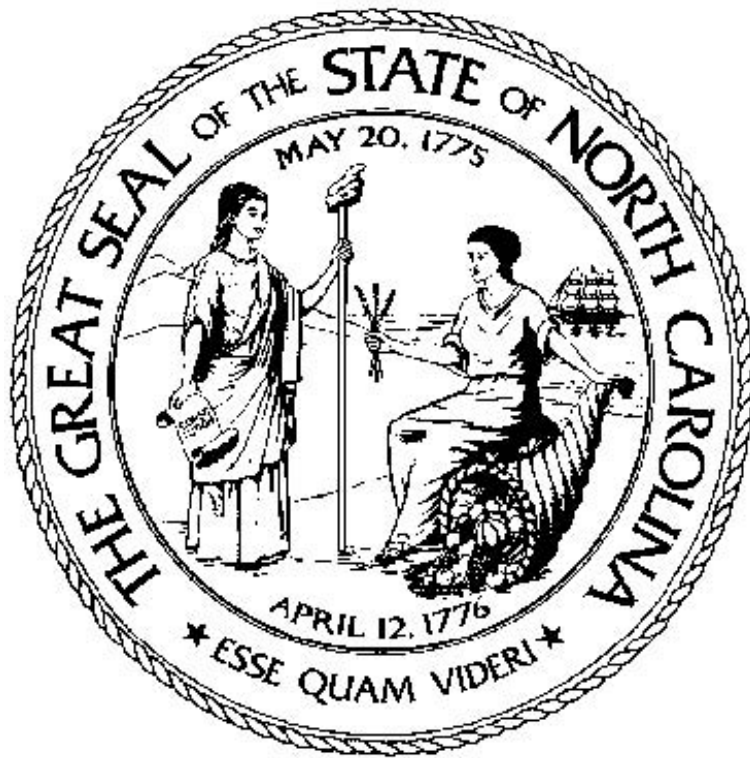


North Carolina's Equity Plan For Highly Qualified Teachers



December 2009

**Prepared by the NC Department of Public
Instruction (NCDPI)**

North Carolina's Equity Plan For Highly Qualified Teachers

North Carolina is committed to ensuring that every public school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century. Because of the critical role of teachers in actualizing this commitment, North Carolina is also committed to ensuring that every child has competent, caring, and qualified teachers. In an effort to recruit and retain quality teachers, North Carolina has implemented many initiatives, including scholarships for prospective teachers that are paid back through working in the public schools, revising licensure policies to eliminate barriers and facilitate the licensing of teachers from other states, creating accelerated alternate routes to teaching, providing a three-year induction program for new teachers, providing salary incentives for teachers who earn National Board Certification and/or master's degrees, and assessing teacher working conditions. (A summary of these initiatives can be found in Appendix A.)

The Office of the Governor and the North Carolina General Assembly are acutely aware of the State's need for quality teachers, and the State has allocated significant resources to this end. Even with these efforts, North Carolina, like a number of other states, has a teacher shortage. North Carolina's need for teachers is a result of a growing student population, efforts to reduce class size, and teacher attrition. North Carolina's current projection for the number of teachers to fill vacancies in 2010 is 11,847, with the number rising to nearly 13,000 in the next five years¹. North Carolina's 47 colleges and universities with approved teacher education programs produce between 4600 and 5000 candidates annually². Approximately 5,300 new hires come from alternative route (lateral entry) programs, out of state programs, or are teachers reentering the workforce. Using these projections, North Carolina will experience a shortage of approximately 1,500 teachers next year³.

TEACHER DISTRIBUTION

While systems in all geographic areas of the State report difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers, there are differences between and within school systems in the need for teachers. Systems throughout the State consistently report difficulty in finding math, science, and special education teachers. This is in line with the fact that nearly half (41%) of all the alternative route (lateral entry) licenses issued in North Carolina are in math, science, and special education. In addition, of the teachers not yet highly qualified, 33% are special education teachers. Analysis of the courses taught by teachers not yet highly qualified (exclusive of special education) reveals that 13% are math and 12% are science⁴. There are systems in the State, however, that even have difficulty finding elementary teachers, and in fact, 9% of the lateral entry licenses issued are for elementary teachers. These latter systems tend to be the rural, low-wealth systems⁵.

Based on extended discussions with personnel administrators across the State and extensive

¹ Workforce analysis conducted by the University of North Carolina General Administration (UNC GA) in 2008.

² Department of Public Instruction (2009). IHE Performance Report. www.dpi.state.nc.us/ihe/reports/.

³ Due to the economic downturn, North Carolina public schools have experienced funding cuts. If these funding cuts are sustained or if more cuts are made in 2010-2011, this shortage will decrease as school districts increase class sizes and/or cut educator positions.

⁴ Out-of-field teaching assignments are included in the not HQT percentages.

⁵ Statistics referenced in this section were based on 2008-2009 data.

analysis of the data at the state level on a variety of teacher characteristics at the school system and school levels, it is clear that North Carolina does not have a single, isolated distribution problem. Rather, North Carolina has a multi-faceted problem of teacher shortage and teacher distribution. North Carolina needs special education, math, and science teachers. North Carolina also needs elementary teachers, and arts teachers, and middle school teachers, and English as a Second Language teachers, and second language teachers willing to teach in rural, low-wealth areas, hard-to-staff urban school areas, and high growth areas. Because NC has a multi-faceted problem, the State has adopted a variety of strategies (described later in this plan) to address the shortage and distribution of teachers in schools across the State.

Information on teacher experience and highly qualified teacher (HQT) status based on whether or not schools made annual yearly progress (AYP), whether or not schools made high growth, school performance composites, school poverty levels, and school minority populations is reflected in the following tables.

**Comparison of Highly Qualified Teacher Status and Experience Characteristics
Based on Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) Status and High Growth Status
2008-2009**

	School Made AYP	School Did Not Make AYP	School Made High Growth	School Did Not Make High Growth
% HQT	98.79%	97.56%	98.77%	98.12%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	21.70%	22.80%	21.00%	22.80%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	29.80%	27.90%	29.90%	28.60%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	48.50%	49.20%	49.00%	48.60%

**Comparison of Highly Qualified Teacher Status and Experience
Based on School Performance Composite Quartiles
2008-2009**

Teachers	Quartile 1 >= 80.6%	Quartile 2 73.3% - 80.5%	Quartile 3 62.6% - 73.2%	Quartile 4 <= 62.5%
% HQT	98.85%	98.63%	98.46%	97.30%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	18.70%	20.50%	22.60%	27.40%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	30.40%	29.20%	28.80%	28.10%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	50.90%	50.30%	48.50%	44.40%

Note: Quartile 1 is comprised of schools with the highest levels of performance, and Quartile 4 is comprised of schools with the lowest levels of performance.

