



## Governor Proposes Emergency Budget With Bonuses For School Personnel

*Katherine Joyce | NCASA Executive Director*

At a briefing this afternoon, Governor Roy Cooper unveiled an [emergency state budget proposal](#) that would allocate recent federal COVID-19 relief funds and additional state money for pandemic response. A chief recommendation in the proposal would provide a \$2,500 bonus to all teachers and principals in public schools and a \$1,500 bonus to all non-certified staff.

The Governor said North Carolina has received more than \$4 billion from the COVID relief package Congress approved in December, and it is important for the state to work quickly to appropriate much of that funding to address immediate needs in pandemic recovery. The General Assembly must act on those appropriations before they can be released, and Cooper said he has been working with lawmakers of both parties as well as other key constituencies in developing the budget proposal he released today. In fact, lawmakers earlier today gave final approval to [Senate Bill 36](#) that would allocate \$1.6 billion of NC's \$4 billion total share of that Congressional package to K-12 public schools through their Title 1 funding formula, and that bill will soon be on the Governor's desk.

In addition to urging the release of the federal stimulus funds, Cooper is calling on lawmakers to appropriate \$695 million from the state's unreserved state General Fund balance to address immediate needs resulting from COVID-19. The package of emergency funding priorities he has outlined includes the following:

- \$468 million to provide one-time bonuses to educators, who he said were the only public sector personnel who did not receive pay increases in 2020. Bonuses would include \$2,500 to all teachers, instructional support personnel, assistant principals and principals; \$1,500 to all non-certified school employees; and \$2,000 to all UNC and community college personnel.
- \$30 million to extend the reach of high-speed internet to all corners of the state and other urgent connectivity initiatives, such as IT infrastructure, security for community colleges and enhancement of 35,000 hot spots used for education.
- \$64.5 million for replenishment of the North Carolina State Health Plan, which has incurred significant costs responding to COVID-19.

Other priorities in the Governor's budget proposal would direct \$82 million toward efforts to boost the state's struggling economy and \$145 million to ensure continuity of state operations during its response to COVID-19. Additional details of those proposals are included in a [press release from the Governor's Office](#).

The proposal now goes to the General Assembly for their consideration and possible action.

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