through our **Pipeline and Leadership Development** efforts, we invest in the development, retention, and advancement of equity-centered educators and leaders across North Carolina. From early-career teachers to district level positions, programs such as the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Fellows, Rural Teacher Leader Network, Jeanes Fellows, and the DRIVE Coalition strengthen a connected ecosystem of change agents driving transformational leadership in education.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS + IMPACT



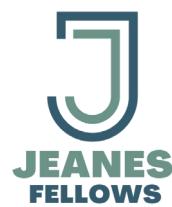
Welcomed **78 new members** in the first year, with Regional Committees in the East, Central, and West regions.

Published a major issue brief analyzing **over 10 years** of teacher diversity data in North Carolina



Served educators in **13 districts** in the eastern part of NC.

Welcomed **37 educators** into Cohort 3 of the Rural Teacher Leader Network.



Delivered over **70 hours of professional learning** to help fellows build equity-focused projects and strengthen community-school partnerships.

Launched the inaugural Jeanes Fellows Program in partnership with The Innovation Project, supported educators from **7 NC school districts**.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about the impact of the Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity & Opportunity please visit floodcenter.org or contact the center's Senior Director, Dr. Deanna Townsend-Smith.





Amplify Voice.

NC CAP mobilizes support for changes that will build a strong, sustainable foundation for afterschool, summer, and Out of School Time (OST) learning across North Carolina, including increasing public and philanthropic investment and advancing policies to help address your program's needs.

- ✓ Released a suite of [advocacy tools and materials](#) for the field
- ✓ Hosted a [Lights On Afterschool](#) celebration to raise awareness about the critical role of afterschool in NC
- ✓ Provided Advocacy PD to providers from across the state to support them in telling their stories



Data & Resources.

NC CAP conducts, compiles, and shares new research to make sure we are able to stay on top of the latest developments in the field. In 2024-2025 we conducted a Landscape Analysis of Afterschool in Northeastern NC, the latest addition to our regional-specific data-collection statewide. This research can be found at ncafterschool.org/regional-data/.



Enhance STEM & Career-Connected Learning in Afterschool.

NC CAP supports STEM and Career-connected learning in Afterschool through our STEM Hub, which includes STEM curriculum (including Career Connections), STEMinars, Professional Development, and our STEM Coalition.

- ✓ Hosted three convenings of the STEM Coalition (STEMCo), which brings together STEM Industries across sectors including higher education (4-year and community colleges), school districts, and other resources and partners, and created [The Afterschool & Industry Partnership Playbook](#) to support the development of partnerships between STEM industry and Afterschool
- ✓ Created more than a dozen new Career Connections available through our [STEM Hub](#)



Build Relationships & Grow Professionally.

NC CAP serves as a connector and convener, hosting regional convenings, facilitating afterschool collaboratives, and hosting the Synergy Conference, NC's only professional conference for OST providers.

- ✓ Led the [WNC After 3PM Collaborative](#), providing capacity-building and professional development for over 100 afterschool professionals across 47 afterschool programs in the 18 westernmost counties in North Carolina
- ✓ Hosted the annual [Synergy Conference](#) for afterschool professionals where more than 200 OST professionals from across the state received 2 days of professional development and engaged in facilitated relationship building

Contact Us

Building awareness of the most pressing public education issues and amplifying stories of student and educator resilience, innovation and brilliance in our local public schools across the state

The Forum champions our local public schools through various communication channels. Over 2024-25, we spoke to North Carolinians about the value of our local public schools, amplified education news, and shared analysis on policies and public investments that impact our schools through our weekly television program, email newsletter, social media, and op-eds.

Between Oct 2024-August 2025:

Education Matters Show

18

Episodes

4,777

YouTube views

5,950

Sound Cloud listens

Op-Eds

16

Published

30

Outlet features

Social Media

15,985

Audience across social media platforms:
X, Facebook, LinkedIn,
TikTok and Instagram



(+14.5% audience growth from previous year)

514,872

Total impressions

46,394

Total engagements

The Friday Report Newsletter

3,846

Subscribers

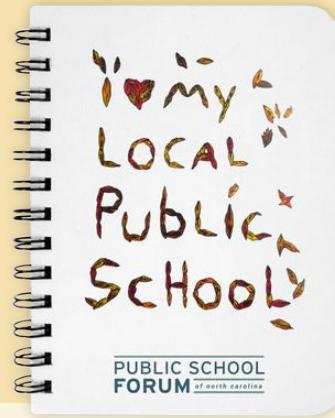
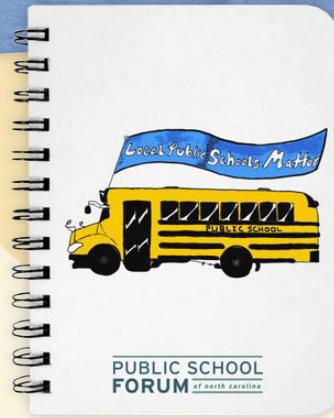
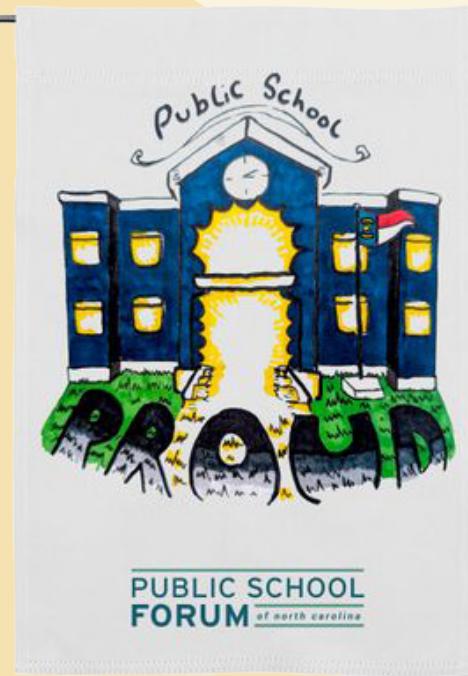


SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Show your love for public schools!



The student artwork featured throughout this report is now available on shirts, mugs, yard flags and more. Get yours today and pick up some gifts for the public school champions in your life!





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FORUM of north carolina