**Comparison of Highly Qualified Teacher Status and Experience
Based on School Poverty Quartiles
2008-2009**

Elementary Schools				
	Quartile 1 ≥ 77.92%	Quartile 2 61.0% - 77.9%	Quartile 3 42.84% - 60.96%	Quartile 4 ≤ 42.76%
%HQT	99.23%	99.28%	99.34%	99.58%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	25.60%	23.40%	21.00%	20.10%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	29.80%	29.10%	28.80%	31.50%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	44.70%	47.50%	50.20%	48.40%
Middle Schools				
	Quartile 1 ≥ 71.07%	Quartile 2 55.12% - 70.97%	Quartile 3 41.13% - 55.11%	Quartile 4 ≤ 41.02%
%HQT	94.34%	97.91%	97.89%	97.70%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	26.40%	22.50%	20.50%	20.60%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	30.10%	30.10%	29.80%	30.40%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	43.50%	47.30%	49.70%	49.00%
High Schools				
	Quartile 1 ≥ 60.47%	Quartile 2 42.65% - 60.41%	Quartile 3 28.82% - 42.63%	Quartile 4 ≤ 28.65%
%HQT	92.56%	96.51%	97.84%	97.34%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	24.70%	20.90%	19.40%	19.90%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	27.30%	25.40%	27.00%	27.50%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	48.00%	53.60%	53.60%	52.70%

Note: Quartile 1 is comprised of schools with the highest levels of poverty, and Quartile 4 is comprised of schools with the lowest levels poverty.

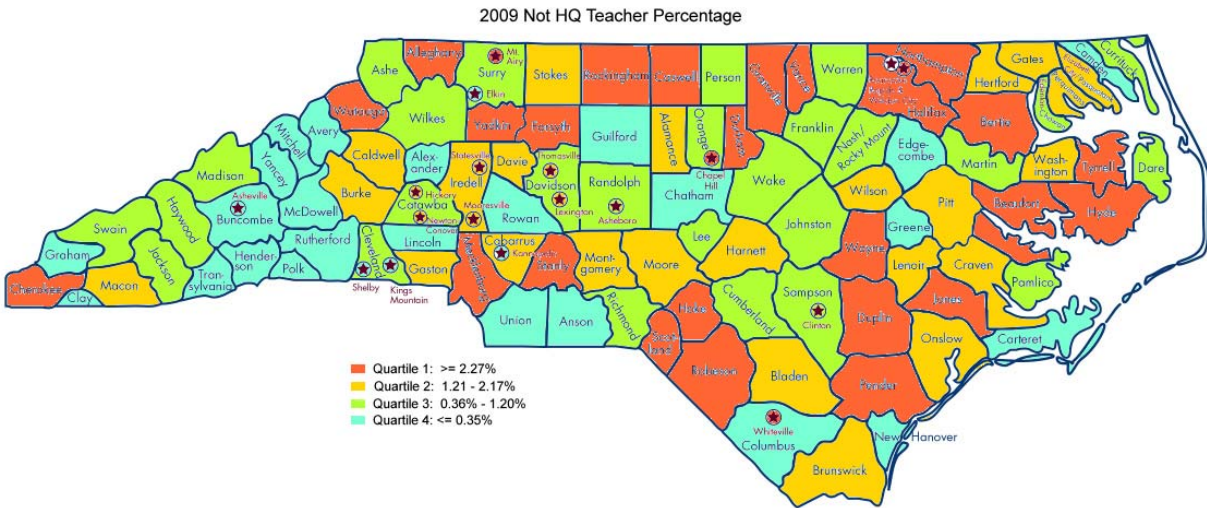
**Comparison of Highly Qualified Teacher Status and Experience
Based on School Minority Population Quartiles
2008-2009**

Elementary Schools				
	Quartile 1 ≥ 70.59%	Quartile 2 44.08% - 70.44%	Quartile 3 22.81% - 44.01%	Quartile 4 ≤ 22.68%
%HQT	99.09%	99.26%	99.56%	99.61%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	27.50%	23.70%	19.70%	18.00%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	29.60%	29.50%	30.60%	29.70%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	42.90%	46.90%	49.60%	52.20%
Middle Schools				
	Quartile 1 ≥ 67.79%	Quartile 2 44.07% - 67.71%	Quartile 3 23.59% - 43.90%	Quartile 4 ≤ 23.48%
%HQT	95.41%	96.57%	97.86%	98.97%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	27.70%	22.70%	20.80%	17.40%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	31.30%	30.50%	30.20%	28.50%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	41.00%	46.80%	48.90%	54.10%
High Schools				
	Quartile 1 ≥ 64.00%	Quartile 2 42.40% - 63.88%	Quartile 3 23.50% - 42.31%	Quartile 4 ≤ 23.46%
%HQT	93.51%	96.88%	97.51%	97.94%
% with 0-3 Years Experience	25.90%	21.20%	19.30%	16.80%
% with 4-10 Years Experience	27.30%	26.90%	27.40%	25.40%
% with 10+ Years of Experience	46.80%	52.00%	53.30%	57.80%

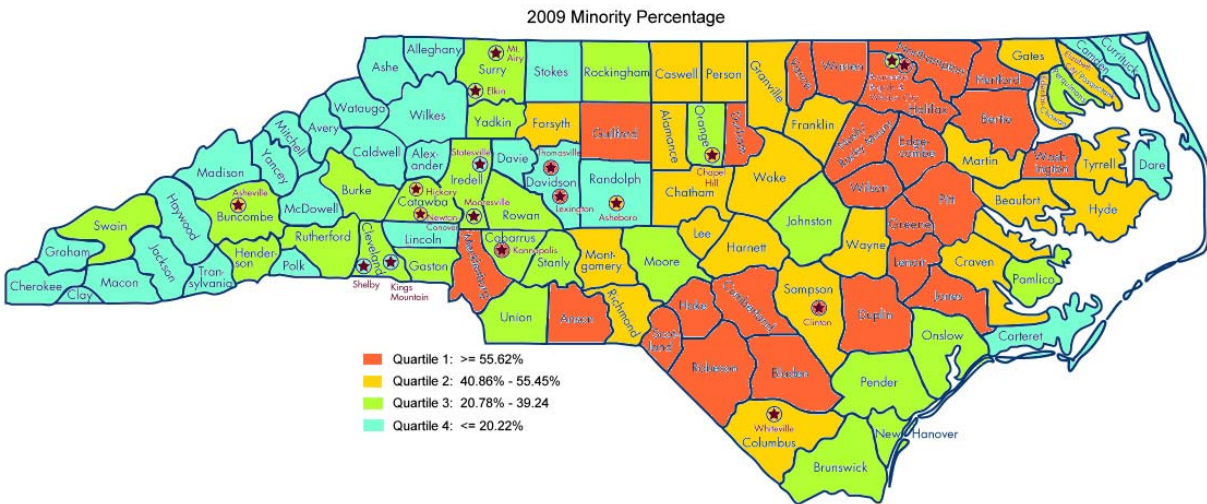
Note: Quartile 1 is comprised of schools with higher levels of minority students, and Quartile 4 is comprised of schools with fewer of minority students.

