



**The Relationship Between Education and Politics in North Carolina:
A Historical Perspective**

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Abstract

My motivation for writing this paper is based on a twenty-five-year observation of the decline of North Carolina's public school system. I witnessed an aggressive and reactionary North Carolina state legislature reducing the investment for the education of the state's children. As a result, North Carolina has lost its progressive reputation in education. The purpose of this paper is to address the questions of how and why a socially conservative agenda realigned the direction of education in North Carolina. Through my research, I identified sources of tension between social conservatism and progressive liberal values pertaining to education over the past one hundred and fifty plus years. I discovered that there was a socially conservative faction that regained power through the United States Supreme Court rulings, out-of-state political funding, and right-wing super-lobbyists. The result is institutionalized segregation of North Carolina public education through the rapid expansion of charter schools, the support of private school voucher payments, and the defunding of public schools. These actions reflect the ongoing history of racial discrimination in North Carolina's public schools.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

North Carolina has a long reputation as the most progressive of the twelve Southern states. Unlike its southern neighbors, North Carolina was not the focus of nightly news broadcasts in the 1960s. During that decade, the lead stories were of physical violence against school integration and featured public schools and courthouses blockaded by racists governors utilizing state and local police. However today, despite the progress made over the ensuing fifty-plus years, North Carolina's education rankings fall behind national and regional student test scores, teacher compensation, and infrastructure improvements.

On May 13, 2016, *NC Policy Watch* stated, "While lawmakers in the North Carolina General Assembly pitch numbers over teacher pay, the National Education Association released its latest sobering report of pay rankings today, with North Carolina continuing to linger among the lowest paying states in the nation."¹ The *NC Policy Watch* report, which combines analysis of last year's pay with projections for the state's academic year, is a popular benchmark for comparing North Carolina educator pay to countrywide educator wages. In 2015, the National Education Association (NEA) ranked North Carolina forty-second in the nation, with an average

¹ Billy Ball. "In National Teacher Rankings, North Carolina Inches Up to 41st." *NC Policy Watch*, accessed February 12, 2019, <http://pulse.ncpolicywatch.org/2016/05/page/15/>.

teacher salary of approximately \$47,800. The state lagged behind the national average for teacher pay more than \$10,000 and ranked tenth out of the twelve states in the Southeast.²

The 2016 United States Census Bureau figures for the total average expenditures per pupil indicate that for charter and public schools, North Carolina ranked forty-fifth in the nation. At \$8,792 total spending per student, North Carolina trailed the national average of \$11,762 by 33 percent.³ A similar 2018 NEA report for per average pupil spending showed North Carolina positioned at thirty-ninth with \$9,528, which was \$2,300 less than the NEA's average for the national expenditures per student.⁴

Recently, on February 26, 2019, North Carolina Governor, Roy Cooper, endorsed a state school construction bond as a progressive step to enhance North Carolina's public schools. His plan calls for two-billion dollars in voter-approved funding of kindergarten through twelfth-grade renovation and construction needs. He stated, "Right now four in ten public schools in our state are at least fifty years old. That means they are still using the schools you and I went to.

² "Rankings & Estimates: Ranking of the States 2015 and Estimates of School Statistics." *National Education Associates*. 2016, accessed January 25, 2019, <http://www.nea.org/rankings-and-estimates>.

³ "2016 Public Elementary-Secondary Education Financial Data." *US Census Bureau*. 2018, accessed February 23, 2019. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2016/econ/school-finances/secondary-education-finance.html>.

⁴ "Rankings & Estimates: Ranking of the States 2015 and Estimates of School Statistics."

That is great for nostalgia but not so good for the students in classrooms with unreliable heating, leaking roofs, or crumbling walls.”⁵

Contrast the reality of current North Carolina financial commitment to education with its 1960s reputation as a model Southern state for “progressive politics.” The state portrayed gubernatorial vision, along with strong leadership and cooperation across party lines. This guidance established the Research Triangle Park, one of the five top research centers in the United States. During the same period, the state’s leadership supported significant growth of research universities: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, and Duke University.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the state made noticeable infrastructure improvements. A dramatically improved and expanded interstate highway system strengthened the state’s reputation as the “goods roads state.” The Southern Environmental Law Center, based at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, provided leadership, awareness, and legal action to protect air, water, and land resources.

The stellar reputation began to weaken in 1984 with the election of the first Republican Governor. For the next twenty-five years, the decisions of the politicians and leaders became increasingly conservative, replacing forward vision with social conservatism.

⁵ Cooper, Roy. “State of the State Address, February 25, 2019.” *NC Governor Roy Cooper*. 2019, accessed February 1, 2019. https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/2019_State_of_the_State_0.pdf.

As someone concerned about the future of North Carolina's public education, I ask this question: How and why North Carolina's progressive educational strategies became supplanted by an onslaught of neo-liberal activism focused on public education policy. To answer this question, I examine the history of education in North Carolina, the significance of influential political leaders, and the role federal initiatives played in determining the current direction of North Carolina's public education.

Chapter 2: The Foundation of Education in the United States

The United States and North Carolina share educational roots in the character, culture, and values of the early colonial settlers. Paul Monroe writes, “The men and women who founded colonial America were cast in a heroic mold. Their education was not primarily the education of the school. Their training was in the world: in the church, on the sea, in the ships, and on the land. Their generation had inherited two dominant ideas and two great forces of recent origin. These were the Renaissance and the Reformation.”⁶

The Renaissance Generates New Knowledge

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, new knowledge broadened man’s horizons of science, art, mathematics, geography, humanity, and politics. Artists and sculptors redefined art in their detailed presentation of the human form. Brunelleschi brought forward classical Roman architecture that expanded construction techniques. Explorers shattered the notion of a flat world by traversing uncharted seas in vessels smaller than the lifeboats now standard on modern ocean liners. The astronomers, Galileo and Copernicus, challenged and disproved the theory that the earth was the center of the celestial bodies. Instead, they separately showed the

⁶ Paul Monroe, *Founding of the American Public School System: A History of Education in the United States, from the Early Settlements to the Close of the Civil War Period*. (New York: The McMillan Company, 1940), 3.

earth was one element in a heliocentric system of multiple planets with a central sun. Columbus sought a trade passage to India and by chance discovered a new hemisphere. Magellan's crew sailed the world and in doing so gave humanity the knowledge of a circumnavigation route of the earth and broke the myth the world was flat. Newton, a scientist and mathematician, showed his genius with the "Three Laws of Motion."

As the wealth of creative, mathematical, astronomical, and geographical knowledge expanded, humanity challenged the reality of a universal church. The Reformation as a force of change gave Europeans a new way to look at their relationship with God and a universal church. Martin Luther posted his "95 Theses" on the doors of a German church. Henry VIII formed the Church of England in separation from the Roman Catholic Church. John Calvin, a Frenchman, challenged the status quo with his "Institutes of the Christian Religion." No longer was there a single church ruled from above by the edict of man. Now, an intellectual revelation to the relationship between man and the Divine fostered. The proliferation of questioning the primacy of the papacy over Christianity gave birth to a Protestant movement that produced various faith paths such as Puritans, Dutch Reformed, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Moravians, Quakers, and Methodists who in short-time populated the American colonies.

Aspirations of the New World Settlers

The men and women, who came to colonize, brought with them many aspirations. Some looked for excitement in the adventure of exploration. Others came with visions claiming treasures and riches. The religiously-oriented settlers wanted a haven to practice and observe

their respective interpretation of Christianity. All shared in a common desire to realize their worth and potential to humanity in a new world. They were a significant segment of society who gave up established norms, geographies, social networks, commercial ties, familial bonds, and routines to sail west into the unknown. In their blind leap for wealth, adventure, and religious freedom, it is safe to assume few held a singular purpose but embraced a varied mix of ambitions as they traveled to the New World.

As they arrived, the new colonists carried with them vestiges of the old experiences. The old societal norms and tenets were in the foundations of their desires for adventure and were forged in the challenges and burdens to create shelter, food, security, and a functioning society out of a wilderness. Their early attempts at education in the colonies began in Virginia. “The steps taken between 1619 and 1622 to provide schools for the colony of Virginia were frustrated by the Indian war which broke out in the latter year and was never successfully renewed during the colonial period.”⁷

In 1635, the first public school in the colonies became established in Boston. This school, known as Boston Latin School, was open to the public, but attendance was not free; tuition was required. Twelve years later, Massachusetts enacted the Act of 1647, which was not only the foundation of the Massachusetts school system, but it became the prototype of later legislation throughout the United States. This epoch-making law, the first of its kind in the world,

⁷ *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th Edition (New York: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1910), 984.

represented the public opinion of a colony of 20,000 persons living in thirty towns. It required every town of fifty house-holders to establish a school, the master of which should be paid either by the parents of the children taught or by public tax.⁸

The Act of 1647 was an early example of progressive vision made a reality via democratic decision process; it was a concept unique to the colonies during this time. This model paved a path for educating the masses far beyond the frontier of the English colonies. Horace Mann, an American educational reformer during the 1800s, commented on the significance of the Act: “It is impossible to conceive the boldness of the measure, which aimed at universal education through the establishment of free schools. In fact, it had no precedent in the world’s history; and in theory, it could have been refuted and silenced by a more formidable array of argument and experience than was ever marshaled against any institution of human origin.”⁹

The short-term value of the educational foundations rooted in Boston provided a reference for other colonies to emulate in developing their respective social responsibilities. Education principles, which became an essential part of the American culture, included: (1) education of the youth is essential to the well-being of society; (2) the state has the right and obligation to furnish an education; (3) the state has the power to establish a standard that determines a curriculum, length of the school year, mandatory attendance, and minimum

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

competency evaluations, and (4) the state can legitimately raise public funds for the financing of education. These four basic principles are an integral part of every state's public-school policy.¹⁰

M.C.S. Noble offers that the early advocates of education in North Carolina were Episcopal clergymen who came as missionaries. "The various missionaries of this early period made urgent and repeated requests for schoolmasters to be sent over to establish schools in which they should not only teach the usual secular branches but also give instruction in the church catechism."¹¹ The Massachusetts Colonial Governor, Lord Barrington, ordered that no one could provide education unless he was a minister licensed by the Bishop of London.¹² Noble adds, "Thus it is seen that in the early settlement of the province of a church was making efforts to provide and control education in what is now North Carolina."¹³

North Carolina's First Schools

The first recorded school in North Carolina was in Elizabeth City in Pasquotank County. It was a public school supported by private funds and functioned from 1705 through 1708. The school's teacher, Charles Griffin, who was an Episcopal teacher and lay reader, served there until

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ M.C.S. Noble, *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1930), 4.

