

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE BILL 902

Short Title: Transforming Principal Preparation. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Blackwell, Horn, Bryan, and Hanes (Primary Sponsors).

For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.

Referred to: Education - K-12, if favorable, Appropriations.

April 16, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM TO ELEVATE
EDUCATORS IN NORTH CAROLINA BY TRANSFORMING THE PREPARATION
OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1.(a) Purpose. – The purpose of this act is to establish a competitive grant program for eligible entities to elevate educators in North Carolina public schools by transforming the preparation of principals across the State. The State Education Assistance Authority (Authority) shall administer this grant program through a cooperative agreement with a private, nonprofit corporation to provide funds for the preparation and support of highly effective future school principals in North Carolina.

SECTION 1.(b) Definitions. – For the purposes of this act, the following definitions apply:

- (1) Eligible entity. – A for-profit or nonprofit organization or an institution of higher education that has an evidence-based plan for preparing school leaders who implement school leadership practices linked to increased student achievement.
- (2) High-need school. – A public school, including a charter school, that meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. Is a school identified under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.
 - b. Is a persistently low-achieving school, as identified by the Department of Public Instruction for purposes of federal accountability.
 - c. A middle school containing any of grades five through eight that feeds into a high school with less than a sixty percent (60%) four-year cohort graduation rate.
 - d. A high school with less than a sixty percent (60%) four-year cohort graduation rate.
- (3) Principal. – The highest administrative official in a public school building with primary responsibility for the instructional leadership, talent management, and organizational development of the school.
- (4) School leader. – An individual employed in a school leadership role, including principal or assistant principal roles.



- 1 (5) Student achievement. – At the whole school level, after three years of
2 leading a school, consistent and methodologically sound measures of:
3 a. Student academic achievement.
4 b. Aggregated individual student academic growth.
5 c. Additional outcomes, such as high school graduation rates, the
6 percentage of students taking advanced-level coursework, or the
7 percentage of students who obtain a career-related credential through
8 a national business certification exam.

9 **SECTION 1.(c)** Program Authorized. – The Authority shall award grants to
10 eligible entities to support programs that develop well-prepared school leaders in accordance
11 with the provisions of this act. The Authority shall establish any necessary rules to administer
12 the grant program.

13 **SECTION 1.(d)** Contract With a Nonprofit for Administration. – By September 1,
14 2015, the Authority shall issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a private, nonprofit
15 corporation to contract with the Authority for the administration of the program, including
16 making recommendations to the Authority for the award of grants, as authorized by this act.
17 The nonprofit corporation applying to the Authority shall meet at least the following
18 requirements:

- 19 (1) The nonprofit corporation shall be a nonprofit corporation organized
20 pursuant to Chapter 55A of the General Statutes and shall comply at all
21 times with the provisions of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
22 (2) The nonprofit corporation shall employ sufficient staff who have
23 demonstrated a capacity for the development and implementation of grant
24 selection criteria and a selection process to promote innovative school leader
25 education programs, including:
26 a. Focus on school leader talent.
27 b. Expertise supporting judgments about grant renewal based on
28 achievement of or substantial school leader progress toward
29 measurable results in student achievement.
30 c. Expectation of creating positive experiences working with the
31 educational community in North Carolina to establish the foundation
32 for successfully administering the programs set forth in this act.
33 (3) The nonprofit corporation shall comply with the limitations on lobbying set
34 forth in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
35 (4) No State officer or employee may serve on the board of the nonprofit
36 corporation.
37 (5) The board of the nonprofit corporation shall meet at least quarterly at the call
38 of its chair.

39 **SECTION 1.(e)** Report on Selection of the Nonprofit. – The Authority shall select
40 a nonprofit corporation to enter into a contract with to administer the program by January 1,
41 2016. The Authority shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the
42 selection of the nonprofit corporation by January 15, 2016.