The maps that follow show LEAs by percent of minority student population, poverty, and percent of teachers not yet highly qualified. In all cases red represents the greatest percent (Quartile 1), yellow represents Quartile 2, green is Quartile 3, and blue is Quartile 4.

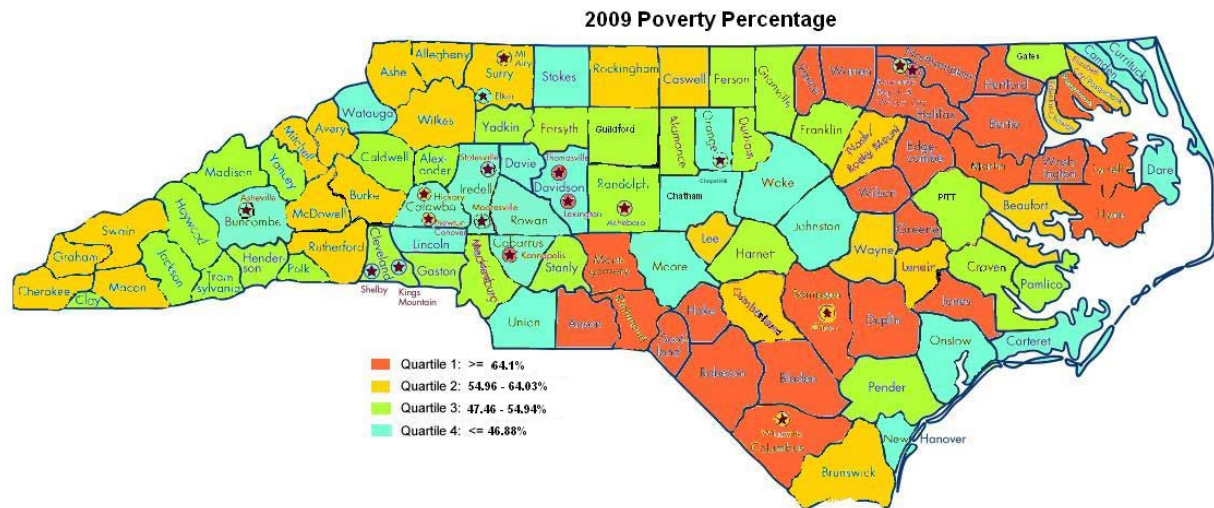
Non-Highly Qualified Teachers by LEA



2009 LEA Minority Student Population by Quartile



2009 LEA Student Poverty by Quartile



Because many schools and school systems across the State are struggling to find highly qualified teachers, North Carolina needs to continue its efforts to help recruit and retain highly qualified teachers. Additionally though, based on analysis of the data contained in the preceding tables, efforts that focus at the middle school and high school levels, as well as in the areas of math, science, and special education are needed. While there are differences across the quartiles in terms of teacher HQT status and experience, the more striking differences are across the school levels.

STRATEGIES TO ENSURE EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION

North Carolina has a multi-faceted problem of teacher shortage and distribution. To ensure the equitable distribution of teachers, NC must increase the overall supply of teachers available to schools. To do this, the State of North Carolina and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) must focus efforts on increasing public awareness of the problem, recruiting teachers to our schools, and retaining the teachers in our schools. The State must also find ways to enhance the effectiveness of our current supply of teachers to ensure that all students are provided quality instruction. NC has adopted a variety of strategies to address the shortage and distribution of teachers. These strategies are described in the following pages.

Strategy 1: Public Reporting

North Carolina publicly reports data on teacher qualifications in the annual School Report Card. The report card is web-based and contains information at the school, district, and State levels on the percent of highly qualified teachers, the number of teachers with advanced degrees, the number of teachers with 0-3, 4-10, and 10+ years of experience, retention of teachers at the school level, number of National Board Certified teachers, and results of the Teacher Working Conditions Survey. Schools are expected to send copies of their report card home. The school report card is published on the Department of Public Instruction website and can be found at: www.ncreportcards.org. System level personnel are provided training on the School Report Card annually so that they can answer any questions parents may have.

Rationale for the Strategy: To ensure the equitable distribution of teachers, the public must be aware of the problems the State faces regarding teacher shortage and distribution. The public reporting of teacher qualification data allows parents and other interested individuals to compare schools within and across systems. Public reporting of the data will raise awareness of inequities and the need for teachers and keep focus on the issue.

Strategy 2: LEA Equity Plans

North Carolina requires LEAs that have not met Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) targets to develop equity and improvement plans. For three years, the State has been providing technical assistance and monitoring to various LEAs that are having difficulty increasing their HQT percentages. This technical assistance was provided through a contract with a retired Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. The State will continue to monitor and provide assistance to LEAs not meeting HQT goals, and the State will assist them in developing equity and improvement plans. The State encourages the LEAs to make use of low wealth funds and the disadvantaged student supplemental funds mentioned in Strategy 5 to implement their equity plans.

Rationale for the Strategy: Because teachers are hired by local school systems and because it is ultimately the local system that assigns teachers to schools and classes, requiring local systems to have and to implement teacher equity plans is critical to ensure equitable distribution. The implementation of the equity plans will be monitored by DPI. The development of equity plans by local school systems will ensure that local school systems are aware of inequities with their schools and that they have developed and are implementing strategies to address inequity.

