

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2021**

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HOUSE BILL 946

Short Title: Sound Basic Education for Every Child. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives von Haefen, Hunt, R. Smith, and Hurtado (Primary Sponsors).
For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.

Referred to: Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 12, 2021

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ADDRESS CRITICAL NEEDS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION AND TO PROVIDE
THE OPPORTUNITY FOR A SOUND, BASIC EDUCATION TO EVERY CHILD IN THE
STATE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**PART I. WELL-PREPARED, HIGH-QUALITY, AND SUPPORTED TEACHER IN
EVERY CLASSROOM**

PEPSC POSITIONS

SECTION 1.1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to support two additional positions for the Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission (Commission) to increase the capacity of the Commission to coordinate efforts to recruit, prepare, retain, and support the State's teaching workforce on behalf of the State Board of Education and the Department of Public Instruction.

EDUCATOR LICENSURE AND COMPENSATION REFORM PLAN

SECTION 1.2.(a) The State Board of Education shall develop a plan for implementing a teacher licensure and compensation reform model designed to restore respect for the teaching profession; to build a more diverse, quality teaching force; to increase instructional capabilities of teachers; and to entice more young professionals, mid-career professionals, and out-of-state individuals into the teaching profession. The plan shall include at least the following components:

- (1) Offer early, inclusive, and clear pathways into the profession.
- (2) Reward excellence and advancement among teachers.
- (3) Encourage retention in the profession.

The State Board of Education shall submit details on the plan and any recommended legislative changes to implement the plan to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by March 15, 2022.

SECTION 1.2.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to develop the plan required by subsection (a) of this section.



EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM CAPACITY STUDY

SECTION 1.3.(a) The State Board of Education, in consultation with The University of North Carolina System Office, shall conduct a study to identify the resources and structures that educator preparation programs at the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina need to be able to do the following:

- (1) Increase capacity in educator preparation programs to recruit, prepare, support, and graduate at least 5,000 in-State trained teachers annually.
- (2) Increase capacity in educator preparation programs to recruit, prepare, support, and graduate more educators of color annually.

The State Board of Education shall report on the findings of this study to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by March 15, 2022.

SECTION 1.3.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to conduct the study required by subsection (a) of this section.

TEACHNC RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

SECTION 1.4. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of eight hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$880,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year for the TeachNC centralized online teacher recruitment tool to improve the recruitment process for both candidates and local school administrative units and to support one position to serve as a TeachNC Administrator.

ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS TEACHER RECRUITMENT MODELS

SECTION 1.5. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to support research-based Grow-Your-Own and 2+2 teacher recruitment education programs in all regions of the State, including high school-based career academy programs, the North Carolina Teacher Cadet Program, the Teaching as a Profession program, and the TA to Teachers program.

STUDY ON CONSOLIDATING AND COORDINATING TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION EFFORTS

SECTION 1.6.(a) The State Board of Education shall develop a plan to implement and fund a statewide system or entity to coordinate, enhance, and evaluate efforts to recruit, place, and retain teacher candidates and beginning teachers between institutions of higher education and local school administrative units. This study shall focus on, but not be limited to, how best to consolidate and coordinate statewide teacher recruitment and retention efforts. The State Board of Education shall submit details on the plan and any recommended legislative changes to implement the plan to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by March 15, 2023.

SECTION 1.6.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to be used to support the development of the plan required by this section.

EXPAND NC TEACHING FELLOWS PROGRAM

SECTION 1.7.(a) Part 3 of Article 23 of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes reads as rewritten:

"Part 3. North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program.

"§ 116-209.60. Definitions.

The following definitions apply in this Part:

- (1) Commission. – The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission.
- (2) Director. – The Director of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program.
- (3) Forgivable loan. – A forgivable loan made under the Program.
- (4) Program. – The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program.
- (5) Public school. – An elementary or secondary school located in North Carolina that is governed by a local board of education, charter school board of directors, regional school board of directors, or University of North Carolina laboratory school board of trustees.
- ~~(6) STEM. – Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.~~
- (7) Trust Fund. – The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program Trust Fund.

