



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROY COOPER  
GOVERNOR

December 5, 2019

Dear North Carolina teachers and school personnel:

As we approach the holiday season, I know many of you are concerned about the status of public school teacher and staff pay raises for this school year. I am, too. I know how hard you work every day to ensure the children of our state have a great education and a bright future, and I thank you for that. Unfortunately, you haven't been afforded the respect you deserve in the legislative budget process.

When I vetoed the General Assembly's conference budget in June, I was in pursuit of a better deal for North Carolinians. One of my primary reasons for opposing the legislature's budget was the fact that it did not invest nearly enough resources in our public schools and those who take care of our students every day, especially our teachers and non-certified school personnel.

Instead of putting our students, educators, and school personnel first, the General Assembly's budget focused on corporate tax cuts and mandatory set-asides that will reduce the amount of state funding available to invest in salaries and public education both this year and in future years. In addition, the General Assembly's pay plan would have provided a paltry 3.9% average increase in teacher pay, a 2% increase in pay for non-certified school personnel, and a 1% cost of living adjustment for retirees over two years. As the professionals who take great care of our students every day, you deserve better.

My compromise budget proposal, which I sent the General Assembly leadership at the beginning of July, includes an average 8.5% increase in teacher pay, a 5% pay increase for non-certified school personnel, and a 2% cost of living adjustment for retirees over two years. Every teacher under my plan would see a pay raise, and the pay raise for non-certified school personnel would be equal to the raise the General Assembly gave to other state employees. In addition, these raises should be backdated so you can receive all your raise from July 1 to the present. We have the resources to make these important investments in our teachers and school personnel right now, and we should do it.

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In October, I offered to negotiate pay raises for teachers and non-certified school personnel separately from the rest of the budget, setting aside other pressing issues like Medicaid expansion. So far, the General Assembly leadership has not accepted my offer to talk.

I know we can find common ground on a reasonable pay plan for our educators. I encourage you to reach out to your legislators and ask them to negotiate with me around a better pay plan for teachers and non-certified school personnel. I am doing my part. Now we need them to do theirs.

Thank you for all that you do for students, their families, and our state's public schools. Your great work inspires me to keep fighting for all North Carolina students to have respected, effective teachers and quality schools.

With kind regards, I am

Very truly yours,



Roy Cooper