Strategy 3: Teacher Working Conditions

Since 2002, the State has surveyed all school-based licensed educators about their teaching conditions, including time, leadership, empowerment, professional development, facilities and resources, and induction. The most recent iteration of the Teacher Working Conditions (TWC) survey was in the spring of 2008, and over 104,000 educators responded, providing every public school with their own data to use as a tool to improve student learning conditions. Analyses conducted by the New Teacher Center demonstrate significant connections between positive teacher working conditions and student achievement and teacher retention. The results of the survey are available on-line at www.northcarolinatwc.org. A detailed report (available on the website) provides a question by question comparison of responses at the district and school levels. Schools and school systems can also request the results in excel file format.

The TWC survey continues to inform local communities on ways to improve each school, and data from the survey assist district and State policymakers in decisions affecting the recruitment and retention of quality teachers, teacher induction practices, and quality training of principals. The TWC data and accompanying research findings continue to shape statewide policy, leading to newly established 21st century standards and evaluations and support for school leaders and classroom teachers.

Rationale for the Strategy: On an annual basis, North Carolina hires approximately 11,000 – 12,000 new teachers. These teachers are needed not only because of student growth, but to replace teachers LEAs have lost due to retirement, other opportunities, and teacher working

conditions. Focusing on teacher working conditions will help improve teacher retention. This in turn will result in more experienced teaching staff in our schools. The State can address the shortage, in part, by retaining more teachers in our schools.

Strategy 4: Mentoring and Induction into Teaching

The NC State Board of Education has enacted policies to encourage optimum working conditions for new teachers⁶. The policy reads:

Research indicates that beginning teachers are often placed in difficult assignments that do not allow them the opportunity to learn and grow as professionals. The beginning teacher is often assigned the most difficult students, multiple preparations, and multiple extra-curricular assignments. These working conditions prohibit on-the-job learning and negatively influence teacher job satisfaction. To ensure that beginning teachers have the opportunity to develop into capable teachers, the following working conditions are strongly recommended:

- assignment in the area of licensure;
- mentor assigned early, in the licensure area, and in close proximity;
- orientation that includes state, district, and school expectations;
- limited preparations;
- limited non-instructional duties;
- limited number of exceptional or difficult students; and
- no extracurricular assignments unless requested in writing by the beginning teacher.

As used in these guidelines, the term “non-instructional duties” refers to those that are not directly involved with the instructional program or the implementation of the standard course of study, but that all teachers are expected to do. Examples would be bus duty, lunch duty, and hall duty. The term “extracurricular activities” refers to those activities performed by a teacher involving students that are outside the regular school day and not directly related to the instructional program.

Rationale for the Strategy: In line with national statistics, North Carolina loses almost 50% of its new teachers within five years. This results in the need to continuously recruit new teachers to replace those that leave. By retaining more new teachers, North Carolina will increase the supply of teachers available to school systems throughout the State. In addition, North Carolina will be better able to ensure that schools are staffed by more experienced teachers. A variety of research studies support the need for strong induction programs for new teachers. Mentoring new teachers impacts retention and helps teachers develop as professionals. While NC has had a mentoring program for over twenty years, the State needs to identify specific strategies to increase the impact of our program on teacher retention.

Strategy 5: Focus on Teacher Retention

Each year LEAs report to the State Board of Education the reasons that teachers left their system.

⁶ North Carolina State Board of Education Policy Manual (2006). Policies on the Beginning Teacher Support Program, Policy Number TCP-A-004, Section 4.30 Optimum Working Conditions for Beginning Teachers.

The data have been analyzed and four categories of teacher turnover have been identified: *Remained/Remaining in Education*, *Turnover that Might be Reduced*, *Turnover Initiated by the LEA*, and *Turnover Beyond Control*. The category *Remained/Remaining in Education* includes individuals resigning to teach in another NC LEA or charter school and individuals who moved to non-teaching positions in education. The category *Turnover that Might be Reduced* includes individuals retiring with reduced benefits, individuals resigning to teach in a non-public school in NC, individuals resigning to teach in another state, individuals dissatisfied with teaching, individuals seeking a career change, and individuals who resigned for unknown and other reasons. The category *Turnover Initiated by the LEA* includes individuals who were non-renewed, dismissed, or resigned in lieu of dismissal. The category *Turnover Beyond Control* included those individuals who retired with full benefits, individuals who resigned for health reasons, individuals who resigned due to family responsibilities and/or childcare, and individuals who resigned due to family relocation. The teacher turnover report is presented to the State Board of Education in October.

Rationale for the Strategy: Teacher turnover contributes to the differences in teacher experience levels at schools. Teacher turnover is higher at hard-to-staff schools and schools where working conditions are less than desirable. Teacher turnover can be reduced, and reducing it will positively impact student achievement. Retaining more teachers will increase the supply of teachers available to schools.

Strategy 6: Financial Incentives

The State and LEAs offer teachers a variety of incentives to enter the field, stay in teaching, and work in hard-to-staff schools and content areas. One way the State offers incentives is through its teacher compensation scale. North Carolina uses a step scale for teacher compensation⁷. The scale provides greater percent increases for teachers after three years of experience through the eighth year of experience and generally flattens out for the remainder of the scale. This increase from years three through eight was designed to provide an increased incentive for teachers to stay in the classroom during the time in which teachers tend to leave the field and when teachers are growing in terms of their effectiveness in the classroom.

In addition, the State provides an incentive to LEAs to hire teachers based upon their quality, rather than the cost required to compensate them. Teachers and other school personnel in North Carolina are paid on a state salary schedule based on education level and experience. School systems are allotted teaching positions based on student enrollment, rather than dollar amounts. Therefore, the salary is paid for whatever person the LEA hires into the position. Consequently, there is an incentive for LEAs to hire teachers with more experience and pay them higher salaries, since the base pay is borne by the State.

North Carolina provides State supplemental funds to LEAs in counties that do not have the ability to generate revenue to support public schools (per a legislated formula) at the state average level. The funding is to allow those counties to enhance the instructional program and student achievement. Eligible LEAs are those located in counties in which the calculated county wealth (per the legislated formula) is less than 100% of the state average wealth. In FY 2009-2010, 202.3 million was allotted for low-wealth funding, and 78 LEAs qualify for these funds.

⁷ NC Department of Public Instruction, Financial and Business Services (2009). Fiscal Year 2009 – 2010: North Carolina Public Schools Salary Schedule. www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/finance/salary/.

This funding can be used by school systems for instructional positions, substitutes, instructional support positions, teacher assistant positions, clerical positions, overtime pay, instructional equipment, instructional supplies and materials, staff development, and textbooks.

