

NC elections director fired as new GOP majority takes control

North Carolina's State Board of Elections underwent a significant shift as Republicans gained control for the first time in nearly a decade. This change was facilitated by a recent Court of Appeals decision allowing a GOP-backed law to take effect, transferring appointment powers from the Democratic governor to the Republican state auditor. Immediately following this transition, the new Republican-majority board dismissed Executive Director Karen Brinson Bell, who had served since 2019 and was recognized for her leadership during challenging times, including the COVID-19 pandemic. She was replaced by Sam Hayes, a Republican attorney and former legal counsel to the state House speaker, despite his lack of experience in election administration.

Brinson Bell's removal has sparked concerns among election officials and observers, who view it as a politically motivated move that could undermine the integrity of the state's election system. Critics argue that the restructuring represents a partisan power grab, potentially affecting the administration of upcoming elections and eroding public trust.

This development also has implications for ongoing legal battles. With the new board in place, decisions regarding disputed ballots and election procedures may now tilt in favor of Republican interests, further intensifying the partisan divide over election oversight in North Carolina.

-Laura Heflin, Archdale Precinct Secretary

If you'd like to express your opinions on this power grab, here are the numbers to contact:

North Carolina State Board of Elections (NCSBE)

Phone: (919) 814-0700

Email: elections.sboe@ncsbe.gov

North Carolina Office of the State Auditor

Phone: (919) 807-7500

Email: Tipline@ncauditor.gov



Suggested script: *I want to express my deep concern about the firing of our elections director following the GOP takeover of the State Board of Elections. This looks like a dangerous shift away from fair and independent governance.*

Democracy Forward, Piedmont Triad is a welcoming, inclusive group based in Archdale, open to everyone no matter where you live or how you're registered to vote. We believe democracy works best when more people are informed, engaged, and heard. Join them on Facebook:

tinyurl.com/DemocracyForwardPT

Ways You Can Take Action From Home

5 Calls is the easiest and most effective way for U.S. constituents to make a political impact. Visit 5calls.org for more information.

Resistbot is the chatbot that turns your texts into faxes, postal mail, or emails to your representatives in minutes. For more information visit their site at resist.bot.

Card Campaign is a volunteer grassroots team dedicated to disseminating verified information about the Trump presidency and how it impacts our democracy, citizens, and immigrants. Visit their site to see all cards available at cc4democracy.com.

Red Wine & Blue is a sisterhood of diverse communities working to change the world together. We help you make meaningful connections, organize in your community, and become more effective than you ever imagined. Visit their website at redwine.blue.

NC House budget has big pay increase for new teachers, modest state employee raises

The North Carolina House Republicans' proposed budget includes a 2.5% raise for state employees and significant increases in starting teacher salaries. The plan aims to raise beginning teacher base pay from \$41,000 to \$48,000 in 2025-26, reaching \$50,000 the following year, and to restore salary supplements for teachers with advanced degrees. However, veteran teachers with 25 or more years of experience would receive only a 2.1% raise, prompting criticism from educators who argue that experienced teachers deserve more recognition. The budget also proposes modest tax changes, such as increasing the standard deduction and introducing a sales tax holiday for back-to-school shopping. After the House votes on the budget this week, negotiations with the Senate will begin to reconcile differences, including those related to employee compensation. Read more at: ncnewsline.com/briefs/nc-house-budget-has-big-pay-increase-for-new-teachers-modest-state-employee-raises

Tuesdays with Tillis

Indivisible Guilford County hosts a weekly protest at Senator Thom Tillis's Greensboro Office from noon - 1 p.m. No set topic, no agenda. Grab your signs and head to Tillis's office at 3200 Northline Ave., Greensboro.



Make Your Voice Heard -If you have an article, event, or book/media review you'd like to contribute to *RanDem News*, please email it to us at rcdp.newsletter@gmail.com.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion on Chopping Block in Asheboro City Schools

To read the entire letter with policy citations, visit RandolphCountyDems.org/ACS-DEI

May 7, 2025

I am a parent of an Asheboro Public Schools fifth grader, and I am writing to share feedback on policies changes that the Board of Education will, presumably, approve at its May 8 meeting. To make my feedback as useful as possible, I will do my best to be brief, separate feedback into digestible sections, and provide supplemental material as attachments.

Are these changes actually required?

In the April 10 BOE meeting, the Board and audience were told that these changes were required based on a (hateful and blatantly racist) "Dear Colleague" letter from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

Since then, the AFT, the NEA, and the NAACP have filed three lawsuits, in coalition with others, in the U.S. District Courts in New Hampshire, Maryland and D.C. And each set of plaintiffs subsequently moved for preliminary relief against the DOE's actions. On April 24, all three courts issued rulings granting, in whole or in part, the requested relief.

These three rulings mean that the U.S. Department of Education can no longer enforce and/or implement the Dear Colleague letter, the related FAQs, the "End DEI" portal or the certification requirement. The department has no authority to interfere, directly or indirectly, with state, school district, college or university decisions over the curriculum that will be taught and the educational programming that will be offered.

Here in North Carolina, Superintendent of Instruction Mo Green, in a letter to DOE Secretary Linda McMahon, certified that the North Carolina Department of Instruction and all local education agencies (which I assume includes Asheboro City Schools) comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

He goes on to point out that "the U.S. Department of Education does not have the legal authority to change assurances and impose new requirements on recipients without adhering to rulemaking procedures or make unilateral changes to Title VI."

Since the legitimacy and legality of these DOE's "mandates" are still being worked out through the judicial system, and since our state superintendent of public instruction has certified that the state and its LEA's are compliant with the Civil Rights Act, it begs the question(s): Are these changes necessary, or even legal? And why now? Why not wait for the matter to work its way through the courts?

Why take protections away from our most-vulnerable students and staff?

I assume that members of the Board have done a side-by-side comparison of the existing policies and proposed changes, but I still think that it's worthwhile to see them again as a reminder of who, exactly, is being targeted — women, students and staff who are queer or trans.

In conclusion and in summary

The directive from the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights is not settled law. It is being challenged on many points and there is currently a national stay on its implementation and enforcement.

North Carolina's Superintendent of Public Instruction has certified to the U.S. Department of Education that North Carolina public schools (including Asheboro City Schools) are in compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The ACS BOE does not have to make these changes at this time, unless it wants to ... which is the bigger question.

I hope that the Board has read and considered these changes carefully, especially thinking about who they will affect. For the Board members who will actually have children in Asheboro City Schools in the 2025-2026 school year, when these changes will really be implemented, please think about how these changes will affect them, their friends, and their teachers and whether they will be receiving an education in a positive and academically rigorous school environment that engages each and every student or not. Finally, I leave you with this version of the poem "First They Came"

"First They Came"

First they came for the pregnant students
 And I did not speak out
 Because I was not a pregnant student
 Then they came for the queer students
 And I did not speak out
 Because I was not a queer student
 Then they came for the trans students
 And I did not speak out
 Because I was not a trans student
 Then they came for the Black, Mexican, Jewish, and disabled
 And I did not speak out
 Because I was not Black, Mexican, Jewish, or disabled
 Then they came for me
 And there was no one left
 To speak out for me

Respectfully,

Todd Dulaney

The aforementioned changes were tabled at the May 8 meeting.