43 **SECTION 1.(f)** Application Requirements. – The nonprofit corporation entering
44 into a contract with the Authority under subsection (d) of this section shall issue an initial RFP
45 with guidelines and criteria for the grants no later than March 1, 2016. An eligible entity that
46 seeks a grant under the program authorized by this act shall submit to the nonprofit corporation
47 an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the
48 nonprofit may require. An applicant shall include at least the following information in its
49 response to the RFP for consideration by the nonprofit corporation:

- 1 (1) The extent to which the entity has a demonstrated record of preparing school
2 leaders who implement school leadership practices linked to increased
3 student achievement.
- 4 (2) The extent to which the entity has a rigorous school leader preparation
5 program design that includes the following research-based programmatic
6 elements:
 - 7 a. A proactive, aggressive, and intentional recruitment strategy.
 - 8 b. Rigorous selection criteria based on competencies that are predictive
9 of success as a school leader, including, but not limited to, evidence
10 of significant positive effect on student learning growth in the
11 classroom, at the school-level, and the local school administrative
12 unit-level, professional recommendations, evidence of problem
13 solving and critical thinking skills, achievement drive, and leadership
14 of adults.
 - 15 c. Alignment to high-quality national standards for school leadership
16 development.
 - 17 d. Rigorous coursework that effectively links theory with practice
18 through the use of field experiences and problem-based learning.
 - 19 e. Full-time clinical practice of at least five months in duration in an
20 authentic setting, including substantial leadership responsibilities
21 where candidates are evaluated on leadership skills and effect on
22 student outcomes as part of program completion.
 - 23 f. Multiple opportunities for school leader candidates to be observed
24 and coached by program faculty and staff.
 - 25 g. Clear expectations for and firm commitment from school leaders
26 who will oversee the clinical practice of candidates.
 - 27 h. Evaluation of school leader candidates during and at the end of the
28 clinical practice based on the North Carolina School Executive
29 Evaluation Rubric.
 - 30 i. A process for continuous review and program improvement based on
31 feedback from partnering local school administrative units and data
32 from program completers, including student achievement data.
 - 33 j. Established relationship and feedback loop with affiliated local
34 school administrative units that is used to inform and improve
35 programmatic elements from year to year based on units' needs.

36 **SECTION 1.(g)** Priorities. – The nonprofit corporation shall evaluate the
37 applicants for grants by giving priority to an eligible entity with a record of preparing principals
38 demonstrating the following:

- 39 (1) Improvement in student achievement.
- 40 (2) Placement as school leaders in eligible schools.
- 41 (3) A proposed focus on and, if applicable, a record of serving high-need
42 schools, high-need local school administrative units, or both.
- 43 (4) A detailed plan and commitment to share lessons learned and to improve the
44 capacity of other entities in reaching similar outcomes.

45 **SECTION 1.(h)** Uses of Funds. – By June 1, 2016, the nonprofit corporation shall
46 recommend to the Authority the recipients of grants under the program. Each eligible entity
47 that receives grant funds shall use those funds to carry out the following:

- 48 (1) Recruiting and selecting, based on a rigorous evaluation of the competencies
49 of the school leader candidates participating in the program and their
50 potential and desire to become effective school leaders.
- 51 (2) Operating a school leader preparation program by doing the following:

- 1 a. Utilizing a research-based content and curriculum, including
2 embedded participant assessments to evaluate candidates before
3 program completion, that prepares candidates to do the following:
 - 4 1. Provide instructional leadership, such as developing teachers'
5 instructional practices and analyzing classroom and
6 school-wide data to support teachers.
 - 7 2. Manage talent, such as developing a high-performing team.
 - 8 3. Build a positive school culture, such as building a strong
9 school culture focused on high academic achievement for all
10 students, including gifted and talented students, students with
11 disabilities, and English learners, maintaining active
12 engagement with family and community members, and
13 ensuring student safety.
 - 14 4. Develop organizational practices, such as aligning staff,
15 budget, and time to the instructional priorities of the school.
- 16 b. Providing opportunities for sustained and high-quality job-embedded
17 practice in an authentic setting where candidates are responsible for
18 moving the practice and performance of a subset of teachers or for
19 school-wide performance as principal-in-planning or interim school
20 leaders.
- 21 (3) Collecting data on program implementation and program completer
22 outcomes for continuous program improvement.