In the 2009-2010 school year, LEAs will receive \$76.2 million through state Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Funding to address the capacity needs of their system to meet the needs of disadvantaged students. Funds are allocated based on a formula that considers the percentage of students living in a single parent family, the percentage of students eligible for federal ESEA Title I, and the percentage of students who have at least one parent with less than a high school diploma. Each LEA must submit an action plan and budget to the State Board of Education. It is expected that LEAs will include teacher recruitment and retention, using the Teacher Working Conditions Survey as a tool, in their plans.

Rationale for the Strategy: Several studies have identified salary as a factor when potential employees decide whether or not to accept a particular assignment. Using the low wealth funding and the disadvantaged student supplemental funding, local systems can offer salary incentives to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools or address working conditions (such as class size, teacher assistants, instructional materials) that might attract teachers to the schools.

Strategy 7: Turn Around Teams for Low-Performing High Schools

Through the Division of District and School Transformation (DST), DPI provides support for North Carolina schools and districts to increase student achievement and reduce dropouts, utilizing a Statewide System of Support. Additionally, District and School Transformation provides specific support to districts and schools identified under federal law through No Child Left Behind and under state statute and/or executive or judicial mandate as having challenges with equity, growth, basic level of proficiency, or district capacity. Low-performing schools, schools with gaps in subgroup performance and secondary schools with performance composites below 60% proficient are supported through District and School Transformation's providing direct instructional and leadership coaching, comprehensive needs assessments, and/or strategic professional development.

The most important elements of the strategies implemented through District and School Transformation (DST) are those focused on changing behaviors and practices of school leaders and instructional staff. Without significant change and reculturing in the classroom, student achievement will not advance. Therefore, the work of DST intensively focuses on change in the professional practice of school leaders and teachers.

This model, focused on developing two levels of capacity, school and district, has produced significant positive results. Capacity-building with current staff when schools and districts are located in areas that make recruitment and retention more difficult is a viable option having documented success. Rather than redistributing existing highly qualified teachers, this model increases the supply of highly qualified teachers, builds the skills and abilities of current staff, and significantly increases instructional effectiveness. The model also allows flexibility among districts with greater and less capacity to effect internal changes.

Rationale for the Strategy: In areas in which recruitment and retention of teachers is less of a challenge and the supply of highly qualified and effective teachers is greater. The model both

allows for and encourages LEA efforts to make policy and staffing changes that will more equitably distribute highly qualified and highly effective personnel.

Strategy 8: Expansion of Access to Teacher Preparation Programs

The North Carolina Community College System, the University of North Carolina (UNC) System, and the independent colleges and universities throughout the State are working to increase the supply of teachers. With special funding from the North Carolina General Assembly, community colleges and UNC campuses, as well as some independent universities, have established 2+2 programs to make teacher preparation accessible to prospective teachers throughout the State. The University System has received special funding to make courses available through distance learning, including internet courses, and institutions are offering courses during late afternoons, evenings, and weekends to increase accessibility for non-traditional students.

The NC General Assembly has charged UNC with developing plans to address the teacher shortage in North Carolina. UNC is in process of developing system and campus-level plans using the following strategies: recruitment, preparation, and better support to improve the retention of new teachers and school leaders. UNC, in conjunction with the General Administration, the UNC Dean's Council on Teacher Education, and NCDPI, have developed plans for the first two of the three strategies; recruitment and preparation. The plans include a focus on preparing more teachers in mathematics education, science education, middle grades education, and special education – highest need licensure areas identified by NCDPI. Outcomes and accomplishments from each of the plans are reported to the UNC Board of Governors, shared with the NC General Assembly and the North Carolina State Board of Education, and discussed with all levels of UNC campus leadership each year. The third strategic plan, new teacher and school leader support, is being finalized with external funding sources being sought to support the implementation of this important work.

Rationale for the Strategy: NCDPI believes that increasing access to teacher preparation programs, particularly in rural areas of the State, will help ensure the equitable distribution of teachers for two reasons. First, analysis of teacher education program graduate data demonstrates that many program completers stay in the area in which they completed their programs. Second, individuals who already have roots/ties in an area/community, particularly rural or low wealth areas, are more likely to remain in those areas/communities. Increasing the supply of teachers will help address inequities in teacher distribution by providing a larger pool of qualified candidates.

Strategy 9: NC Virtual Public School

Through the NC Virtual Public School (NCVPS) program, e-learning opportunities have been prioritized for students residing in rural and low-wealth county LEAs through strategic professional development waves with credit recovery, advanced placement, and blended learning modules, with courses being offered to the schools and districts who need the service the most. As of the fall of 2009, students from 114 of the 115 school districts in the State took at least 10 online courses from NCVPS. The course catalog contains over 100 courses, which include: AP courses, EOC courses, honors and general courses in Math, Science, English, Social Studies,

World Languages, Arts, CTE, and Healthful Living, as well as courses available for credit recovery. The courses are offered in block and year-long format, as well as on both traditional and early calendars in order to meet the varied scheduling needs across the State. In addition, NCVPS employs over 300 teachers on an adjunct basis. All are certified to teach in North Carolina and are considered “highly qualified” as required by No Child Left Behind.

The 2009-2011 State budget appropriation includes expansion funding for the North Carolina Virtual Public School. Since 2007, The NCVPS has been second in the nation in terms of enrollment, having served over 60,000 students since its inception. (Florida Virtual is the first.) It has been recognized by the Center for Digital Education, The Chief State Schools Officers, and the International Association of Online Learning as the number eight virtual school in the country. In addition, the organization also partners with Learn and Earn Online to bring free college tuition opportunities to these areas through www.nclearnandearn.gov.

Rationale for the Strategy: NC Virtual Public School helps ensure equity in teacher distribution by providing students access to courses and other opportunities they might otherwise not have. NCVPS enables students throughout the State, regardless of geographic area, to have access to highly qualified, experienced teachers. Schools and school systems unable to employ highly qualified teachers for specific subjects are often able to access them through the Virtual Public School.

Strategy 10: Special Education Teachers

A May 2009 site visit by the US Department of Education (USED) focused on Title II programs found that NC has not established appropriate Highly Qualified Teacher requirements for special education teachers who teach core academic subjects. Specifically USED found that, the use of the Praxis 0511 *Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge* test does not allow secondary teachers to adequately demonstrate subject matter competence across the disciplines at the secondary level. This finding implies that NC has therefore effectively been setting a lower standard for special education teachers than it has for general education teachers who must hold 24 hours in content or take the Praxis II test(s) in each subject(s) they teach. As a result of the finding, secondary special education teachers in NC who demonstrated subject matter competence by passing the Praxis 0511 are no longer considered highly qualified. This change in standards now leaves North Carolina in the position of having a shortage of highly qualified content area teachers who are able to teach special education students throughout the State.