¹² *The Colonial Records of North Carolina Vol. 7*, ed. Robert Cain, accessed February 1, 2019, https://www.uncpress.org/book/9780865262102/the-colonial-records-of-north-carolina-volume-7/?title_id=3947.

¹³ Noble, *A History of the Public Schools of North Carolina*, 4.

he was recruited by settlers to move to Chowan county and establish a new school.¹⁴ In 1712, another teacher, Mr. Mashburn, provided another early attempt at education in the village of Sarum near the present-day Ahoskie. At this school, Reverend Giles Rainsford inspected the students and reported back to English authorities. Rainsford commented on the reading and writing skills and ensured that the instruction was grounded in Christian principles. In his letter to the Bishop of London, he implored the value of the school and the need for funds to sustain the operation. However, the school was not sustained in part because of violent consequences lingering from the Indian war of 1711. Each of these early North Carolina schools was situated in the northeast Tidewater area of the Albemarle Sound.

The year 1745 introduced a different approach to supporting education. Edenton's commissioners authorized various public works to serve its citizens. The town's progressive action created a municipal commitment to public works and their financing. Livestock was not allowed to roam unfettered, and the owners were liable "under the penalty of twenty shillings for each and every offense."¹⁵ Also, the town authorized the selling of surveyed town lots with the express purpose of the funds used for the construction of the schoolhouse. What was significant about this decision was that Edenton truly had a public institution unfettered by religious supervision. Later, in 1770, records show the school continued, but the seven board members

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Noble, 10.

who were Episcopalians in the act of incorporation, stated the teachers had to be a member of the “established Church.” Thus, what began as a secular school now morphed into a “state-aided school.” This action was a forerunner of future state legislators favoring financial assistance to private schools allied to Christian denominations.

As the colony grew, it developed the social and cultural characteristics found in human settlements. Among these were orphans and needy children from situations of warfare, disease, accidents, and abandonment. In 1766, a law was enacted to create a public school in New Bern. The public wanted the school, and the Assembly authorized the sale of lots and taxes to fund the project. Noble tells us, “subscribers were desirous that the benefits (school) should be as extensive as possible that the poor who were unable to educate their children should partake of these benefits.”¹⁶ The act of 1766 also gave the Assembly taxation power by “placing a tax of a penny a gallon for all rum and other spirituous liquors imported into the Neuse River.”¹⁷ This forward step in policy for New Bern laid the groundwork for future North Carolina settlements to have a mechanism to allow public financing of education.

The meaning of “public school” in eighteenth-century colonial North Carolina deserves comment. First, while under King George there was the policy that the colonial schools must have only teachers approved by the Church of England. Second, “public school” was associated

¹⁶ Ibid., 15

¹⁷ Ibid.

with the notion of public land sold as well as a public tax on imported spirits financed the construction. A far different description and meaning of the modern-day definition of “public schools.”

Other colonies tried to adopt and implement a program similar to Boston though none proved permanent. What did emerge before 1776 were many colleges privately funded and oriented to religious training in a particular Protestant sect. These included ten schools located from New Hampshire to Virginia. Among them were: Harvard University (1636); College of William and Mary (1693); Yale University (1701); Princeton University (1746); Washington and Lee (1749); University of Pennsylvania (1749); Columbia University (1754); Brown University (1764); Rutgers College (1766); and Dartmouth College (1769). The presence of these institutions initially provided education and training for various Protestant denominations. Later, they expanded their offerings in the humanities. The study of Greek and Latin led to the study of classic works, which prompted the need for a different academic preparation than found in the basic education associated with public schools. Schools with an academy focus, as found on the continent, appeared in various colonies. Often, the instructors were recent graduates of one of the universities and colleges mentioned above. The academy model, based on the study of Latin, Greek, and the classics, prepared the student for college-level studies. These academies were private and almost exclusively were for male students. None had a formal calendar year, consistent curriculum, and often were held in a private home that might board some of the

students. These universities provided the future educators, ministers, and lawyers who were to serve the colonies as they moved towards a Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Chapter 3: Public Education Arrives in North Carolina

North Carolina adopted its state constitution in 1776, and the document included formal provisions for public education. This proclamation raised academic policy to an official state responsibility; however, the text did not go into detail about the funding, curriculum, instructional certification, length and dates for an academic calendar, accessibility by age, gender, and race, and staffing. Instead, North Carolina claimed education as one of its state powers. Since the United States Constitution did not include many powers as a federal responsibility, the states were ceded the responsibility and authority for items not deemed a federal power under the national constitution.

Each of the states had their timeline for formalizing and implementing the powers they deemed as states' rights. There was no consistency among the states for various aspects of public policy adoption and implementation. Individual states had their particular basis for the interpretation of what their public education would become. Timelines, organizational planning, curriculums, funding sources, design and construction of infrastructure, instructor certification, and length of the academic year remained to be defined. The states' footings for going forward with education policy became the nascent colonial era instruction forms. These early schools varied by colony through two shared characteristics: religious heritage and disposable financial resources. These features prevailed as the driving forces that provided instruction to colonial-era children.

Paul Monroe argued, “In the analysis of our educational growth, certain great features are assigned to specific periods: thus, education is said to have been universalized in the Colonial period, nationalized and democratized in the early National period.”¹⁸ Along with education, other elements of governance awaited development by each of the thirteen emerging states existed. The importance of codifying laws, formulating revenue sources, establishing a judicial system, organizing political systems, and conducting elections varied by state. Colonials inherently drew upon their lived experience and colonial institutions under King George III. Monroe writes, “During the Colonial Period the idea that a certain type of education was necessary for each class in society became generally accepted. So did the belief that every self-sufficient social group or colony should have an educational system.”¹⁹

The Spectrum of Colonial Period Education

In the colonies, the early education forms and options included a wide range of institutions with ten universities at the top of the spectrum. They produced religious ministers, professional leaders, and academic instructors. Additionally, Latin-form academies provided an education based on grammar, language, and humanities that enabled development for university matriculation. The footing for basic education enabled the reading of scripture and hymnals coupled with composition and basic counting covered the most common modes of instruction.

¹⁸ Monroe, *Founding of the American Public School System*, 185.

¹⁹ Ibid.

The last element in colonial education offered an apprenticeship program where the tactile learners served under a master craftsman who mentored his prodigy for approximately seven years in trades such as a blacksmith, a cobbler, or a carpenter. Besides the tradecraft aspect, the master also provided fundamental skills such as reading, grammar, penmanship, and arithmetic for conducting client transactions. The format, organization, context, and demographics of the states' initial education options varied by state as much as their geography and financial resources fluctuated.

In the post-independence era, the states faced similar challenges beyond the basic classroom. These tasks included how to incorporate a formal policy for including female students, define secondary education, address the geographic nature of an individual school, and governance of an education system. These efforts fostered the onset of the democratization of education. In time, the individual states found their voice and blazed a path that availed public education for all individuals while providing a universalization of a common knowledge base.

Early Public Education in North Carolina

In 1770, Charlotte was a small village on the western frontier of colonial North Carolina. Though far removed from the colonial capital in New Bern, the citizens in Charlotte understood the need for a college. At the time, in other states, several academies existed that prepared young men for university instruction. The civic leaders of western North Carolina gathered and applied for a charter to form a college; and on January 15, 1771, the North Carolina Assembly, in session at New Bern, chartered a college to be known as Queen's College. "This movement to establish a

college in North Carolina was destined to contribute to the advancement of public and private life among our people far beyond anything dreamed of by its friends and promoters.”²⁰ The charter had two clauses, which proved disastrous for Queen’s College. “The first of these stipulated that no person should be elected president of the institution unless he were a member of the established church. The second clause provided raising ‘some certain revenue’ for the support of the college. These two clauses were to prove its undoing when the charter came before the King for his approval.”²¹ The foresight and commitment of developing a university in the far southern reaches of the colonial territories were forward thinking and bold. The charter, when presented to the King’s advisor Richard Jackson, aroused a reactionary decision. At this time, one of the seeds fermented in a colonial cauldron boiled over in 1776 and triggered a rebellion. Royal forces control and denial counterbalanced the seesaw of hope and aspiration in the colony. At play, a policy stating that the Church of England remained as the licensed form of Christianity in North Carolina, and taxation was the King’s authority, while the citizens of western North Carolina were predominately Presbyterians. Richard Jackson, King’s counsel advised, “from the Prevalency of the Presbyterian persuasion within the county of Mecklenburg.... The college will operate as a seminary for the education and instruction of

²⁰ Noble, 16.

