



North Carolina General Assembly
Senate Chamber
State Legislative Building
Raleigh, NC 27601-2808

February 4, 2020

The Honorable David Lee
N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts
PO Box 2448
Raleigh, NC 27602-2448

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Dear Judge Lee,

I write to invite you to testify during the short session before the Senate Education Committee to share your perspective and recommendations on education policy. In order to receive the most effective and productive input for our legislators to consider, we really need to hear from you in person.

For decades legislators have grappled with issues and policy options on how to best meet the challenge of providing the opportunity for a sound basic education for all of North Carolina's children. The good news is that everyone wants our children to get a quality education that's delivered effectively and efficiently. Opinions differ as to which education policies are most effective and best for our diverse student population. I want to hear and be in a position to consider as many of those opinions as possible, because that's what fosters better policy outcomes.

The fact that the *Leandro* case has been going on without resolution for a quarter-century – representing terms of six different governors, 13 legislatures, and with both major political parties in control at differing times – points to two key realities: 1) There are no easy answers to questions of which education policies deliver the best outcomes, and 2) a courtroom is not the optimal venue in which to resolve the complex policy challenges that have existed since the very first authorization for spending public funds for K-12 education more than 150 years ago.

Public education is the rare issue that can unite factions that often disagree on other policy matters. I strongly believe that broad stakeholder discussions help the legislature better execute its Constitutional duty to enact policy and appropriate funds. For that reason, please accept my invitation to share your perspective before the Senate Education Committee during the short session. This invitation will remain open until we find a mutually agreeable date and time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deanna Ballard".

Senator Deanna Ballard

