

At least we're not Alabama

Letter to the editor, [Brunswick Beacon](#), 05.16.24

Public education is the cornerstone of any thriving society, serving as the bedrock upon which future generations build their lives and contribute to the world around them. It lays the foundation for individual success, societal progress and economic prosperity.

First and foremost, good public education provides equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background or personal circumstances. By offering a free, accessible education to every child, public schools help level the playing field and ensure that talent and potential are not wasted. This fosters a more equitable society where everyone has the chance to succeed based on their abilities and efforts, rather than their privilege or social status.

Moreover, quality public education is essential for nurturing students' intellectual, social and emotional development. In addition to imparting essential academic knowledge and skills, schools also play a crucial role in instilling values such as tolerance, empathy and critical thinking. Through interactions with teachers and peers, students learn to collaborate, communicate effectively, preparing them to become responsible citizens and active participants in their communities.

Furthermore, a strong public education system is vital for driving innovation, economic growth, and global competitiveness. Investing in education also yields long-term dividends, as educated individuals are more likely to secure stable employment, higher incomes, and better quality of life.

Sadly, public education is under threat in North Carolina. A teacher shortage, exacerbated by substandard pay and benefits, is having a detrimental effect on students. But, instead of shoring up public education, the MAGA Republican N.C. Legislature moved \$500 million from the public education budget to be made available to charter schools. World Population Review.com now ranks NC 43rd in public education in the nation; Alabama ranks 50th.

The way to deal with this existential threat to our future is at the ballot box. Examine candidates' platforms, ask them if they are products of public education and what track record they have for supporting public education.

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