²¹ Ibid., 17.

youth in the principles of the church Presbyterian.”²² The interpretation of this statement was that official England did not “think it well to give encouragement to a sect of dissenters.”²³ The school’s charter designated that the education funds retain whiskey sales as its source. Jackson “thought that from the looseness of the wording, the clause might be made to tax British spirits into the county of Mecklenburg and at same time exempt from tax all spirits made and sold within the county.”²⁴ However, in 1772 Queens College did not receive a royal charter for a college; although a Presbyterian seminary for ministers opened in Charlotte.

As North Carolina adopted its state constitution, it included two articles important for education. The North Carolina authors remembered, with the conviction, the earlier decrees of King George III who ruled against Presbyterian ministers and the local liquor tax to fund Queens College. These statesmen did not allow the Presbyterians to form Queens College in 1772 after the colonial governor had approved doing so in 1770. Additionally, lingering resentment continued over King George III’s royal decree that only Episcopalians could be licensed instructors in the North Carolina colony.

The two grievances were incorporated into the North Carolina Constitution by two constitutional articles. The first of these complaints found a remedy in Article XLI stated:

²² Ibid., 18.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid., 19.

“A School or Schools shall be established by the legislature for the convenient Instruction of Youth, with such Salaries to the Masters paid by the Public, as may enable them to instruct at Low Prices; and all useful Learning shall be duly encouraged and promoted at one or more Universities.”²⁵ Likewise, Article XXIV addressed religion and proclaimed: “There shall be no Establishment of any one Religious Church in this state in Preference to any other.”²⁶ These two articles were remarkable for the development of an instructional system. One provided, by law, the first state-sponsored public university in the United States, the University of North Carolina. The other article established legally that no one religion has preference over another. These two steps were progressive. They demonstrated democratic responses to royal decrees. Together they helped define the autonomy that formal education needed from outside agents imposing their will on the dissemination of knowledge.

On April 8, 1777, the North Carolina legislature met for the first time in New Bern. Senator Alexander and Delegate Avery represented Mecklenburg County. Earlier they each played instrumental roles in the state’s Articles incorporation on education in the state constitution. They also were trustees of the unofficial Queens College. As a team, they worked to move legislation through the House to the Senate and win approval of giving a legal certification to Mecklenburg Seminary (Queens College) by calling it Liberty Hall. In short order, North

²⁵ N.C. Const., art. XLI.

²⁶ N.C. Const., art XXIV.

Carolina had a chartered school within a few months of convening its first legislature. Liberty Hall went forward for seven years supported on private tuition and morphed into Salisbury Academy in 1785. This life span was characteristic for the early academies as the demographics of students aged out, families relocated, and instructors found new positions.

As North Carolina entered its first decades as a state, the educational focus was on establishing a university. The University of North Carolina was formally chartered on December 11, 1789. Shortly afterward land was purchased in Chapel Hill, and plans for building design and construction commenced. The first class was received on January 15, 1795.

Primary and secondary state-sponsored public schools were slow in formalization. The path to schooling initially followed the colonial form of private academies. By 1800, there were approximately forty private academies across the state with predominately white male students. Characteristically, the model was a private home where students boarded and were given instruction by a recent university graduate. Typically, the teacher came from Harvard or Princeton. The students were often the sons of planters who joined together enough in numbers to financially sustain the instructor and house their children. Annual attendance could vary from four to six months depending on the number of students and their mastering of the academic work provided.

Two exceptions to this academy model were found respectively in Salem and Warrenton, North Carolina. Salem was a Moravian settlement that had a history of gender equality where women had a political voice, could own property and were encouraged to attend school. The

Moravians shared a philosophy that could be viewed today as one with several progressive aspects. They formed Salem Academy in 1772, and later it became Salem College for educating women. After the turn of the century in 1808, Jacob Mordecai, an educated and a respected citizen of Warrenton, North Carolina, opened his seminary in Warrenton to educate young women. His curriculum included English, arithmetic, geography, writing, music and voice, and needlework. His institution attracted young women from the principal villages of the day including Petersburg and Farmville, Virginia, along with young women from Fayetteville, Wilmington, Raleigh, and Northeast Tidewater in North Carolina

With the turn of the century, Noble noted:

In 1802, or just thirteen years after North Carolina entered the Union, a new voice, speaking with the authority of high political position, began to be heard in behalf of public education in the state. This new voice was the voice of our governors, who from this time forward advocated in their messages to the legislature the establishment of schools for the education of the children of the state. In the opinion of all the early governors, the perpetuation of the liberty won by the blood of the fathers in the great Revolution could be made certain only by a general diffusion of learning and science. A government resting upon the will of the people would never be safe unless they were educated, and hence the great necessity for popular education. ²⁷

The leaders of the post-colonial North Carolina recognized the need and value for education beyond basic literacy. Their experience under and apart from English rule instilled in them the

²⁷ Noble, 30.

notion that a democratic republic can only be sustained when a society accepts and respects the rule of law.

In their formal addresses to the state, all of the ensuing governors included some mention on the value and need to educate young North Carolinians, and the need for an educated public to sustain the republican form of governance. Another message highlighted the necessity for knowledge in all corners of the state for unity. These early governors concurred on a theme that ignorance was the source of power for despots, and the knowledge disseminated would solidify the state. On an annual basis, much talk transpired about the importance of statewide education, but no formal policy began until 1816.

Archibald Murphey of Orange County, an early graduate of the University of North Carolina in 1799, became known as the “Father of North Carolina Public Education” because of his education policy papers and reports. He became a state legislator, and in 1816, at the urging of Governor Miller, he constructed the first legislative report on the formal position of the state relating to public education. This report asked for, “a system which would include schools for teaching the rudiments of education as well as those in which the highest branches would be taught.” He added, “the state must feed, clothe, and educate the children of the poor at public expense because many of them would be most useful citizens and from them would come teachers who would in turn gratuitously teach any poor children placed in their schools”²⁸ His

²⁸ Ibid., 35.

plea was heard and understood by the legislative bodies. They responded by appropriating \$500,000 as seed money for state primary and secondary education.

In 1817, Murphey, as the appointed chairman of the committee charged with documenting an outline of public education, followed with a second report. His efforts ranked him as the foremost educational statesmen in post-independent North Carolina. Noble describes Murphey's work as "a masterpiece of constructive and suggestive thinking on public instruction and bears on its face the evidence of careful thought and patient investigation of school systems. He was a thinker so far ahead of his time, yet the essentials of his dreams are the foundation of our present educational structure."²⁹ In his education position papers, Murphy included the provision to establish The Board of Public Instruction. His plan called for an open election of six members with three from the area east of Raleigh and three from the western lands. The Board was to be responsible for the location of schools (primary education) and academies (secondary grades). Other powers of the Board included hiring and compensating the teachers. The Board of Public Education was to structure the examination, competency, and promotion of the students. The Board instituted a provision that no academy could be opened in an area until the primary school was established. Significant to Murphey's plan was the vision to see an overall state educational scheme that included primary, secondary, and university instruction under the

²⁹ Ibid., 36.

guidance and supervision of a state-chartered administration. Adopting Murphey's proposal was North Carolina playing its state's role in the post-war Nationalization of education.

In succeeding years, North Carolina continued to add plans and policies in support of education. Among these, providing a funding source in 1825 for the State Literary Fund emerged. This plan provided the initial county funding for constructing and equipping schoolhouses as centers of learning. The fund operated until the Civil War when it became bankrupt. Despite Murphey and his cohorts' efforts to fund state education outside special interests used political leverage to divert education monies for their projects. As a result, never more than 20 percent of the monies went to education. Paul Monroe in his chronicling of the American School Systems wrote, "Prolonged agitation, the consideration of many bills by the state legislature, and finally, the realization that one-third of the white population was illiterate led to a permissive free school law in 1839."³⁰

North Carolinians were frustrated over the state's promises via the Literary Fund to provide education funding. They argued for action and construction after tiring of unfulfilled promises. In 1839, a common school law was enacted which empowered counties to raise funds to supplement what the state offered. This local control of funding, combined with local school superintendents, had a marked effect. School construction proceeded and expanded knowledge across the state.

³⁰ Monroe, 287.

Not all was good from the 1839 decree as Monroe offered, “But because of hostile social sentiment, fostered particularly by the friends of the private or old field schools, the stigma of pauperism adhered to those using free schools, and the system never flourished.”³¹ The rapid expansion of schools, resentment of vested interests, and lack of vetted supervision trained in education led to growing pains and scattering of positive results. However, the hostile social sentiment towards public funding of instruction might have been an early demonstration of reactionary behavior. As Monroe relates there was a social stratification between the affluent and the illiterate. This classification may have been an early foreboding of class warfare by making it difficult for the poor to rise above their social and economic status. In the nineteenth century, Murphey’s wing was leading North Carolina forward in the South by raising literacy and disseminating knowledge. At the same time, other forces were working to detour dedicated education monies for their personal financial objectives. The planter class diverted school funds to finance roads and bridges to reduce transportation costs of agricultural commodities. Allied with this financial detour is a social stratification power move to restrict and stigmatize secondary learning options for the poor white’s upward mobility. This scenario began to be played out in the 1830s as conservative groups worked to hold power over the poor and undereducated white population. Thus, began a recurrent theme in North Carolina political conservative attitudes toward education.