23 **SECTION 1.(i)** Duration of Grants. – The nonprofit corporation shall also
24 recommend to the Authority the duration and renewal of grants to eligible entities according to
25 the following:

- 26 (1) The duration of grants shall be as follows:
 - 27 a. Grants shall be no more than five years in duration.
 - 28 b. The nonprofit corporation may recommend renewal of a grant based
29 on performance, including allowing the grantee to scale up or
30 replicate the successful program as provided in subdivision (2) of this
31 subsection.
- 32 (2) In evaluating performance for purposes of grant renewal and making
33 recommendations to the Authority, the nonprofit corporation shall consider:
 - 34 a. For all grantees, the primary consideration in renewing grants shall
35 be the extent to which program participants improved student
36 achievement in eligible schools.
 - 37 b. Other criteria from data received in the annual report in subsection (j)
38 of this section may include the following:
 - 39 1. The percentage of program completers who are placed as
40 school leaders in this State within three years of receiving a
41 grant.
 - 42 2. The percentage of program completers who are rated
43 proficient or above on the North Carolina School Executive
44 Evaluation Rubric.

45 **SECTION 1.(j)** Reporting Requirements. – Recipients of grants under the program
46 shall submit an annual report to the nonprofit corporation contracting with the Authority,
47 beginning in the third year of the grant, with any information requested by the nonprofit
48 corporation. Whenever practicable and within a reasonable amount of time, grant recipients
49 shall also make all materials developed as part of the program and with grant funds publically
50 available to contribute to the broader sharing of promising practices. Materials shall not include
51 personally identifiable information regarding individuals involved or associated with the

1 program, including, without limitation, applicants, participants, supervisors, evaluators, faculty,
2 and staff, without their prior written consent. The nonprofit corporation shall work with
3 recipients and local school administrative units, as needed, to enable the collection, analysis,
4 and evaluation of at least the following relevant data, within necessary privacy constraints:

- 5 (1) Student achievement in eligible schools.
- 6 (2) The percentage of program completers who are placed as school leaders
7 within three years in the State.
- 8 (3) The percentage of program completers rated proficient or above on school
9 leader evaluation and support systems.

10 **SECTION 2.** By June 1, 2016, the State Board of Education shall adopt a policy to
11 provide for a specific certification process applicable to school administrators who provide
12 documentation to the State Board of successful completion of a principal preparation program
13 selected for a competitive grant in accordance with this act.

14 **SECTION 3.** The nonprofit corporation administering the program shall provide
15 the State Board of Education with the data collected in accordance with Section 1(j) of this act
16 on an annual basis. By September 15, 2021, the State Board of Education, in coordination with
17 the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina, shall revise, as necessary, the
18 certification requirements for school administrators and the standards for approval of school
19 administrator preparation programs after evaluating the data collected from the grant recipients,
20 including the criteria used in selecting grant recipients and the outcomes of program
21 completers. The State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Legislative Education
22 Oversight Committee by November 15, 2021, on any changes made to the certification
23 requirements for school administrators and the standards for approval of school administrator
24 preparation programs in accordance with this section.

25 **SECTION 4.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of
26 Governors of The University of North Carolina the sum of five hundred thousand dollars
27 (\$500,000) for the 2015-2016 fiscal year to be allocated to the State Education Assistance
28 Authority to contract with the nonprofit corporation selected pursuant to Section 1(e) of this act
29 to establish and administer the program and the sum of nine million five hundred thousand
30 dollars (\$9,500,000) for the 2016-2017 fiscal year to contract with the nonprofit corporation for
31 the administration of the program and to award grants to selected recipients.

32 **SECTION 5.** Sections 1 and 4 of this act become effective July 1, 2015. The
33 remainder of this act is effective when this act becomes law.