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"§ 116-209.62. North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program established; administration.

(a) Program. – There is established the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program to be administered by the System Office of The University of North Carolina, in conjunction with the Authority and the Commission. The purpose of the Program is to recruit, prepare, and support students residing in or attending institutions of higher education located in North Carolina for preparation as highly effective ~~STEM or special education~~ teachers in the State's public schools. The Program shall be used to provide a forgivable loan to individuals interested in preparing to teach in the public schools of the ~~State in STEM or special education licensure areas.~~ State.

(b) Trust Fund. – There is established the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program Trust Fund to be administered by the Authority, in conjunction with the System Office of The University of North Carolina. All funds (i) appropriated to, or otherwise received by, the Program for forgivable loans and other Program purposes, (ii) received as repayment of forgivable loans, and (iii) earned as interest on these funds shall be placed in the Trust Fund. The purpose of the Trust Fund is to provide financial assistance to qualified students for completion of teacher education and licensure programs to ~~fill STEM or special education licensure areas in~~ teach in the public schools of the State.

(c) Uses of Monies in the Trust Fund. – The monies in the Trust Fund may be used only for (i) forgivable loans granted under the Program, (ii) administrative costs associated with the Program, including recruitment and recovery of funds advanced under the Program, (iii) mentoring and coaching support to forgivable loan recipients, and (iv) extracurricular enhancement activities of the Program in accordance with the following:

- (1) The Authority shall transfer the greater of six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000) or ten percent (10%) of the available funds from the Trust Fund to ~~the General Administration of~~ The University of North Carolina System Office at the beginning of each fiscal year for the Program's administrative costs, the salary of the Director of the Program and other Program staff, expenses of the Commission, and to provide the Commission with funds to use for the extracurricular enhancement activities of the Program.
- (2) The Authority may use the greater of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) or four percent (4%) of the funds appropriated to the Trust Fund each fiscal year for administrative costs associated with the Program.
- (3) The Authority shall provide the Commission with up to six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000) from the Trust Fund in each fiscal year for the Commission to provide mentoring and coaching support to forgivable loan recipients through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program in an amount of up to two thousand two hundred dollars (\$2,200) for each Program recipient. Funds shall be prioritized for teachers serving in North Carolina public schools identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37.

(d) Director of the Program. – The Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall appoint a Director of the Program. The Director shall appoint staff to the Commission and shall be responsible for recruitment and coordination of the Program, including proactive, aggressive, and strategic recruitment of potential recipients. Efforts shall include identifying and encouraging students of color and students who may not otherwise consider a career in teaching to enter the program. Recruitment activities shall include a broad-based strategy (i) targeting regions of the State with the highest teacher attrition rates and teacher recruitment ~~challenges, challenges and~~ (ii) actively engaging with educators, business leaders, experts in human resources, elected officials, and other community leaders throughout the ~~State, and~~ (iii) ~~attracting candidates in STEM and special education licensure areas to the Program.~~ State to attract a diverse pool of applicants. The Director shall report to the President of The University of North Carolina. The Authority shall provide office space and clerical support staff, as necessary, to the Director for the Program.

(e) Student Selection Criteria for Forgivable Loans. – The Commission shall adopt stringent standards for awarding forgivable loans based on multiple measures to ensure that only the strongest applicants receive them, including the following:

- (1) Grade point averages.
- (2) Performance on relevant career and college readiness assessments.
- (3) Experience, accomplishments, and other criteria demonstrating qualities positively correlated with highly effective teachers, including excellent verbal and communication skills.
- (4) Demonstrated commitment to serve in ~~a STEM or special education licensure area in~~ North Carolina public schools.