³¹ Ibid.

The ensuing years leading up to a period of rebellion and secession saw schools constructed across the state. Also, a state superintendent's office of Common Schools was created, and an academic calendar published. Calvin Wiley was the first to occupy the State Superintendent's office in 1852. His position developed from a need for leadership, direction, and management of a sprawling state enterprise. The number and geographic dispersal of common schools required a unified direction and educational standards while the counties remained the primary organizers and funding sources for schools. One hundred counties and several hundreds of schools created an administrative challenge. To handle this task, nine superintendents, one per congressional district, were provided and an overall State Superintendent was appointed. This arrangement provided the needed regional inspection, direction, and adherence to North Carolina's statewide policies for instruction.

The real contributions of Calvin Wiley to North Carolina were innovative, progressive, and durable. From his perspective, Wiley was able to identify the need for a system that produced and supplied teachers from more than one university. He saw the value in formalizing policies that not only added sites for teacher training but also promoted the recruitment of female teaching candidates for women-specific training. Wiley's genius recognized a solution to abate conservative desires for a status quo on the primacy of private academies for secondary education. Wiley used economic logic to accomplish two personal goals for NC education. First, he wanted a longer school year of nine to ten months because it would offer financial stability to teachers. Often it in the prevalent school years of four to six months, teacher-turnover was rooted

in financial needs. Secondly, he saw that the planter class had an economic cost besides an emotional burden of separation based on formal education. They would have to send their children away for ten months to be schooled and not reared at home. Wiley completed a financial study that made it feasible to fund and staff new secondary schools for ten months by appealing to the planters. His plan showed it was financially less expensive, socially productive, and strengthened the landed class family structures to spend their monies at local schools via taxes, subscriptions, and outright donations. This strategy was his genius and gift to strengthening North Carolina public schools. Not all the conservatives were won over, particularly those in the far eastern reaches of the state. The tide of opinion changed such that North Carolina went to a ten-month academic calendar, secondary schools grew in numbers, education levels rose, females now had an equal opportunity at a professional career, and several Normal Teaching institutes were erected.

Beyond the classroom and its administration, Wiley had witnessed many young men leave North Carolina for the southwestern lands beyond the Blue Ridge. He began to promote remaining in North Carolina through public addresses. He extolled North Carolina as a desirable place to live and praised the school curriculum that recognized the state's natural resources and diversity of weather for varied agriculture. He also embraced the value of technology from the benefit of building a railroad to connect coastal ports with the western mountains and beyond. Wiley recognized that the youth were leaving for hope and prosperity in other states. He saw an alternative to stop the emigration of youth. Wiley promoted the message those ideals were

awaiting in North Carolina through education, knowledge, and adaption of new technology.

Calvin Wiley and his followers added to Murphey's ideal of public education as a prime agent for social change. Their public addresses and written proclamations of North Carolina's commitment to education added to early building North Carolina's reputation as a progressive Southern state.

Chapter 4: Education After the Civil War

When discussing North Carolina's development of education and its progressive reputation, it is essential to understand the culture and mindset of the general population of 1861. As the drumbeat for secession rumbled in North Carolina, two distinct sides of public opinion existed. The first faction, the pro-union group grew in numbers and voice as they moved westward from the coastal plain to Piedmont and then to the far western mountains. The planter class, the second group who lived in the Southeast, led the debate for secession.

The Question of Secession

The slave labor-oriented economy was only profitable in the Cape Fear river basin down to Wilmington. This area provided a combination of suitable land and the water-borne transportation necessary for economic viability. North Carolina's geography and navigable water access were minimal when compared to the colonial tidewater agriculture model of South Carolina and Virginia.

Why was North Carolina divided over the question of secession? Paul Escott argues, "The people of North Carolina were singularly unenthusiastic about the prospect of leaving the Union and joining a new Southern government. Despite the influence of an actively pro-secession governor, John Ellis, they refused to even hold a convention and showed their intention

of sending a large majority of unionist delegates to the convention, had it been approved.”³²

North Carolina moved towards secession only after the Confederate troops assaulted Ft. Sumter, in Charleston, South Carolina on April 12, 1861. “Lincoln promptly called for troops from loyal states to support the insurrection. ‘You can get no troops from North Carolina,’ Governor Ellis told the United States Secretary of War.”³³ The opening of hostilities swayed public opinion to have North Carolina secede. May 20, 1861 marked the official date North Carolina seceded from the Union.

The decision to secede had ominous consequences for North Carolina. In short order, the United States Navy blockaded most of the coastline. The naval siege resulted in drastic reductions of critical items; the most significant was the loss of salt. War demanded armies, which in turn required manpower. Escott reveals that nearly one-fourth of all conscripts in the Southern armies’ 121,348 men came from North Carolina. The total loss of life from volunteers and conscripts exceeded 40,000.”³⁴ Also, historians estimate that over 30,000 men became maimed with loss of limbs. The aftermath of the Civil War in 1865 caused North Carolina to lose nearly an entire generation of young men. Their deaths left behind destitute widows and orphans.

³² Paul D. Escott, “Unwilling Hercules: North Carolina in the Confederacy.” in *The North Carolina Experience: An Interpretative and Documentary History*, ed. Lindley B. Butler and Alan D. Watson (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), 266.

³³ *Ibid.*, 266.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 267.

In total, the physical, emotional and financial consequences of the ill-fated rebellion derailed the prosperous momentum that North Carolina experienced in the 1850s.

Reconstruction and Education in North Carolina

An inspection of North Carolina education during the Civil War validates that the state's students and teachers shared in the suffering. The traditional sources of educational material and supplies resided in New England. Therefore, for North Carolina, locating books and paper was difficult because of the lack of quality paper and publishing capacity in the state. Additionally, forced conscription and volunteers significantly reduced instructors. The shortage of instructors facilitated Public School Superintendent Calvin Wiley's desire to increase the number of female educators. In 1859, a state report showed female teachers comprised 7.5 percent of the state's teacher population. By 1863, females were 40 percent of the total number of teachers.³⁵ Since vast numbers of students suffered from the conflict, attendance dropped severely, attendance. In 1859 seventy-seven counties reported a school attendance of 108,938 children; in 1863, fifty counties reported 35,495 attendees.³⁶

In addition, as the Civil War prompted expropriation of available funds for war bonds, the State Literary Fund became depleted. The fund closed on March 18, 1865 and became

³⁵ Nobel, 245.

³⁶ Ibid.

another casualty of the Civil War. Sherman's Army approached Raleigh in April of 1865, which was twenty-five years after North Carolina founded the common school program.

Education in North Carolina faced a myriad of challenges in the transition from war to peace to Reconstruction. There were questions of personnel, student numbers, financing, and rebuilding the structures damaged and abandoned. A search began for textbooks and instructional material that did not extol the virtues of the South nor anti-Union sentiments. Then with the emancipation of the slaves, there arose an unexpected need to provide education to those freed slave children. Escott offers the paradox of North Carolina Civil War experience by explaining that North Carolinians undoubtedly took little pleasure in deciding to continue a war effort that had brought them despair, but most saw no other choice. A state that had not favored secession became the bulwark for secession's cause. A state that was a center of disaffection became a pillar of strength for the Confederacy."³⁷

May 29, 1865 marked the beginning of Reconstruction as President Andrew Johnson appointed W.W. Holden as the Governor of North Carolina. Holden was a pro-union and anti-secessionist North Carolinian who led the way to recovery. A constitutional convention began in Raleigh on October 2, 1865. "On the same day in Raleigh, a meeting of prominent colored men adopted an address to present to the convention. They asked for the passage of laws as would be

³⁷ Escott, "Unwilling Hercules: North Carolina in the Confederacy." in *The North Carolina Experience: An Interpretative and Documentary History*, 271.

helpful as freedmen and the education of their children so as to make them useful citizens.”³⁸

The first legal action to support “colored” education came on March 10, 1866; under this action, “colored apprentices” were bound to white people who served as mentors to their “wards” in tradecraft, reading, and arithmetic.³⁹

The state’s Republicans led the re-opening of schools and the operation of education policies. White pro-union supporters, freed slaves, and white northerners who resettled to lead Federal Reconstruction composed the Republican party. Their legislature during these initial years reopened the school system for both races but did not provide the funding required. “The new school system, and public institutions in general, were racially segregated. In contrast to previous regimes, Republicans made an effort to provide equal facilities.”⁴⁰ The party of Lincoln, the Republicans, looked to the future with goals of equality. The gains were short-lived as the northern states lost interest in the Reconstruction program. Thus, the North Carolina conservatives regained power as Democrats and allowed Negro schools to degrade. The Democrats, especially the legislative body, worked, “disfranchising their opponents in the years

³⁸ Noble, 271.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 274.

⁴⁰ Allen W. Trelease, “Reconstruction: The Halfway Revolution” in *The North Carolina Experience: An Interpretative and Documentary History*, ed. Lindley B. Butler and Alan D. Watson (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), 292.

that followed, they maintained that power, with the exception of a fusion period, for almost a century.”⁴¹

A bright light began to shine on NC education with a movement towards graded schools. Calvin Wiley had advocated for graded classrooms in 1860, but the Civil War prevented the program. In 1873, individual school districts began to clamor for organizing school houses by grade level and abandoning the schoolhouse where multiple grade years shared the same classroom. This arrangement became recognized as a liberal progressive and local effort to improve educational effectiveness. The origin of the grade-level school came from Peabody Schools in Massachusetts. Peabody Schools were post-Civil War schools, texts, and teachers funded through northern philanthropic efforts. Their influence was immediate as attendance and grades improved, and students and parents recognized their value. The Peabody Schools closed in a few years after the Civil War as the teachers returned home.

