



2026 Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Information

Kevin Gray

Running for NC Senate 41

Candidate Responses

Q1: *In your view, what is the purpose and value of public education for North Carolina?*

A1: In my view, public education's purpose is to be available to equip every child with the foundational skills they need to become independent adults. Its value shows up in real-world outcomes, not in the good we intend, or how much money is spent per pupil. When schools chase ideology over instruction, kids get left behind. But when we focus on the basics like reading, writing, math, and critical thinking, and hold people accountable for results, we see the value in our public education system in the capable adults it produces.

Q2: *Do you believe that the state is adequately funding our public schools? What changes, if any, would you propose related to funding for education in order to ensure that every child has the opportunity to receive a sound basic education?*

A2: North Carolina has poured billions into public education, yet too many students still can't read or write at grade level. Funding isn't the problem, Mississippi proved that with skyrocketing 4th grade reading scores through better teacher training, not bigger budgets. I'd tie funding directly to results. Higher pay for teachers and schools that deliver the basics, and accountability, for those pushing ideology instead. Real opportunity comes from outcomes, not spending.

Q3: *As a member of the North Carolina General Assembly, what policies would you champion in order to ensure that all students have access to a qualified, diverse, dedicated educator workforce?*

A3: North Carolina needs a qualified teaching workforce, not shaped by diversity quotas. States like Mississippi and Florida show the path forward. Intensive training and performance incentives produced dramatic reading gains without chasing demographic checkboxes. I'd champion raising pay for teachers who deliver results in core subjects, cutting red tape so good educators can focus on teaching, and recruiting talent based on



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skill and commitment rather than identity. A diverse workforce happens when you attract the best people and hold them accountable to outcomes.

Q4: *Do you support the recent expansion of North Carolina's Opportunity Scholarship voucher program? What accountability measures should private schools receiving public tax dollars be held to?*

A4: The expansion of the Opportunity Scholarship voucher program gives families real choice, especially those trapped in failing schools due to jurisdictional red tape. So yes, I am in support of those kids who are living conditions that I grew up in, opportunities that I was not able to have.

Private schools receiving tax dollars should face accountability, but on the proper metrics. They need to show academic results in core subjects, not comply with the same bureaucratic rules or ideological mandates as public schools currently do. Transparency on outcomes is fair, but forcing them to adopt the same failing model would lead to the same results we've seen in our public schools.

Q5: *What do you think the General Assembly should do to ensure schools are equipped to address student well-being and mental health needs?*

A5: I think the General Assembly should focus mental health resources on real clinical needs, not on turning schools into therapy centers or ideological training grounds. We need more school counselors and partnerships with actual mental health professionals, but we also have to get parents back in the loop and identify issues that are spiking anxiety and confusion in our kids. Focusing on learning the basics and maintaining order in the classroom itself is a form of mental health support. Kids do better when they're not drowning in chaos, worried about global issues they can't fix, or being told their feelings define reality.