(f) Program Selection Criteria. – The Authority shall administer the Program in cooperation with ~~up to eight~~ institutions of higher education with approved educator preparation programs selected by the Commission that represent a diverse selection of both postsecondary constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and private postsecondary institutions operating in the ~~State.~~ State, including minority-serving institutions. The Commission shall adopt stringent standards for selection of the most effective educator preparation programs, including the following:

- (1) Demonstrates high rates of educator effectiveness on value-added models and teacher evaluations, including using performance-based, subject-specific assessment and support systems, such as edTPA or other metrics of evaluating candidate effectiveness that have predictive validity.
- (2) Demonstrates measurable impact of prior graduates on student learning, including impact of graduates teaching in STEM or special education licensure areas.
- (3) Demonstrates high rates of graduates passing exams required for teacher licensure.
- (4) Provides curricular and co-curricular enhancements in leadership, facilitates learning for diverse learners, and promotes community engagement, classroom management, and reflection and assessment.
- (5) Requires at least a minor concentration of study in the subject area that the candidate may teach.
- (6) Provides early and frequent internship or practical experiences, including the opportunity for participants to perform practicums in diverse school environments.
- (7) Is approved by the State Board of Education as an educator preparation program.

(g) Awards of Forgivable Loans. – The Program shall provide forgivable loans to selected students to be used at ~~up to eight~~ selected institutions for completion of a program leading to initial teacher licensure as follows:

- (1) North Carolina high school seniors. – Forgivable loans of up to four thousand one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$4,125) per semester for up to eight semesters.
- (2) Students applying for transfer to a selected educator preparation program at an institution of higher education. – Forgivable loans of up to four thousand one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$4,125) per semester for up to six semesters.
- (3) Individuals currently holding a bachelor's degree seeking preparation for teacher licensure. – Forgivable loans of up to four thousand one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$4,125) per semester for up to four semesters.
- (4) Students matriculating at institutions of higher education who are changing to an approved program of study at a selected educator preparation program. – Forgivable loans of up to four thousand one hundred twenty-five dollars (\$4,125) per semester for up to four semesters.

Forgivable loans may be used for tuition, fees, the cost of books, and expenses related to obtaining licensure.

(g1) Extracurricular Enhancement Activities. – The Program shall provide planning, training, and ongoing support for Program leaders and recipients, including training on topics such as culturally responsive teaching, teaching students with disabilities, and trauma-informed teaching.

~~(h) Identification of STEM and Special Education Licensure Areas. – The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall identify and provide to the Commission and the Authority a list of STEM and special education licensure areas and shall annually provide to the Commission the number of available positions in each licensure area relative to the number of current and anticipated teachers in that area of licensure. The Commission shall make the list of STEM and special education licensure areas readily available to applicants.~~

(i) Administration of Forgivable Loan Awards. – Upon the naming of recipients of the forgivable loans by the Commission, the Commission shall transfer to the Authority its decisions. The Authority, in coordination with the Director, shall perform all of the administrative functions necessary to implement this Part, which functions shall include rule making, disseminating information, acting as a liaison with participating institutions of higher education, implementing forgivable loan agreements, loan monitoring, loan cancelling through service and collection, determining the acceptability of service repayment agreements, enforcing the agreements, and all other functions necessary for the execution, payment, and enforcement of promissory notes required under this Part.

(j) Annual Report. – The Commission, in coordination with the Authority, the Department of Public Instruction, and the selected educator education programs participating in the Program shall report no later than January 1, ~~2019, 2022~~, and annually thereafter, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the following:

- (1) Forgivable loans awarded from the Trust Fund, including the following:
 - a. Demographic information regarding recipients.
 - b. Number of recipients by institution of higher education and program.
 - c. Information on number of recipients by anticipated ~~STEM and special education~~ licensure area.
- (2) Placement and repayment rates, including the following:
 - a. Number of graduates who have been employed ~~in a STEM or special education licensure area~~ within two years of program completion.