NCDPI is employing a variety of strategies to address this shortage and ensure the special education students of North Carolina have access to highly qualified teachers. In order to be considered highly qualified to teach content areas to secondary special education students, teachers now must have at least 24 hours of content area coursework or pass the Praxis II in the content area for which the educator is ‘teacher of record’. NCDPI convened several stakeholder meetings in December 2009 and considered alternative routes through which a potential special education teacher, and those who were formally considered highly-qualified, might demonstrate competence in ways that could certify the teacher as highly qualified in the content areas.

In the meantime, the State held webinars to support LEAs in their efforts to ensure that special education students are taught by HQTs. Most of the strategies suggested by the State center on

using an inclusion model. Some specific variations include:

- Consultation Model: General education teacher covers course materials, and special education teacher re-teaches difficult skills.
- Teaming Model: Special education teachers are assigned to a specific grade level team. The special education teacher provides support to general education teachers in terms of instructional strategies and potential modification ideas.
- Blended Learning Model: Via the use of technology, a HQT teaches the students virtually. The special education teachers serves as an on-site facilitator to reinforce learning, answer questions, etc.

EVALUATION OF THE EQUITY PLAN

This equity plan for highly qualified teachers will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis by the Department of Public Instruction, with input from LEAs and other stakeholders. The results of the review and update will be reported to the State Board of Education. Needed additions and/or modifications of the strategies will be included in the review and update.

Appendix A
Summary of Teacher Recruitment and Retention Initiatives

SUMMARY OF TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION INITIATIVES

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES	FINANCIAL INCENTIVES <i>Continued</i>	LICENSURE POLICIES	SYSTEM INITIATIVES	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospective Teacher Scholarship Loan • Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program • Future Teachers of North Carolina Scholarship Loan Fund (FTNC) • Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund • Teaching and Principal Fellows • Non-teaching work experience credit • Support for National Board Certification • In-state tuition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DSSF and Low Wealth funding • Salary increases, including 12% for National Board Certification and 10% for master's degree <div style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; padding: 5px;">PROGRAMS/ SERVICES</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Troops to Teachers (T3) • Prezell R. Robinson Scholars • Teacher Cadet (NCAE) • NC TEACH www.teach4nc.org • On-line application • Teachers-teachers.com • Regional Alternative Licensure Centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of alternative entry licensure routes through SB 1124 • Revision of licensure policies to facilitate licensing of fully licensed and highly qualified teachers from other states • Creation of accelerated track for lateral entry teachers with 5 years of relevant experience • Assistant Principal Provisional License • Validation of expired licenses • High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing bonuses • Home grown projects • Working with local businesses to provide incentive packages (e.g., low-interest mortgage loans, waiver of utilities deposits, etc.) • Weekend recruiting events • Job fairs • Out-of-state recruitment • Immediate contracts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three year induction program • Paid mentors (for 2 years) • 3 extra days for orientation • Optimum working conditions for beginning teachers • Teacher of the Year • Principal of the Year • Milken Educators • NCCAT/Teacher Academy

TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION INITIATIVES IN NORTH CAROLINA

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

The following financial programs were established as ways to enhance the quality of the North Carolina teacher pool. Programs offer incentives to enter and remain in the field, remain in their school, pursue National Board Certification and produce high levels of student achievement.

Future Teachers of North Carolina Scholarship Loan Fund (FTNC)

The Future Teachers of North Carolina Scholarship/Loan program was established by the 2005 North Carolina General Assembly to provide scholarships/loans to college juniors and seniors who are seeking licensure to teach math, science, special education or English as a second language in North Carolina's public schools.

This two-year scholarship-loan can be used at any North Carolina four-year institution that offers a teacher education program. Future Teachers of North Carolina is administered by the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority. The annual award will be \$6,500 per year for students enrolled full time (a minimum of 12 credit hours for both the fall and spring semesters). One half of the award is made available to the recipients in the fall semester the remainder in the spring semester. Recipients may renew the scholarship-loan up to two years. Funding for the program is contingent each year upon appropriations made available to the State Education Assistance Authority by the General Assembly.

Prospective Teacher Scholarship Loan (PTSL)

The Prospective Teacher Scholarship Loan is a competitive, merit-based scholarship-loan program created by the North Carolina General Assembly in 1957. This program was designed to provide scholarship loans to qualified individuals who are pursuing college degrees to become teachers in the public schools of North Carolina.

The annual award is:

1. \$4,000 per year for juniors and seniors.
2. \$2,500 per year for freshmen and sophomores and community college students planning to transfer into a teacher education program at a four-year institution.

One half of the award is made available to the recipients in the fall semester and the remainder in the spring semester. Recipients may renew the scholarship-loan up to three years. Funding for the program is contingent each year upon appropriations made available to the State Education Assistance Authority by the General Assembly.

Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program

Beginning July 1, 2008, the Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant Program will provide up to \$4,000 a year in grant aid to undergraduate and graduate students and students enrolled in a post-baccalaureate teacher credential program, or current or prospective teachers.

Eligible undergraduate and post-baccalaureate students may not receive more than \$16,000 and graduate students may receive no more than \$8,000 in total TEACH Grants.

Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund (TASF)

The Teacher Assistant Scholarship Fund provides funding to full-time teacher assistants pursuing initial licensure through a baccalaureate program at a NC college or university with an approved teacher education program or enrolled in a North Carolina community college transfer program leading to teacher certification at a qualifying four-year campus. Students already holding baccalaureate degrees seeking initial licensure are eligible to apply. Funding levels for new recipients are dependent upon where the student is enrolled. The maximum amount that a student can receive over time through this program is \$25,200.

North Carolina Millennium Teacher Scholarship Loan Program

The North Carolina Millennium Teacher Scholarship Loan Program is a competitive program for worthy and needy North Carolina resident high school seniors who are interested in teaching in North Carolina public schools. Students who are selected for the NC Millennium Teacher Scholarship will receive \$6,500 per year for four years to be applied toward the cost of attendance. Up to 20 recipients will be selected at each of the three participating campuses.

