

Legal Aid of North Carolina, Inc.

Advocates for Children's Services

Raleigh Office

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Dear Attorney:

I am an attorney with Advocates for Children's Services (ACS), a statewide project of Legal Aid of North Carolina (LANC). I write to provide you with important information about a **free** resource for students in North Carolina, and to ask you to **help make sure students have the support they need to be successful in school.**

LANC is a statewide, nonprofit law firm that provides free legal services in civil matters to low-income people in order to ensure equal access to justice and to remove barriers to economic opportunity. ACS is a project of LANC that seeks education justice for low-income families and an end to the school-to-prison pipeline through legal advocacy, community education, and collaboration.

ACS is hoping to partner with Departments of Social Services statewide to help the children they serve obtain necessary educational services. As you are aware, children who require assistance from DSS often have wide ranging issues which can create problems in many areas of their lives. LANC attorneys in 16 offices across the state are available to provide free, high-quality legal advice and representation to students who are: a) from low-income families; and b) U.S. citizens. Children who are in foster care or otherwise in state custody will almost always qualify for assistance from LANC without reference to their biological family's economic status.

Examples of types of cases LANC may be able to take include:

- A student is wrongly denied enrollment in school;
- A student has repeatedly failed classes and tests, but is not receiving individualized interventions;
- A student with a disability that interferes with learning and who needs special education is not receiving individualized, appropriate services from the school;
- A student is repeatedly short-term suspended but the school does not put any behavioral interventions into place;
- A student is facing long-term suspension or expulsion;
- A student is being bullied or harassed and notifies the school, but the school fails to act; or
- A student is discriminated against on the basis of race, national origin, sex, disability, or religion.

"The test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children." -Dietrich Bonhoeffer



A United Way Agency



Together, we can ensure that all students from low-income families have their education rights respected, are treated fairly, and have access to an excellent education. **Here's what you can do:**

- Discuss our educational services with the department you represent and provide them with copies of our attached materials.
- Encourage social workers working with children with educational issues to reach out or access our resources for advice. They can call ACS's general line at (919)226-0052 or contact me directly.
- Arrange a students' rights training for staff and/or families by completing the enclosed form and emailing it to JuliaN@LegalAidNC.org.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss collaboration further, please do not hesitate to contact me or our community outreach director, Julia Nieves. Julia can be reached at (919)675-1717 or JuliaN@LegalAidNC.org. **Thank you for all that you do for children!** I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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