- b. Number of graduates who accepted employment at a low-performing school identified under G.S. 115C-105.37 as part of their years of service.
- c. Number of graduates who have elected to do loan repayment and their years of service, if any, prior to beginning loan repayment.
- d. Number of graduates ~~employed in a STEM or special education licensure area~~ who have received an overall rating of at least accomplished and have met expected growth on applicable standards of the teacher evaluation instrument.
- e. Aggregate information on student growth and proficiency in courses taught by graduates who have fulfilled service requirements through ~~employment in a STEM or special education licensure area~~ employment.
- (2a) Mentoring and coaching support through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program, including the following:
- a. Number of forgivable loan recipients who received mentoring and coaching support when employed at a low-performing school identified under G.S. 115C-105.37.
- b. Number of forgivable loan recipients who received mentoring and coaching support when employed at a school not identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37.
- (3) Selected school outcomes by program, including the following:
- a. Turnover rate for forgivable loan graduates, including the turnover rate for graduates who also received mentoring and coaching support through the North Carolina New Teacher Support Program.
- b. Aggregate information on student growth and proficiency as provided annually by the State Board of Education to the Commission in courses taught by forgivable loan graduates.
- c. Fulfillment rate of forgivable loan graduates.

"§ 116-209.63. Terms of forgivable loans; receipt and disbursement of funds.

(a) Notes. – All forgivable loans shall be evidenced by notes made payable to the Authority that bear interest at a rate not to exceed ten percent (10%) per year as set by the Authority and beginning on the first day of September after the completion of the program leading to teacher licensure or 90 days after graduation, whichever is later. If a forgivable loan is terminated, the note shall be made payable to the Authority 90 days after termination of the forgivable loan. The forgivable loan may be terminated upon the recipient's withdrawal from the Program or by the recipient's failure to meet the standards set by the Commission.

(b) Forgiveness. – The Authority shall forgive the loan and any interest accrued on the loan if, within 10 years after graduation from a program leading to teacher licensure, exclusive of any authorized deferment for extenuating circumstances, the recipient serves as a teacher ~~in a STEM or special education licensure area, as provided in G.S. 116-209.62(h)~~, for every year the teacher was awarded the forgivable loan, in any combination of the following:

- (1) One year at a North Carolina public school identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37 at the time the teacher accepts employment at the school or, if the teacher changes employment during this period, at another school identified as low-performing.
- (2) Two years at a North Carolina public school not identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.37.

The Authority shall also forgive the loan if it finds that it is impossible for the recipient to work for up to eight years, within 10 years after completion of the program leading to teacher licensure, at a North Carolina public school because of the death or permanent disability of the

recipient. If the recipient repays the forgivable loan by cash payments, all indebtedness shall be repaid within 10 years after completion of the program leading to teacher licensure supported by the forgivable loan. If the recipient completes a program leading to teacher licensure, payment of principal and interest shall begin no later than the first day of September after the completion of the program. Should a recipient present extenuating circumstances, the Authority may extend the period to repay the loan in cash to no more than a total of 12 years."

SECTION 1.7.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program Trust Fund the sum of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of four million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$4,700,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to support an additional 490 teacher licensure candidates.

SECTION 1.7.(c) Subsection (a) of this section applies beginning with the 2022-2023 academic year.

RECRUITMENT BONUS PILOT PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS IN LOW-WEALTH, LOW-PERFORMING, OR HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOLS

SECTION 1.8.(a) Purpose. – The State Board of Education shall establish a grant program to assist local school administrative units in providing multiyear recruitment bonuses to certified teachers who commit to teach multiple years in a low-performing or high-needs school. Bonuses awarded as part of this grant program shall include, but are not limited to, the following components:

- (1) Awards over multiple years with a requirement that teachers remain in the school over multiple years to receive the bonus.
- (2) Awards to licensed teachers who commit to teach in a school identified as low-performing, as defined in G.S. 115C-105.37, a school identified as continually low-performing, as defined in G.S. 115C-105.37A, or a school where seventy-five percent (75%) or greater of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Program.

SECTION 1.8.(b) Request for Proposal. – By September 1, 2021, and annually thereafter, the State Board of Education shall issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the grant program. Local boards of education shall submit their proposals by December 1, 2021. The RFP shall require that proposals include the following information at a minimum:

- (1) Description of the proposal, including details on targeted schools for the bonuses and how the bonus program will be structured.
- (2) Evidence-based research that supports the proposal.
- (3) Implementation time line for the plan.
- (4) Plans for financial sustainability once grant money is no longer available.

