

September 20, 2021

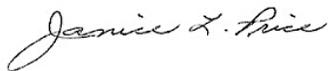
Statement on Leandro Compliance

The landmark case of *Leandro v. State of North Carolina* affirms every child's state constitutional right to a sound, basic education beginning in early childhood. For more than 25 years, North Carolina lawmakers from both parties have failed to meet this constitutional obligation. The NC Early Education Coalition supports the court-ordered compliance with the Leandro Plan to ensure that every child – regardless of race, family income, or zip code – has a foundation for success in school and in life.

The Leandro Comprehensive Remedial Plan was developed thanks to the work of state and national nonpartisan education and early childhood experts, and it details the policy, programmatic, and budgetary changes necessary to fulfill this constitutional obligation. The Leandro Plan is measured, evidence-based, and it is affordable.

The Leandro Plan recognizes the urgent need to expand funding to ensure that all children, especially children of color and children from underserved and marginalized communities, have access to a sound, basic education beginning in early childhood. The Leandro Plan includes funding for many policies and programs that have been and continue to be our top priorities, including Smart Start, Child Care WAGE\$, NC Pre-K, Child Care Subsidy Assistance, early intervention, and much more. These programs support young children and working families, the early childhood workforce, child care programs, and communities across North Carolina.

Leandro is an opportunity for our state to advance equity, change systems, and deliver on the promise of an opportunity for every child to fulfill their potential. This is an investment that we can't afford *not* to make. We stand in support of the court's order for the state to fully fund the Leandro Plan in order to fulfill the obligation to provide every child with a sound, basic education beginning in early childhood.



Janice Price
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