**PUBLIC SCHOOL STRONG!**

“Our schools are in a state of emergency,” said Governor Cooper, warning that the voucher bill being pushed through the NCGA would steer millions of dollars away from our public schools and into private schools and private pockets. For decades, we have seen the results of gross disinvestment in our public schools—the impact is clear in our children’s classrooms with aging facilities and underpaid teachers. Some of our kids have books so old that George Bush is listed as the last president!

The far-right has latched onto the privatization of our education system and is introducing bill after bill that will strip our schools of everything they need to be successful. Meanwhile on the local level, Moms for Liberty and other grassstomp groups are trying to be the loudest voice in the room, pushing book bans and trying to erode our trust in public education.

**But that’s where local parents and teachers are pushing back!** Since the launch last month, Public School Strong teams are forming in nearly 30 counties across North Carolina, ready to turn out to their local school board meetings and fight for public education!
UPDATES FROM OUR LOCAL CHAPTERS ACROSS NORTH CAROLINA!

Ashe: Co-governance for Better Housing
Our Ashe County chapter had record turnout to their last chapter meeting. They’ve had lengthy, productive, private conversations with multiple Commissioners about the realities of housing in the county. They’re building a tenants rights information resource that they will canvass back out into the community, while also promoting a tenants resource fair event in mid-July.

Get involved with Ashe!
Email Dolly: dolly@downhomencc.org

Watauga: Mobilizing for Housing
After 32 Watauga members showed up at their County Commission, members were asked to participate in an Ad Hoc committee around housing by the County Commissioners. This will happen later in June, with the goal of getting a specific proposal on the agenda for a vote soon after. In the meantime, the chapter is canvassing and tabling with a petition to gather support for the effort.

Get involved with Watauga!
Email Dalton: dalton@downhomencc.org

Cabarrus: Rallying for Rental Assistance
In Cabarrus, our campaign asking the county commission to allocate funding the Emergency Rental Assistance Program has gained a lot of momentum. We are currently sitting at 232 signatures on our petition and have had over 300 conversations thus far. After showing up to the commissioner’s board meeting on May 15, two commissioners and the county manager have reached out to us and gave us the opportunity to explain our campaign and hear our concerns face to face. We have their attention and are getting speed for the next meeting!

Get involved with Cabarrus!
Email Jasmine: jasmine@downhomencc.org

Alamance: Shining the Light on Shady Budgeting
Alamance County’s budget campaign is in full swing! People haven’t been happy when they learn the County Commission is trying to take budget funds away from school repair in order to pay for a courthouse expansion! Members are pushing to get their petition signed, and folks are ready to show up at the county commissioner meetings and voice their concerns.

Get involved with Alamance!
Email Bryant: bryant@downhomencc.org
Granville: Balling to Restore a Public Park

After 13 chapter members and community allies showed up to support the Granville Street Blacktop project at the Oxford Commissioners’ Meeting on May 9, the chapter has continued outreach. They’ve got over 500 local residents signed on to their petition to support the new park and basketball courts for the 2023-24 fiscal year. They’ve requested to add budget to the Parks and Rec department from unallocated ARPA money so the City of Oxford can properly maintain these great new facilities at Granville Street. They’re building support for the next Commission meeting on June 13, and are confident they will win!

Johnston: Working the System

Our Johnston County chapter has had discussions with Board of Education members about their proposal to fund school supplies. There is more than enough funding in the budget to provide teachers with the necessary supplies for their classrooms, and they’re hopeful that the County Commissioners will approve this historic budget request, solidifying education as a top priority in JoCo.

Get involved with Granville!
Email Reeves: reeves@downhomenc.org

Get involved with JoCo!
Email Liz: liz@downhomenc.org

CHESS NOT CHECKERS
GETTING READY FOR THE POLITICAL LONG GAME

By Bonnie Dobson, Deep Canvass Manager + Alamance County member
It feels like there are a lot of set backs in North Carolina... but now it has me scared. But someone once said to me this is chess, not checkers. Chess is a long game.

The Civil Rights movement began in the late 1940s and didn’t end until the late 60s after I was born. My dad is 91. He was born in 1932 and lived through segregation in North Carolina. He was refused service in restaurants and sat at the back of public transportation and in the segregated section of the theaters. The house I first lived in was bought by one of my dad’s white Jewish friends from the NAACP. Gerald Becker because my family couldn’t purchase a home because of the color of our skin. Everything was segregated, from roadside picnic tables to bathrooms. And my dad kept working to make changes every day. Recently, I asked my father if he was ever ready to give up during those years, and he said, “HELL no.”

My dad knows: It took more than twenty years of a deliberate, conscious, organized movement to gain rights. Chess, not checkers.

Voices Against
Mark Robinson

We need to let everyone-- our neighbors, our families, our friends-- know who MAGA extremist Mark Robinson is! He cannot be our next Governor.

You can add your voice to our social media campaign designed to educate voters about Mark Robinson’s extremism by sending a photo and a quote about why you oppose Robinson to gwen@downhomenc.org

Learn more about MAGA extremist Mark Robinson and his bid for NC governor here:
carenc.org
Building Power Through Working Class Candidates

Let’s welcome Isra Allison to the Down Home team! Isra has spent the last 8 years managing and consulting progressive congressional campaigns across the country, but she is now bringing her skills to her home state of North Carolina as our new Political Program Manager!

Isra will be working across the state to help poor and working class people build their skills and get the training and support they need to run for office. We know we need working people elected positions. This is how we build power!

"This is the most important work that can possibly be done in the state of North Carolina."

How Are You Celebrating Pride Month in Rural North Carolina?

Our towns are for all y’all! Every year, more and more small towns host Pride celebrations and we couldn’t be more thrilled. This year, places like Pittsboro are having their very first Pride celebration, while other small towns like Sylva and Boone carry on long-standing traditions.

This year, Down Home is working with Cardinal and Pine to collect photos from small town Pride events! Are you headed out with the fam to Pride this year? Send your pictures to gwen@downhomenc.org to get them featured!