North Carolina's Post-Reconstruction Education Efforts

As North Carolina's economy and finances improved, cities and towns pushed for graded schools. Senators and Delegates from various jurisdictions introduced waivers for their constituents to have a local choice. At this time, the North Carolina Department of Instruction controlled all aspects of post-Civil War education. Gradually, the state increased the local options for graded schools but did not fund them. However, the local option charters received the

⁴¹ Ibid., 294.

authority to initiate a local tax to pay for graded schools. Depending on whether a school became labeled as “white” or “black” districts determined their funding, and each district funded their graded schools. Though not an exercise of racial equality, the graded schools were locally democratic actions. Various towns and rural locations obtained the state’s authorization for local levies to fund local school construction. This movement was the first progressive effort since the Civil War to restore education and move it forward. By 1883, graded schoolhouses were becoming the model for the state’s public school initiative.

Paralleling the local school effort was a demand for providing more training for teachers. A Normal School was established at the University of North Carolina; for the first time, the Chapel Hill campus included women. In 1877, six weeks of summer instruction were offered to an “enrollment of 235 students, of whom were 128 men and 107 women. Of this number 117 were teachers and the others were preparing to teach. The normal school’s purpose was to improve scholarship and the art of teaching.”⁴²

In 1877, Governor Vance addressed the legislature on education and made a special notation. His speech marked the first public official’s commentary on Negro education. Noble writes that “Vance made a provision be made for the training of colored teachers. His opinion was that to provide for the training of colored teachers was the plain duty of the state.”⁴³ Vance

⁴² Noble, 414.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 420.

carried this idea farther and expanded the program into two four-month terms at a site in Fayetteville with the support of the town's citizens. The success in Fayetteville led to the legislature establishing four additional colored schools in 1881. Within ten years, there were a total of 235, 911 children in "colored" schools. Noble commented that, "Colored schools were unequal to the needs, but they have improved, and they will continue to improve and send to the colored schools every year an increasing number of teachers of character, education, and devotion."⁴⁴ The post-Reconstruction racial inequality was rooted and continued because of the state legislature's control of funding. Governors wanted to be agents of change but did not have the authority under the new constitution.

In 1899, the Conservative Democrats regained control of the North Carolina legislature. This political block had its roots in the same forces that pursued the state's secession. Even after over thirty years, their old desires and cultural mindset remained. Once in power, the Democrats speedily exerted their restored power. The first orders focused on the dismantling of the reforms brought about initially through Reconstruction and later codified in a new state constitution. The progressive actions attacked included racial equality laws, expanded voting rights, school curriculums that did not promote Southern rebellion, and expansion of public education opportunities. These forward-looking aspects of post-war North Carolina arose from a coalition of pro-union white North Carolinians, relocated post-Reconstruction northern whites, freed

⁴⁴ Ibid., 427.

blacks, and poverty-stricken white North Carolinians. The conservative Democratic forces viewed all members of these collaborations as a collection of carpet baggers, scalawags, white trash, and less than human. Each segment of the hopeful cohorts had a stake in the new societal and cultural changes. The progressive door of opportunity opened from a war was overturned by the restoration of conservative power structures.

Chapter 5: Education in the Twentieth-Century

With the election of Governor Charles B. Aycock in 1900, coupled with the election of Furnifold M. Simmons to the United State Senate, men of unquestioned Democratic pedigree once more held the reins of government. For the first time since Reconstruction began, the dissenting voices had been decisively silenced, and opposition to the old South became suppressed.⁴⁵ They masterminded a plan to use literacy testing as a vehicle to control the black vote. Nevertheless, because of the high white illiteracy rate they had a political plan that would not work. Hence, they had to increase education funding to raise the white literacy rate so as to increase the pool of eligible white voters. With this action, Simmons spent the next three decades in the Senate and was the absolute ruler of the North Carolina Democratic party. His reign outlasted various governors and state legislators while he maintained his conservative grip on all aspects of North Carolina politics until the Great Depression.

Governor Aycock, reactionary in most aspects as a conservative politician, differed in one respect from Simmons and his ultra-conservative cohorts by favoring an education policy for both black and white students. Aycock, a committed segregationist, supported education for white and black students. In 1901, he successfully increased local authority options to generate

⁴⁵ Jeffrey J. Crow, "Cracking the Solid South: Populism and the Fusionist Interlude." in *The North Carolina Experience: An Interpretative and Documentary History*, ed. Lindley B. Butler and Alan D. Watson (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 342.

local taxes for local schools to spur school construction. At the same time, Aycock fought attempts not to fund black education, and he forged a legislative compromise. He asked that the dedicated school taxes drawn on white properties go to white schools and requested that the black tax base support black education. His opponents wanted 100 percent of the tax base funds to go solely to white education. Aycock made certain that state and local taxing options did not favor one race at the expense of the other. In the same year, Aycock consolidated the school districts, and his orders abolished three hundred dysfunctional school districts across North Carolina. At last, action for that legislative calendar occurred when he reorganized the State Literary Fund as a revolving loan fund for school construction, thereby adding to the funding sources for school construction. In 1903, Aycock successfully promoted the first state financial appropriations of revenues in direct support of public education. He was resilient in both promoting and defending equal education as he was in segregation. To the end, he remained a committed conservative and racist who opposed the progressive reforms brought on with Republican and Reconstruction programs.

With the reactionary powers of Senator Furnifold in place, no legislation initiatives that offered progressive educational action occurred for three decades; only policy adaptations were instituted. In 1913, North Carolina added the Compulsory Attendance Act, required attendance for a least four months per year for all children between the ages of eight and twelve. In 1917, the State Board of Education placed teacher certification under the State Board of Examiners.

Subsequently, in 1920, the state expanded the school calendar to six months. North Carolina's educational progress remained static until the state political landscape changed.

A New Generation of Leaders Emerge

The agent of change arrived in 1929 as the new elected a new governor, O. Max Gardner of Gastonia, built his coalition to supplant the entrenched conservative allies of Senator Simmons. Gardner was an industrialist from west of Charlotte, while Simmons was a lifetime politician from eastern North Carolina. The shift was a political realignment that influenced various aspects of the state's public policy. Gardner's election "marked the arrival of a new generation of leaders in the progressive plutocracy. He was the first gubernatorial candidate who did not run against Reconstruction or 'evoke fears of Negro domination associated with the Wilmington Race Riot' in 1898."⁴⁶

The School Machinery Act marked one of Garner's most noteworthy contributions to the state's education policies. The stock market crashed, and the Great Depression occurred in his first year of service. In response, Gardner, in dual roles as both the governor and the new political power, acted to stem the social and financial impact on the state. His partnership with the legislature produced a variety of legislation including aspirational policies to assist education.

⁴⁶ Karl Campbell. "Tar Heel Politics in the Twentieth Century: The Rise and Fall of Progressive Plutocracy" in *New Voyages to North Carolina: Reinterpreting North Carolina History*, ed. Larry E. Tise and Jeffrey J. Crow (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press), 250.

The School Machinery Act, a significant legislation, replaced local authority over education with state control. Its main thrust generated funds to keep the schools open since most counties did not have funds. This program guaranteed each county a minimal amount of state financial support to keep the schools operational. The act forced all school systems to provide free education, and they had to comply with state operational guidelines. The law specified that no longer would the counties have to match the state allotment of funds with local monies. This final segment of relief action established a new State Board of Education that directed a program that provided a uniform salary schedule for all teachers and principals.

The southern tier of the states viewed Governor Gardner and his political associates as progressives and outliers. His response to The Great Depression centralized government power, protected business interests, and offered assistance to the poor while not sacrificing the ruling elite's power. He also reformed voting by instituting a closed ballot which eliminated the stuffing of votes by the Simmons machine.⁴⁷ Progressive by Southern standards, Gardner did not waver on his conservative values by expanding civil rights and allowing union organization. After he finished his term, Gardner continued to exert power by selecting succeeding gubernatorial candidates until he died in 1947. The years during and in the aftermath of World War II were as distracting from ordinary life in North Carolina as the Civil War. Life and

⁴⁷ Campbell. "Tar Heel Politics in the Twentieth Century: The Rise and Fall of Progressive Plutocracy" in *New Voyages to North Carolina: Reinterpreting North Carolina History*, 2017. 251-252.

prosperity, accompanied by post-war peace, contrasted with the difficulties North Carolinians faced in Reconstruction. Now, in the late 1940s, North Carolina soared with industrialization, population increases, wealth expansion, infrastructure development, and a promising future.

Chapter 6: Education Post-World War II

In 1947, North Carolina began a stream of progressive measures for education. This cycle began with raising the compulsory attendance to sixteen years of age. During the same period, the State Board of Education received the authority to use public funds for special education programs. This action brought special education into the mainstream of education policy. In 1949, the General Assembly agreed to use state bonds for school construction, thereby increasing the state's level of participation in local construction. Four years later, in 1953, the citizens of North Carolina obtained their first opportunity to vote on state school bonds. The measure passed, and fifty-million dollars were authorized. The success of this action paved the way for future and larger bonds as the state's school population expanded during the post-war baby boom.