Teaching Fellows Program

Enacted by the NC General Assembly in 1986, the Teaching Fellows Program seeks to recruit talented high school graduates into the teaching profession and to help them develop leadership qualities such as visionary thinking and risk-taking. The Program provides a \$6,500 per year scholarship for four years to 500 outstanding North Carolina high school seniors to pursue a degree in teacher education. Teaching Fellows are required to participate in a number of experiences designed to enhance their education and give insights into the challenges facing them when they enter the classroom. The student agrees to teach for four years following graduation from college in one of North Carolina's public schools or United States Government schools in North Carolina.

Principal Fellows Program

Created by the 1993 General Assembly, this program was established to train qualified individuals to enter school-based administrative positions in the public schools of North Carolina. The program provides a full year of academic study at the master's level, followed by a one-year internship in a school system. A 12-member Principal Fellows Commission selects the scholarship/loan recipients of the program. First year Principal Fellows receive \$30,000 per year, and 2nd year Principal Fellows receive 60% of a beginning assistant principal's salary. Second year Principal Fellows also receive a stipend over a 10 month period from the Department of Public Instruction.

ABC Bonuses

Averaging \$100 million per year for the last decade, the State provides bonuses to teachers based on student performance. Teachers receive \$750 if their school meets expected growth targets; \$1500 if their school exceeds expected growth targets⁸.

⁸ In 2008, due to economic conditions, the General Assembly capped the total amount of funding for this purpose, and teachers received bonuses at a reduced level. For 2009 and 2010, the General Assembly has not funded teacher bonuses for school performance due to the economic downturn and limited availability of funds.

DSSF and Low Wealth Funding

DSSF Funds are allocated based on a formula that considers the percentage of students living in a single parent family, the percentage of students eligible for federal ESEA Title I, and the percentage of students who have at least one parent with less than a high school diploma. Each LEA must submit an action plan and budget to the State Board of Education. It is expected that LEAs will include teacher recruitment and retention, using the Teacher Working Conditions Survey as a tool, in their plans.

Low Wealth Funds are allocated to school systems in counties that do not have the ability to generate revenue to support public schools (per a legislated formula) at the state average level. The funding is provided to allow those counties to enhance the instructional program and student achievement.

In-state Tuition

Individuals from other states employed as teachers in North Carolina qualify for in-state tuition rates at the public universities upon establishing residency (this waives the one-year residency requirement).

Non-Teaching Work Experience Credit

Individuals can be granted experience credit (for salary purposes) for full-time non-teaching work experience relevant to their teaching license. Beginning July 1, 2001, credit has also been granted for part-time work experience.

National Board Certification Support

NC State legislation provides support to teachers seeking advanced certification through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Since 1994, teachers with a continuing license and a minimum of three years teaching experience in North Carolina have been eligible to receive support for certification, including funding for the cost of the assessment fee, up to three days of paid release time, grant renewal credit, and a 12% salary differential upon completion, as long as teachers agree to remain in the classroom⁹. Due to economic conditions, the State was unable to provide funding for assessment fees for 2009 and 2010; however, teachers continue to receive three days of paid leave and a 12% pay increase upon completion. The State anticipates the legislature will resume funding of fees in FY 2011.

Job Sharing

The General Assembly has authorized, and the State Board of Education has adopted a policy, providing teachers the opportunity to share teaching positions¹⁰. Two teachers, each working half-time, can share a teaching position designated by the local board of education. The teachers receive prorated benefits and retirement service credit.

⁹ Due to economic conditions, the State was unable to provide funding for assessment fees for 2009 and 2010; however, teachers continue to receive three days of paid leave and a 12% pay increase upon completion. The State anticipates the legislature will resume funding of fees in FY 2011.

¹⁰ NC General Assembly (2003). Job sharing by school employees. NCGS § 115C-326.5; NC State Board of Education (2003). NC State Board of Ed Policy Manual; Policy Number TCP-D-001; Public School of North Carolina (2009). Benefits and Employment Policy Manual, Policy number 17.1 – Job-Sharing for School Employees.

PROGRAMS/SERVICES

Troops to Teachers (T3)

Troops-to-Teachers is a federally funded program designed to assist former (exiting) military personnel interested in a teaching career. The program provides individuals assistance in locating teaching positions and affiliating with college/university teacher education programs to complete licensure requirements.

Prezell R. Robinson Scholars

The Prezell R. Robinson Scholars Program is designed to encourage high school students to pursue careers in teaching. Low-wealth school systems and school systems with documented difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers are eligible to participate. Robinson Scholars participate in system-sponsored activities designed to foster their commitment to teaching and enhance the likelihood they will be accepted to and complete an approved teacher education program.

Teacher Cadet Program

The General Assembly has appropriated funds to support teacher cadet programs in high schools throughout the state. This program is administered by the North Carolina Association of Educators.

NC TEACH

NC TEACH is a statewide lateral entry teacher licensure program developed jointly by the State Board of Education and the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina. It is designed to recruit, train, support, and retain highly skilled mid-career professionals who seek to enter the teaching profession. The program includes an intensive summer experience prior to entering the classroom, seminars focused on professional development throughout the academic year, and on-line support. It is offered at seven sites throughout the state. Federal funds were used to support the development and implementation of the program. The federal funding for this program has now ended and it is supported with state funds.

On-line Applications, Posting of Job Vacancies

The HRMS (Human Resource Management System) has been significantly upgraded and the Department has contracted with two individuals to assist LEAs in using the system. LEAs can post job vacancies through the system. Individuals interested in employment as teachers in North Carolina can complete an application on-line. The applications are downloaded to LEAs weekly.

Teachers-teachers.com

The state participates in an online recruiting initiative that aides schools in recruiting quality teachers. Candidates can apply to positions using a common application form. North Carolina is one of only three states to have a common application form that can be used for any district in the state.

LICENSURE POLICIES

Alternative Entry

Individuals with valid out-of-state licenses and one year teaching experience, teaching experience at the college level, or three years relevant work experience are eligible for alternative entry. Individuals in the first category (out-of-state license) can be exempted from Praxis testing requirements under this route. Individuals in the second and third categories (college teaching experience or three years relevant experience) who satisfy Praxis testing requirements during their first year of teaching are not required to affiliate with a college/university to complete course work to be granted a clear license¹¹.

LEA Lateral Entry Program

Since establishing the innovative/experimental lateral entry policy in June 2008, the State Board of Education has approved several such programs¹². Guilford County established the first such program. It offers lateral entry candidates the option of selecting a 19-month long, locally-customized licensure and support program as an alternative to an IHE or RALC program. Since then, Moore County has partnered with Sandhills Community College to create a similar program. In July 2009, the State Board approved a program for career and technical education teachers in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, as well as a program offered through Mount Olive College for eastern LEAs. Iredell-Statesville also is currently in the process of developing a program.