SECTION 1.8.(c) Grant Awards. – By February 15, 2022, the State Board of Education shall review the proposals submitted by local boards of education and shall select up to 10 local school administrative units for grant awards. The State Board of Education may make grant awards for up to three years. A local school administrative unit may not receive more than five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in a single fiscal year from the grant program.

SECTION 1.8.(d) Evaluation and Reporting. – Of the funds appropriated by this section, the State Board of Education may use up to three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) to contract with an independent research organization to evaluate the impact of this grant program. The independent research organization shall report the results of this evaluation to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by September 1, 2024. The Department of Public Instruction shall report annually on the implementation of this grant program beginning March 15, 2022.

SECTION 1.8.(e) Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) in recurring

funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of six million dollars (\$6,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement the grant program in accordance with this section.

SECTION 1.8.(f) Carryforward. – Any unexpended funds appropriated under this section at the end of the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 fiscal years shall not revert to the General Fund but shall remain available for the purposes set forth in this section.

TEACHER PREPARATION RESIDENCY PILOT GRANT PROGRAM

SECTION 1.9.(a) Purpose. – The State Board of Education shall establish a grant program to assist local school administrative units in the development of teacher preparation residency pilot programs. Teacher preparation residency programs provide the necessary preparation and induction supports to teacher preparation candidates pursuing a continuing professional license. Teacher preparation residency programs eligible to receive grant funding through this program shall include, at a minimum, the following components:

- (1) Coursework in the candidate's area of licensure.
- (2) Tuition and stipends.
- (3) Faculty advising.
- (4) Clinical training experiences.
- (5) Ongoing induction support.

Residency programs eligible for this grant program may include partnerships between local school administrative units, educator preparation programs, local community colleges or universities, and other community organizations. Grant funds awarded to local school administrative units under this program shall be matched by the local school administrative units on the basis of one dollar (\$1.00) in nongrant funds for every one dollar (\$1.00) in grant funds.

SECTION 1.9.(b) Request for Proposal. – By October 1, 2021, the State Board of Education shall issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the grant program. Local boards of education shall submit their proposals by January 15, 2022. The RFP shall require that proposals include the following information at a minimum:

- (1) Description of the proposal, including the number of teacher preparation candidates to be served.
- (2) Evidence-based research that supports the proposal.
- (3) Implementation time line for the plan.
- (4) Plans for financial sustainability once grant money is no longer available.

SECTION 1.9.(c) Grant Awards. – By April 15, 2022, the State Board of Education shall review the proposals submitted by local boards of education and shall select up to 10 local school administrative units for grant awards. The State Board of Education may make grant awards for up to three years. A local school administrative unit may not receive more than five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in a single fiscal year from this grant program.

SECTION 1.9.(d) Evaluation and Reporting. – Of the funds appropriated by this section, the State Board of Education may use up to three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) to contract with an independent research organization to evaluate the impact of this grant program. The independent research organization shall report the results of this evaluation to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by September 1, 2025. The Department of Public Instruction shall report annually on the implementation of this grant program beginning by March 15, 2023.

SECTION 1.9.(e) Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement the grant program in accordance with this section.

SECTION 1.9.(f) Carryforward. – Any unexpended funds appropriated under this section at the end of the 2022-2023 fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund but shall remain available for the purposes set forth in this section.

EXPAND PARTNERSHIP TEACH

SECTION 1.10. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in recurring funds to expand Partnership Teach to up to two additional hub sites, including providing funds for staffing, fellowship support, mentoring, and increasing recruitment capacity.