The Civil Rights Movement's Influence on Education

A different effect on Southern education occurred in 1954. It was the year of *Brown vs. Board of Education*, whereby a unanimous decision of the Supreme Court declared that racial segregation of public schools was unconstitutional. This law became the foundation of the Civil Rights movement. The Supreme Court set a judicial precedent that separate but equal were not, in fact, equal. However, moving forward with the actual integration of Southern schools proved challenging. Various Southern states opposed federal attempts to force racial integration as an infringement of their state's rights. The assertion of Southern states' rights fueled protracted

court battles that delayed the integration of their schools. Later, the new medium, television, displayed the violent ugliness of other Southern local and state police to enforce their state's rights regarding education.

Luther Hodges was elected North Carolina's Lieutenant Governor in 1952 and became North Carolina's Governor in 1954 after Governor Umstead died. Hodges, a successful, self-made industrialist from Eden, had no prior political experience. This combination made for a political paradox by becoming a governor with no history of engaging in political favors and patronage. Hodges was free of the typical entanglements of professional politicians, and he was also among the last progressive plutocrats who were progressive in matters benefitting industry but conservative in social issues. "He committed the heresy of appointing people in office without first ascertaining whether they were Republicans or Democrats, arousing the ire of county Democratic chairmen accustomed to having such appointments cleared with them."⁴⁸ His first visionary initiative occurred after learning that North Carolina was forty-fourth out of forty-eight states in per capita income. Hodges structured an integrated plan of progressive ideas beginning with his program to outperform other Southern states at industrial recruitment. Next, he cut taxes to render the state more attractive for companies relocating. Hodges had the foresight to establish The Research Triangle Park, which furthered North Carolina's progressive image. His visionary instincts led to the construction of an increased span of the interstate

⁴⁸ Jay Jenkins. *The Atlanta Constitution*, November 20, 1960.

highway system by acquiring needed future right-of-ways. In 1957, Hodges responded to North Carolina's progressive industrialists' call for help in training and educating beyond high school. Furthermore, Hodges initiated the North Carolina Community College Act, which became recognized as a progressive commitment to education. The Act provided two-year technical training and professional programs. By 1961, seven Industrial Education Schools and four Community Colleges opened. His popularity with voters allowed him to defy his industrialist base when he passed the first minimum wage in state history. *The Atlanta Constitution* reported, "For the first time in history, North Carolina adopted a bill calling for a state minimum wage. Governor Hodges has been a stout advocate of the bill, and his advocates will guide the bill through the legislature."⁴⁹ Despite all of his works of progress, Hodges remained a staunch social conservative as typified in his anti-union decisions to employ the National Guard to restore order after textiles strikes. His significant conservative action was the Pearsall Plan. Hodges desired to avoid the public spectacle in other Southern states over forced integration of state schools. He responded with the Pearsall Plan, which decentralized state education by closing the North Carolina Department of Education. Pearsall legislation created over one hundred local school boards to preside over their local education policies. As a legal maneuver, the resulting decentralization would force the Federal authorities to litigate forced integration with each of the

⁴⁹ Jay Jenkins, *The Atlanta Constitution*, April 19, 1959.

individual school boards. Later in 1966, the Pearsall Act was declared unconstitutional, but it helped avoid the violence and hatred displayed in other Southern states.

To the end, Hodges's independence and focus earned merit moved North Carolina forward on many fronts, but his social conservative beliefs held fast. His political career ended as the Secretary of Commerce for President John Kennedy.

Terry Sanford, after a tumultuous Democratic primary, won the general election for Governor in 1960. With his election came another milestone in North Carolina's political character and reputation. I. Beverly Lake, Sanford's opponent in the Democratic primary, framed the election in racial terms. Lake, the conservative Democrat, showed Sanford as a threat to stability because of Sanford's liberal reformist philosophy. However, Sanford won the primary and then endorsed John Kennedy. After the primary battle, Governor Luther Hodges led the progressive industrialists in closing Democratic ranks and publicly endorsing Sanford. Hodges's backing solidified the Democratic party as progressive.

Democrats in North Carolina then became the modernizing political force. Campbell who viewed the Democrats as modernizers in 1960 wrote that Sanford supported an activist government to promote infrastructure and especially education, and modernizers were more willing to accept African Americans and women into their ranks.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Campbell, 262.

Numerous changes marked Governor Sanford's term. In 1960, he began a "Go Forward" plan to improve state education. He also created a summer program, The Governor's School, for gifted students, and the program continues today. In 1963, he expanded the North Carolina Community College system to all counties. In the same year, Sanford established the Advance School for students with learning disabilities and used his political capital to gain voter approval of a one hundred million dollar school construction bond. Recognizing the importance of education to its future students, the Governor also established the Learning Institute of North Carolina to focus on identifying North Carolina's education needs and solutions for the long-term. Always focused on knowledge, he leveraged his success with the Kennedy presidential campaign by having the Environmental Protection Agency established in the Research Triangle Park.

Governor James Hunt's Contribution to North Carolina Education

James Hunt was first elected in 1977 as Governor and was re-elected in 1981. He was then re-elected in 1991 with sixteen years in the office, he became North Carolina's longest serving governor in the state's history. As a graduate student at North Carolina State University, Jim Hunt entered politics by organizing and running the university component of Terry Sanford's gubernatorial campaign. As Governor, Hunt led the state through economic growth, educational reform and social change. He also took risks and was the first governor to bring

women and minorities, especially blacks, into central roles in government.⁵¹ Focusing on the expansion of knowledge, Governor Hunt initiated several education programs. They began in 1977 when he made kindergarten education available to all children in the state. Also, he established statewide annual testing and competency testing programs to increase teaching effectiveness, he added three additional regional education centers and completed a goal of having one center per state district. In 1979, Hunt separated non-public school responsibility from the State Board of Education. Recognizing the need to support gifted students, he funded and opened the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in Durham in 1980. His progressive education support continued in 1983 by increasing high school graduation requirements from eighteen to twenty units; this became effective with the class of 1987. As another effort to assist academically gifted students, Governor Hunt started the North Carolina Scholars program. Not yet satisfied with North Carolina's educational standings, Hunt organized Commission on Education for Economic Growth in 1984. This commission produced a report on reforms needed to increase the effectiveness of student's preparation for technical skills training, professional certificate programs, and four-year degree programs. After completing his second term in 1985, Jim Hunt returned to private life.

In 1993, Jim Hunt returned to politics by running for Governor for a third term. He won after a contested primary and general election. As an installed governor, Jim Hunt faced a

⁵¹ Gary Pearce, *Jim Hunt: A Biography* (Winston-Salem: John F. Blair, 2010),102.

different political reality. The North Carolina House of Representatives was now in the hands of conservative Republicans who controlled financial aspects of new legislation. A division of party power in the legislative and executive branches always makes policy changes difficult at best. They compromised and reached agreement on Hunt's education initiative, the Excellent School Act. This program focused on attracting and keeping teachers of excellence. The Act raised student and teacher accountability standards, and teacher pay schedules were raised to National average levels to keep the best teachers from leaving for competing states. In 1999, The Rand Corporation, a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research analysis, recognized Governor Hunt for having the most improved state test scores during the 1990s. Hunt's hopes for additional social and educational success were sidelined because of two catastrophic slow-moving hurricanes that devastated North Carolina. First, Fran struck in 1996 Next, in 1999, Floyd turned inland eastern North Carolina into a lake with water levels flooding the state inland one hundred miles to Interstate Highway 95. In each case, the recovery efforts supplanted any new state policy plans.

Governor Hunt ended his final term with having the most significant state bond of five-hundred million dollar approved by voters for state education construction. His Democratic successors did not maintain a progressive agenda and did not exhibit the leadership skills required to forge bipartisanship in a divided state government. A new political realignment was afoot in North Carolina as its longest-serving governor retired from public service. The coming

decades would blow away nearly a century of progress in education, economics, and social change. North Carolina's political reality would be both reactionary and divisive.

Chapter 7: Generational Political Realignment

North Carolina has undergone multiple political realignments beginning with the post-Civil War Reconstruction. The shifts in political philosophy lay between the guardrails of progressive ideas on the left and the conservative ideology on the right. The left side of North Carolina's political reality espoused uplifting ideas and aspirational forces for the good of a broad-based society. At the opposite boundary, conservatives speaking to maintaining heritage, tradition, culture, and financial stability flourish. Often, as the political environment of North Carolina transformed, the results appeared generational. The democratic aspirations of North Carolina's early heroic settlers shaped the state's current political discourse and public policy.

The Reconstruction Period

The state's political realignment after the Civil War influenced North Carolina's modern-day public policy and particularly its education system. The Reconstruction period, which rebuilt North Carolina, was led by a combination of pro-Union native sons, northern unionists who resettled in North Carolina as a part of Reconstruction, and most significantly the emancipated slaves. These groups became known as Republicans, the party of Abraham Lincoln.

All Republicans promoted equality of the races, including black participation in elected office, and they worked to eliminate latent desires to return to a pre-secession culture. They grew in power and held the reigns until the late 1890s when the Wilmington Race Riot occurred. The

aftermath of the events in Wilmington led to the second power shift. Avowed racists, Senator Furnifold Smith, with Governor Charles Aycock at his side, committed to ensuring that power through the vote would secure their visions of controlling policy. The Democrats gained supremacy based on fears that black people did not possess the intelligence and skills to administer authority. Smith's cadres exercised the open threat of black men to white females. His forces depicted the white Republicans as drifters and cons aiming to make a financial gain at the expense of the whites. Smith's followers wore the mantle of Democrats and were a combination of the established elite planter class of Eastern North Carolina and the emerging industrialists in the Piedmont region.