Alternative Programs for Administrators

The State Board of Education can approve alternative licensure programs for school administrators¹³. In June 2008, the State Board gave approval for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to recommend individuals who complete the *New Leaders for New Schools* program (NLNS) for a full state license as a school administrator. The NLNS is designed to provide intensive instruction, hands-on experience, and ongoing support to create a pathway for current and former educators to become principals who specialize in leading urban public schools.

Licensure Policies To Facilitate Transition of Highly Qualified Teachers From Other States

License reciprocity has expanded in North Carolina. Beginning teachers (0-2 years of experience) who have completed another state's approved alternative route to licensure, have met the federal requirements to be designated as "Highly Qualified," and have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college are eligible for North Carolina licensure. Similarly, experienced teachers who are fully licensed and "Highly Qualified" in another state and who either meet North Carolina's Praxis requirements or hold National Board Certification are eligible for licensure¹⁴.

Accelerated Track for Lateral Entry Teachers

The NC State Board of Education created an accelerated track for lateral entry teachers who have

¹¹ State Board of Education (2009). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policies on General Licensure Requirements; Policy Number: TCP-A-001; Section 1.80-Alternative Entry License.

¹² State Board of Education (2009). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policy Defining Innovative/Experimental Programs for Lateral Entry Teacher Licensure; Policy ID Number: TCP-B-010.

¹³ State Board of Education (2009). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policy Defining Innovative/Experimental Programs for School Administrator Preparation; Policy Number: TCP-B-006.

¹⁴ State Board of Education (2000). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policy Governing Reciprocity in Licensing; Policy Number TCP-A-018.

5 years of experience considered relevant by the employing LEA. The five years of experience can substitute for the 2.5 grade point average. In addition, individuals with the five years of experience who pass the required Praxis II tests in the first year can be issued a Standard Professional 1 License, upon completion of designated instructional modules (rather than entire programs of study), and completion of one year of successful teaching as verified by the employing LEA¹⁵.

Validation of Expired Licenses

The State Board of Education has implemented a policy to encourage individuals with expired licenses to return to teaching. Rather than requiring that all license renewal hours be completed before issuing a license, individuals whose licenses have expired are granted validated licenses upon employment by an LEA. The validated license allows an individual up to three years to earn required renewal hours¹⁶.

High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE)

In compliance with No Child Left Behind, North Carolina has developed a High, Objective, Uniform, State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) that allows veteran teachers who hold clear North Carolina teaching licenses to be designated highly-qualified without additional testing¹⁷. Individuals who hold a clear license, but have been teaching-out-of field for at least three years can also use the HOUSSE to obtain a full license in the teaching area.

Expansion of Lateral Entry Pathways for Teachers

NC Session Law 2009-0451, passed in August 2009, requires the State Board to identify and remove barriers to lateral entry into teaching for skilled individuals from the private sector. It also requires the Board to trim current course requirements and to allow opportunities for candidates to complete coursework online. A progress report will be presented to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee in January 2010.

SYSTEM-INITIATIVES

Local school systems utilize a number of incentives to recruit teachers. These included signing bonuses, local job fairs, issuing contracts “on-the-spot,” attending out-of-state recruitment fairs, and working with local businesses to provide incentive packages.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

Three-Year Induction Program, Paid Mentors, Orientation, Optimum Working Conditions

To facilitate entry into the teaching profession, the State has implemented a number of initiatives. Beginning teachers are issued an initial license 3-year license and participate in an induction program designed to provide them support and assistance. State-funded beginning teachers are provided paid mentors for two years and can be paid for three additional days of

¹⁵ State Board of Education (2005). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policies on licenses for non-teacher education graduates; Policy Number TCP-A-014.

¹⁶ State Board of Education (2007). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policies Regarding Renewal Requirements; Policy Number TCP-A-005.

¹⁷ State Board of Education (2009). State Board of Education Policy Manual; Policies on General Licensure Requirements; Policy Number: TCP-A-001

employment to participate in orientation activities designed by the LEAs. School systems can apply for the flexible use of their mentor funds to support the employment of full-time mentors. Legislation has been enacted that specifies teachers with less than 3 years of teaching experience not be assigned any extra-curricular activities unless they are requested in writing. The Board has articulated optimum working conditions for beginning teachers which include minimal non-instructional duties and no extra-curricular duties unless requested in writing¹⁸.

Salary Increases

Under the Excellent Schools Act, the State raised the salary paid to teachers. The revised salary schedules include a 12% pay differential for teachers with National Board Certification and a 10% pay differential for teachers with master's level licenses¹⁹.

Enhancement/Recognition Programs

The State participates in several programs designed to recognize and honor inservice educators. The **Teacher of the Year** Program recognizes outstanding teachers. The State Teacher of the Year receives a \$7500 award and serves as an ambassador for teaching for one year. Seven regional Teachers of the Year receive \$5000 each. Through the generosity of the NC Automobile Dealers Association the State Teacher of the Year also receives a new car. The State Teacher of the Year and the seven regional winners are also provided a trip to a national professional development conference. Additionally, the North Carolina Center for International Understanding provides the State Teacher of the Year the opportunity to participate in an international study trip.

The **Principal of the Year** Program, conducted in conjunction with Wachovia Bank, honors outstanding principals. Cash awards are made to the State Principal of the Year and seven regional Principals of the Year by Wachovia Bank.

North Carolina participates in the **Milken Educator** Program. Two-four educators per year are selected to receive \$25,000 from the Milken Foundation. These educators are recognized at the local level and honored at a luncheon.

NC Center for the Advancement of Teacher (NCCAT)

The NC Center for the Advancement of Teaching was established in 1985 to develop and retain high quality teachers by providing a continuum of research-based professional development programs for beginning teachers, National Board candidates, teacher leaders, and teachers focused on core content areas. NCCAT provides programming to over 4,000 teachers annually.

www.nccat.org

¹⁸ North Carolina State Board of Education Policy Manual (2006). Policies on the Beginning Teacher Support Program, Policy Number TCP-A-004, Section 4.30 Optimum Working Conditions for Beginning Teachers.

¹⁹ Department of Public Instruction (2009). Fiscal Year 2009 – 2010 North Carolina Public School Salary Schedules. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/finance/salary/>.