

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015**

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SENATE BILL 594

Short Title: Teach for North Carolina Pilot Program. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators McInnis (Primary Sponsor); and Lee.

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate.

March 30, 2015

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE TEACH FOR NORTH CAROLINA PILOT PROGRAM.

Whereas, based on current enrollment in teacher preparation programs, the average age of teachers, and the teacher turnover rate, North Carolina is facing a real teacher shortage in its rural counties, a shortage that is a growing crisis for our entire educational system; and

Whereas, with the recent elimination of the costly Teaching Fellows Program, there is no incentivized program to encourage our best and brightest high school students to enter teaching; and

Whereas, as a result, rural counties rely on inexperienced, new teachers from other states with inconsistent levels of preparation who often leave for their home state and higher salaried jobs as soon as they have a few years of experience in North Carolina schools; and

Whereas, to solve this problem and provide stable, talented, and motivated teachers in our classrooms, we need a bold new plan that takes advantage of the assets and resources already at our disposal; and

Whereas, the Richmond, Scotland, and Anson County school systems are using teacher assistants in some classrooms instead of teachers because they are unable to recruit and retain teachers; and

Whereas, these schools systems are therefore not spending a significant portion of the State funds allotted to them for teachers; and

Whereas, these unspent funds could be used to pay the educational costs of teacher assistants in these schools systems who want to earn degrees in teaching; Now, therefore, The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

SECTION 1.1. The Teach for North Carolina Pilot Program is established in the Department of Public Instruction. The purpose of the program is to provide scholarship loans to qualified teacher assistants in the Richmond, Scotland, and Anson County school systems who are preparing to teach. The Department shall administer the program.

SECTION 1.2. The Department of Public Instruction shall award a maximum of 30 four-year scholarship loans for the 2015-2016 academic year and an additional 30 four-year scholarship loans for the 2016-2017 academic year to teacher assistants who are working in the Richmond, Scotland, or Anson County school systems or in school systems in adjacent North Carolina counties.

SECTION 1.3. All loan recipients shall be residents of North Carolina. The Department shall consult with the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina



1 and the North Carolina Community College System in developing other criteria for awarding
2 the loans.

3 **SECTION 1.4.** The following terms and conditions shall apply to each loan made
4 pursuant to this act:

- 5 (1) Promissory note. – All loans shall be evidenced by promissory notes made
6 payable to the Department.
- 7 (2) Interest. – All promissory notes shall bear an interest rate established by the
8 Department that does not exceed ten percent (10%) and is in relation to the
9 current interest rate for non-need-based federal loans made pursuant to Title
10 IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Interest shall accrue
11 from the date of disbursement of the loan funds.
- 12 (3) Loan amount. – Each recipient shall receive a loan of seven thousand dollars
13 (\$7,000) a year for four years. Of these funds, four thousand five hundred
14 dollars (\$4,500) per year shall be used to cover education costs under the
15 Comprehensive Articulation Agreement between the Board of Governors of
16 The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community
17 College System, and two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per year
18 shall be a stipend.
- 19 (4) Repayment. – The Department shall forgive the loan if the recipient (i)
20 teaches for eight consecutive academic years in a county designated as tier
21 one in accordance with G.S. 143B-437.08, or (ii) teaches for four
22 consecutive academic years in a school that received a D or F grade in
23 accordance with G.S. 115C-83.15. If the recipient completed the program in
24 less than four years, the Department shall reduce the teaching requirement
25 on a pro rata basis.

26 The Department may provide for accelerated repayment and less than
27 full-time employment options. The Department shall collect cash
28 repayments when service repayment is not completed. The Department shall
29 establish the terms for cash repayment, including a minimum monthly
30 repayment amount and maximum period of time to complete repayment.

- 31 (5) Death and disability. – The Department may forgive all or part of a loan if it
32 determines that it is impossible for the recipient to repay the loan in cash or
33 service because of the death or disability of the recipient.
- 34 (6) Hardship. – The Department may grant a forbearance, a deferment, or both,
35 in hardship circumstances when a good-faith effort has been made to repay
36 the loan in a timely manner.
- 37 (7) Other. – The Department may establish other terms and conditions that are
38 necessary or convenient to effectuate the program.

39 **SECTION 1.5.** In order to ensure that there is an adequate number of qualified
40 teachers available in rural counties, the General Assembly urges the State Board of Education
41 to consider modifying the teacher preparation and licensure requirements for scholarship loan
42 recipients who have five years of exemplary experience as teacher assistants in the classroom
43 and already have an associate's degree by (i) exempting them from the student teaching
44 requirement and (ii) modifying the prescribed minimum score on a standard examination
45 appropriate to demonstrate the applicant's academic and professional preparation for licensure
46 as a teacher.

47 **SECTION 1.6.(a)** The Department of Public Instruction shall prepare an annual
48 evaluation report on each recipient of a scholarship loan.

49 **SECTION 1.6.(b)** The Department shall report no later than December 1, 2015,
50 and annually thereafter, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the
51 implementation of the pilot program.

1 **SECTION 1.7.** The Department of Public Instruction may adopt rules necessary to
2 implement, administer, and enforce the provisions of this Part.

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4 **PART II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AND**
5 **THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

6 **SECTION 2.1.** If the distance to the nearest constituent institution of The
7 University of North Carolina with a school of education limits student access, The University
8 of North Carolina and the North Carolina Community College System shall coordinate the
9 establishment of satellite programs for loan recipients to complete the last two years of the
10 program at community college campuses.

11 **SECTION 2.2.** The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina
12 Community College System shall provide support and coordination to ensure that loan
13 recipients majoring in teaching disciplines, such as English Education, Art Education, Music
14 Education, and Math Education, have a seamless transition from the community college to the
15 university.

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17 **PART III. FUNDS**

18 **SECTION 3.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
19 Public Instruction the sum of three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) for the 2015-2016
20 fiscal year and the sum of five hundred ten thousand dollars (\$510,000) for the 2016-2017
21 fiscal year. Of these funds, the sum of two hundred ten thousand dollars (\$210,000) for the
22 2015-2016 fiscal year and the sum of four hundred twenty thousand dollars (\$420,000) for the
23 2016-2017 fiscal year shall be used for scholarship loans. The remainder shall be used by the
24 Department of Public Instruction for one personnel position and other costs related to the
25 administration of the Teach for North Carolina Pilot Program.

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27 **PART IV. EFFECTIVE DATE**

28 **SECTION 4.** Section 3 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2015. The remainder
29 of this act is effective when it becomes law and expires July 1, 2019.