The Great Depression

A change came during the Great Depression when Smith lost his United States Senate seat. At this time, the severe financial burdens facing North Carolinians brought about a desire for change. When Smith's grip on the party failed, Governor Max Gardner, a Democrat, entered the office as a prosperous textile manufacturer. Gardner and his cohorts were the progressive plutocrats of North Carolina. They were as socially conservative as Smith, but they were progressive in matters that served to promote industrial power and profit. This realignment positioned North Carolina to emerge as a progressive Southern state. Gardner after his term went on to be a key member of President Roosevelt's team leading the nation to recovery. His successors maintained the status quo for a generation. The final progressive magnate, Governor

Luther Hodges, left his term as the last of the progressive capitalist when the post-World War II brought the winds of change to social issues.

The Post-World War II Economic Boom

The economic boom, personal financial prosperity, Presidents' Truman and Eisenhower championing the successful military performance of black Americans, and *Brown vs. Board of Education* merged to move North Carolina away from the socially conservative Democrats to progressive ideology. North Carolina led the split away from the Southern Democratic alliance. The other Southern states became known as Dixiecrats when governors, senators, and congressman followed Senator Strom Thurman en masse out of the Democratic Party and called themselves Republicans. The departure of the Dixiecrats to the Republican Party contrasted North Carolina as the progressive Southern state.

The state remained Democratic and did not create a televised spectacle via violent school integration and civil rights protests. Governor Hodges, who did not possess the deep political roots of his Democratic predecessors, was pragmatic and measured from experience gained as a successful industrialist. As his term ended, he endorsed Terry Sanford for Governor in the general election. Together they endorsed and actively campaigned for the liberal John Kennedy. Sanford was swept up in the same wave of popularity of the progressive energy the Kennedy Democrats brought to the nation. North Carolina was now on a course of progressivist ideas for a generation. Its national reputation of enlightenment grew with a commitment to public education, institutional research, and public works.

The Great Recession

In 2008, the Great Recession arrived, and North Carolina was financially stressed because of its national prominence as a financial center. As financial markets crashed, the state's manufacturers struggled to compete with Chinese imports. North Carolina lost its preeminent world position in textiles, furniture, and industrial fibers. The subsequent strains on profits, paychecks, retirement accounts, and state treasury reserves were immense. In addition, Republican led PACs from other states made financial and long-range planning investments in the North Carolina State Legislature elections, and the cumulative effect culminated in North Carolina's conservative forces gaining control of the Senate.

Also, the voters gave Barack Obama the slimmest margin in the state presidential election. Simultaneously, Democrat Beverly Perdue was elected Governor, and Kay Hagan, a Democratic candidate for United States Senate, rode the Obama wave into office. North Carolina voted Democratic in state-wide elections but split the power in local contests. Democrats had thirty of the fifty seats in the Senate, and the Republicans' majority in the House expanded to sixty-six from fifty-two. The in-state political reality began its new transformation to the right guardrail. The next two years saw Obama's popularity drop as the state's economic woes continued. The commitment to organizing, planning, and financing the state elections by national Republican leaders bore fruit. In 2010, the Republicans swept the mid-term elections in both

state houses. They gained eleven senate positions for a majority of thirty-one versus nineteen Democrats.⁵²

Now holding power in both houses, the conservative forces enjoyed control of legislation and revenues with their counter budget power to the executive branch's wish list. In 2012, the presidential election year saw the final pieces of political power fall in place. First, Obama did not carry the state. Then Hagan and Perdue were replaced as Senator and Governor. With the House majority increasing by nine votes to seventy-six, Republican-led legislature in the state made further gains. The Senate added two additional Republicans for a total of thirty-one. Now the political power grid of North Carolina had two Republican United States Senators, a Republican governor, and veto-proof control of both sides of the North Carolina Legislature.

Citizens United vs. Federal Elections Commission

The 2010 completion of North Carolina's political realignment warrants an examination of how outside agents assisted in the transformation. First, the 2010 Supreme Court case, *Citizens United vs. Federal Elections Commission*, changed the face of campaign finances and money in politics in the United States. On January 11, 2010, the United States Supreme Court ruled that limits on independent expenditure for political purposes by corporations and labor unions were unconstitutional.⁵³ The Supreme Court ruled that the restrictions on independent

⁵² "Data and Statistics." *North Carolina State Board of Education* n.d., accessed March 12, 2019, <https://www.ncsbe.gov/data>.

⁵³ *Citizens United v. FEC* (588 U.S.50[2010]).

political campaign expenditures by corporations and labor unions violated the Constitution's First Amendment, which guarantees the freedom of speech. The central point of contention was whether expenditures by corporations and labor unions tilted the political playing field so strongly in favor of wealthy players that elections could be routinely bought.⁵⁴ This new law forced donors to revise their strategy. At the same time, unemployment was high, energy costs soared to their highest levels, factory inventories were down, and the immediate future was grim. At first glance, the reaction to the Citizens United ruling favored Republican donors because of corporate reserves. Spending by 501c3 and 527 organizations dramatically increased, which was interpreted as evidence of firms' strategic behavior to hide behind weak disclosure rules, and expenditures ranged between \$1K to \$40K.⁵⁵

In North Carolina, researchers found that the state stood in a unique position because of the increased amount of outside funds for local political campaigns. In the state's 2010 elections, eleven outside groups spent \$2.6 million, nearly 92 percent of which was used to support the Republican candidates. Three of these groups were connected with North Carolina businessman Art Pope and accounted for 72 percent of outside spending in North Carolina. One group, Real Jobs for NC, targeted nineteen house and senate races, in which a Republican challenger

⁵⁴ Tilman Klumpp, Hugo Mailon and Michael Williams, "The Business of American Democracy: Citizens United, Independent Spending and Elections." *The Journal of Law and Economics* 59, no.1 (February 2016), 2.

⁵⁵ Douglas M. Spencer and Abby K. Wood, "Citizens United, States Divided: An Empirical Analysis of Independent Political Spending." *Indiana Law Journal*, 89(1): 318.

defeated a Democratic incumbent. Altogether, the groups associated with Pope targeted twenty-seven races and were successful in twenty.⁵⁶

After the Supreme Court's decision and outside money entered all states for political agendas, the United States Congress allowed the Civil Rights Voting Act to lapse. The inflow of cash from Political Action Committees filled the Republican coffers. The expiration of the Voting Rights legislation permitted wholesale gerrymandering of elections in the Southern states. The combination of the cash influx and redistricting of election boundaries had a significant effect in all the Southern states. North Carolina aggressively drove gerrymandering to create districts that maximized the white vote while packing black voters into districts that resembled a Rorschach pattern. Redistricting became a foundational element of the Republican power in North Carolina. The expansion of funding provided financial resources to continue the increase in Republican seats in both state houses.

⁵⁶ Klumpp, Mailon and Williams, "The Business of American Democracy." 36.

Chapter 8: Outside Agents

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) is a non-profit organization that promotes itself as, “America’s largest nonpartisan, voluntary membership organization of state legislators dedicated to the principles of limited government, free markets, and federalism.”⁵⁷

The vast majority of Americans have never heard of this organization. They would not recognize it by the formal name nor its accepted moniker of ALEC. The footprint of ALEC is apparent across the American legislative landscape. ALEC, founded in 1973, was the product of Paul Weyrich with assistance from Lou Barnett and Henry Hyde. Each had experience in conservative politics. Weyrich was also a co-founder of conservative advocacy groups such as the Heritage Foundation, The Moral Majority, and the Council on National Policy. ALEC filled a void in conservative advocacy as related to the interaction between corporate interests and legislators. In their bylaws regarding voluntary membership states:

Full membership shall be open to persons dedicated to the preservation of individual liberty, basic American values and institutions, productive free enterprise, and limited representative government, who support the purposes of ALEC, and who serve, or formerly served, as members of a state or territorial legislature, the United States Congress, or similar bodies outside the United States.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ “About ALEC.” *American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEX)*. 2019, accessed March 3, 2019. <https://www.alec.org>.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

ALEC functions as a super lobbying enterprise. The group is active beyond the stereotypical button-holing of elected officials for legislative favors. Its reach is broad and deep into the pipeline of public persuasion, education and training of legislators, the generation and submission of proposed legislative documents, supporting gun rights, advocating for private control of penal facilities, promoting alternatives to traditional public schools, and building firewalls to protect incumbent members. Membership includes The Charles Koch Foundation, the DeVos Foundation, the Friedman Foundation, Koch Industries, Sylvan Learning, Connections Education, and K-12 Inc.⁵⁹ The mission statement of ALEC offers that it is a nonpartisan, voluntary membership organization promoting libertarian ideals and free markets. To its critics, ALEC is anything but nonpartisan and membership is exclusive. It is a shadowy back-room arrangement where corporations pay good money to get friendly legislators to introduce prepackaged bills in state houses across the country. ALEC's existence has been long known but its practices, mostly have not. The group has not been eager to tie its bills in Wisconsin, to those in Ohio to those in North Carolina.⁶⁰ A common thread among that trio of

⁵⁹ Brendan Fischer. "Cashing in On Kids." *The Center for Media and Democracy*, March 3, 2016, accessed March 1, 2019. <https://www.prwatch.org/news/2016/03/13054/cashing-kids-172-alec-education-bills-2015>.

