**WHAT IS THE N.C. SUPREME COURT & WHAT DOES IT DO?**

The state Supreme Court is North Carolina’s highest court. It only hears appeals*, so it holds no trials and has no jury. Its primary purpose is to consider whether errors occurred in lower courts or in how judges interpreted our laws.

*Appeal: A challenge to a previous legal decision

**The N.C. Supreme Court can determine rights for things such as abortion, state maps, gun control, and other issues that affect us.**

**HOW DO JUSTICES GET THE JOB?**

Justices are elected to 8-year terms by voters like you.

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**Voting Rights**

In May 2022, the N.C. Supreme Court protected voting rights for people with previous felony charges -- expanding voting rights to tens of thousands of voters.

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**Immigration**

The N.C. Supreme Court determines how federal immigration law and legislation should be applied within state. For example, a 2016 case led to a requirement that defendants in state court must be informed of the immigration consequences of taking a plea deal (State v. Nkiam, SC declined action after hearing oral arguments, which upheld appeals court decision).

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**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

Cases involving state laws are tried in State Trial Courts

- Intermediate Appellate Courts
  - Defendant loses and appeals
  - Further appeal

- N.C. Supreme Court
  - Decisions can be appealed if they raise a constitutional question

- U.S. Supreme Court

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**WHO IS ON THE N.C. SUPREME COURT?**

- 1 chief justice
- 6 associate justices

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**Ethnic studies in schools**

N.C. Supreme court decisions can affect funding for N.C. public schools, which can determine access to adequate resources and teachers for students.

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**Redistricting**

In February 2022, the State Supreme Court struck down unfair district maps and ordered them to be redrawn by the state legislature.

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**VOTE for your Supreme Court Justices!**

The N.C. Supreme Court is an important part of checks and balances in our judicial system, and **voters have the power to choose who’s in it.**

To learn more about elections, visit www.ncaat.org/vote