⁶⁰ Nancy Scola. "Exposing ALEC: How Conservative-Backed State Laws are All Connected." *Nationaljournal.com*, April 16, 2012, accessed March 4, 2019 *General One File*. http://link.galegroup.com.proxy.lib.duke.edu/apps/doc/A296120539/IFOF?u=duke_perkins&sid=ITOF&xid-3a9a730a.

states is each has a very aggressive Republican legislature promoting vouchers, grants and charter schools as more productive alternatives to traditional public schools.

In North Carolina, a favorite of ALEC is North Carolina State Representative Jason Saine of Lincolnton, N.C. He entered the state legislature as a part of the Republican landslide of 2010. He has co-sponsored many bills held dear by ALEC including those on charter schools and limits to free speech on campus. In 2014 ALEC named him “Legislator of the Year.” In 2017, he became National Chairman of ALEC. His website states, “Representative Jason Saine has been an effective leader, legislator, and champion of conservative causes for decades in Lincoln County, North Carolina.”⁶¹ In broad type, his webpage banner reads, “Rethinking the way we deliver education in the 21st century.”⁶² He is indicative of other North Carolina conservative Republican legislators who are members of ALEC; however, he is notable for his awards from ALEC and service as National Chairman of ALEC.

North Carolina’s public education system has been under attack since the Republican’s gained majority control of both sides of the state legislature in 2010. Their actions are typical of the neoliberal policies on education espoused by ALEC, Koch Brothers, and the DeVos family. Their shared agenda includes charter school deregulation, voucher programs, opportunity grants, increased testing of faculty and students, and teacher salaries based on performance. ALEC is the

⁶¹ *Jason Saine NC House*, accessed March 15. www.jasonsaine.com

⁶² *Ibid.*

messenger of neoliberal educational philosophy. Through private networking and seminars, ALEC infiltrates the elected policymakers to sponsor their “cookie cutter” pro forma bills. This partnership between ALEC and legislators forms an inner circle isolated from the public and education professionals.

In the fall of 2012, North Carolina’s electorate put in power a “supermajority” of a Republican House, Senate, and Governor, making an electoral regime change that opened the window for ALEC-inspired policies in education and noneducation sectors.⁶³ Thirty-four members of the North Carolina House of Representatives and Senate, along with eighteen former legislators, were identified as having ties with ALEC, including attending ALEC annual meetings and serving on various task forces.⁶⁴

ALEC was loaded and ready in early 2013. North Carolinians were faced with the following ALEC-influenced education-related policies: the introduction of a voucher program, the replacement of teacher career status (otherwise known as tenure rights) with performance pay in which districts give the top 25 percent of their teachers a \$500 pay raise, the elimination of master’s degree salary increases, and thousands of teaching assistant job cuts. These education bills were part of a package that ALEC created to inspire policies that influenced social support

⁶³ Catherine Marshall, Ariel Tichnor-Wagner and Mark Johnson, “Moral Mondays and the Defense of Public Education: The Fusion Movement Against ALEC-Influenced Legislation in North Carolina.” *Peabody Journal of Education*, 92:1, 91.

⁶⁴ Brendan Fischer, “Cashing in on Kids.”

for the poor, healthcare, voting rights, labor rights, LGBT rights, and environmental protections.⁶⁵

North Carolina legislator, Jason Saine in his role as ALEC's National Chairman, led their 45th ALEC Annual Meeting in 2018 at North Orleans, Louisiana. This annual convention serves as a rollout of their legislative agenda for the coming calendar year. A key partner with ALEC on education issues is the DeVos family funded, American Federation for Children (AFC). During the past few years, AFC has promoted a "cash for kids" prototype of school privatization to increase state legislation endorsing school vouchers. ALEC framed the proffered legislative bundles as a civil rights ticket for low-income kids; however, ALEC's "Education Saving Account Act" created a universal system that siphons off public education dollars to private school parents of any income level.⁶⁶

The reframing and expanding the reality of ALEC's cookie-cutter bills is their modus operandi. Getting the legislation out of committee to a floor vote and then adding the details in conference committees is the core function of lobbyists. This discussion is relevant to the 2018 National Convention because of two education items introduced as 2019 goals. First, the Economic Development Zone ESA Act was rolled out to the members. ESA can be considered

⁶⁵ Catherine Marshall, "Moral Mondays and the Defense of Public Education."

⁶⁶ Mary Bottari, "ALEC Sets the Table for Gerrymandering, Union Busting, Protecting Fossil Fuels, and Privatizing Schools." *Center for Media and Democracy PR Watch*. August 7, 2018, accessed March 14, 2019 <https://www.prwatch.org/news/35270>.

another ALEC mechanism to divert public school funds to private education. The cover for financial action would be the that student could go to any private school when they live in a low-income development zone.⁶⁷

ALEC's second education policy package is aimed at school safety, known as the Statement of Principles on School Safety and Security. This platform is an example of pandering to anti-gun American citizens. The reality is that ALEC wants the control of policy and legislation with local officials. They know that controls at the local county and state level raise the difficulty of their opponents to move anti-gun legislation forward. ALEC reversed themselves and turned the authority for school safety over to local powers because it knows that local authorities in forty-three states are already exempted from regulating firearms.⁶⁸

Despite their forty-six years of success, ALEC faces challenges. Super lobbies, their donors and membership prefer anonymity. Public scrutiny, media inquiries, and lawsuits are not conducive to their business plan. Recent events such as Trayvon Martin's tragic death, Moral Monday protests, and public exposure by the Center for Media and Democracy have opened the curtains that allowed ALEC, Koch Brothers, Moral Majority, Heritage Foundation, and others to tip the scales of democracy.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

The answer to why North Carolina lost its image as a progressive southern state in terms of educational policies and practices is rooted in the history of tensions that consistently sought to redirect North Carolina's education policies. This pressure began when King George III's government rejected the approval of a royal charter for Queen's college because of their Presbyterian sponsorship. In the post-colonial era, the new North Carolina constitution eliminated the preference of one faith over another as related to education. Ensuing conflicts continued with the elite planter class funding only education for their children, which established a discord between those who could afford private education versus other segments, which did not have the means to support universal education.

A significant source of friction in North Carolina involved white supremacy before and after the Civil War. During post-reconstruction, the white supremacists created a narrative that promoted the righteousness of the South's secession from the Union. In this narrative, they wanted to portray the black population as illiterate, lazy, and threatening. Efforts to control the black vote ballot box included enacting legislation requiring a passing grade on a voter literacy test. As a consequence of this racist act, politicians discovered a majority of poor white voters were illiterate and thereby illegible to vote. Their solution was to fund public education for poor and illiterate white males at the expense of educating black children. The funding was unequal

and established a segregated education for whites and blacks that was unequal in funding and instruction.

This dual education system continued beyond *Brown vs. the Board of Education* in 1954 when the Supreme Court ruled that the separate education of black and whites was not equal. This ruling was the United States Federal Government's first attempt to stop the states' legislative actions of underfunding black education.

The early to mid-twentieth century was the era of the progressive plutocrats, the barons of North Carolina's mill factories. They embraced progressive education as a vehicle for increasing the skills and training of their workforce. They did not support progressive social actions including integration, union organizing, and women's rights. However, they endorsed education when it increased the efficiency and profitability of their factories.

In response to *Brown vs. Board of Education*, North Carolina's political leadership enacted the Pearsall Plan in 1956. This strategy was North Carolina's answer to a potential single federal lawsuit aimed at the state school system to integrate North Carolina's schools. It was a social-conservative scheme to disband the single state-wide school system. The Pearsall Plan replaced the existing state control by ceding educational authority to one hundred local districts. The Pearsall premise was to overwhelm the federal authorities with one hundred lawsuits versus one legal action to enforce *Brown vs. Board of Education*. In 1966, federal courts declared the Pearsall Act unconstitutional.

The social tensions related to North Carolina education began to abate following John Kennedy's and Lyndon Johnson's lead on progressive national policies, the war on poverty, and the voting rights act. This atmosphere of social change was a part of Governor Hunt's sixteen years serving North Carolina. He led the way in realigning and implementing progressive educational policies covering pre-k through the university level. His successors did not provide the leadership nor match Governor Hunt's skills on political interaction with the state legislature; they served more in a maintenance mode versus continuing expansion of progressive values.

A significant policy shift from progressive themes to social-conservative control began in 2008 when Republicans secured power in the state senate. This shift to social conservatism in the state senate initiated the erosion of North Carolina's progressive image. The reasons for losing this reputation are rooted in two factors. The first element is the result of the 2010 United States Supreme Court ruling on Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission. The Supreme Court ruled that it is unconstitutional to limit the free speech of corporations and unions. This decision allowed out-of-state money to enter North Carolina politics. The result was that substantial amounts of money were invested in targeted electoral districts. The investments paid political dividends by first gaining Republican majorities in the state senate and house.

In 2012, additional funding moved North Carolina to the far right guardrail with a supermajority. Republicans now controlled the governor's office, both US Senate seats, and veto-proof majorities in both parts of the North Carolina State Legislature. The second agent of change was from outside the state in the form of a super lobby named ALEC. They provided the

organizational skills, drafted prototype bills of legislation, conducted campaigns of public persuasion, and constructed a firewall that insulated the Republican legislators from public scrutiny.

The net effect on North Carolina's public education is now a reduction in school funding, elimination of hundreds of teaching assistant positions, the removal of the charter school cap, the elimination of extra for a master's degree, and the increase of vouchers for private schools. Now, to regain the state's progressive image, the North Carolina voters must decide to bring about another political realignment.

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