DEVELOPING A REPRESENTATIVE AND INCLUSIVE VISION FOR EDUCATION (DRIVE) GRANT PROGRAM

SECTION 1.11.(a) Purpose. – The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Office of the Governor, The University of North Carolina System Office, and the Community College System Office, shall establish a grant program to support strategic partnerships committed to increasing the pipeline of educators of color across the State. As an extension of the recommendations and strategies presented by the Governor's DRIVE Task Force on January 1, 2021, the grants shall be provided to local school administrative units, institutions of higher education, and community organizations to implement innovative initiatives that support the recruitment, preparation, support, and retention of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse educators. The purpose of this program shall be to do at least the following:

- (1) Increase the diversity of the educator workforce across the State through novel recruitment efforts.
- (2) Strengthen the pipeline of aspiring teachers of color across the State through traditional and alternative certification pathways.
- (3) Provide mechanisms to support and retain educators of color currently serving in elementary and secondary public schools.
- (4) Promote collaboration between school systems, institutions of higher education, and community and nonprofit organizations to diversify the educator workforce.

SECTION 1.11.(b) Applications. – Applicants for grants shall demonstrate at least the following for grant award consideration:

- (1) A partnership between at least two of the following entities: local school administrative units, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Historically Minority-Serving Institutions, educator preparation programs, alternative certification programs, public and private colleges and universities, community colleges, and community or nonprofit organizations.
- (2) Proposals for strategies that address one or more of the following components of the educator development continuum as highlighted by the DRIVE Task Force's 2021 Report to the Governor: recruitment, placement and induction, and support and retention of educators of color.

SECTION 1.11.(c) Use of Funds. – Grant funds may be used for the following activities:

- (1) Strengthening existing high school dual enrollment programs to offer education-based college credit or honors courses as streamlined pathways for future careers in education.
- (2) Implementing targeted school system-level and community-based recruitment programs for aspiring educators of color interested in traditional and alternative educator preparation programs.

- (3) Utilizing and leveraging existing financial aid programs that include scholarships, loan forgiveness, and tuition reimbursement that reduce the disproportionate financial burden incurred by aspiring candidates of color.
- (4) Increasing preparation and supporting preservice educators of color through paid clinical learning experiences, with a commitment to teaching in North Carolina public schools.
- (5) Offering support for job placement and licensure for candidates of color after completing their educator preparation program.
- (6) Providing induction and mentoring programs that address the needs of educators of color that include sustaining networking and professional learning communities or affinity groups.
- (7) Encouraging and financially supporting educators of color interested in joining national professional organizations or attending national conferences.

SECTION 1.11.(d) Request for Proposal. – By October 1, 2021, the State Board of Education shall issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the grant program. Applicants shall submit their proposals by December 1, 2021. The RFP shall require that proposals include the following information at a minimum:

- (1) Description of the proposal.
- (2) Evidence-based research that supports the proposal.
- (3) An implementation time line for the plan.
- (4) Plans for financial sustainability once grant money is no longer available.

SECTION 1.11.(e) Selection. – By February 1, 2022, a selection committee shall select up to five grantees, making the effort to ensure that there is representation across the State as reflected by rural and urban districts, institutions of higher education, and community-based partners. Any grants awarded may be spent over a five-year period from the initial award. Grants may be awarded for new or existing projects.

SECTION 1.11.(f) Reporting Requirements. – No later than September 1 of each year, grant recipients shall submit to the State Board of Education an annual report for the preceding grant year that describes the implementation of the program. This report must include qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate program effectiveness.

SECTION 1.11.(g) Evaluation and Reporting. – Of the funds appropriated by this section, the State Board of Education may use up to three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) to contract with an independent research organization to evaluate the impact of this grant program. The independent research organization shall report the results of this evaluation to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by September 1, 2023. The State Board of Education shall report annually on the implementation of this grant program beginning on January 1, 2023.

SECTION 1.11.(h) Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of two million dollars (\$2,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to implement the grant program in accordance with this section.

SECTION 1.11.(i) Carryforward. – Any unexpended funds at the end of each fiscal year from the funds appropriated for the grant program under this section shall not revert to the General Fund but shall remain available for expenditure for the purposes set forth in this section.

ANNUAL EDUCATOR DIVERSITY REPORT

SECTION 1.12.(a) G.S. 115C-12(22) reads as rewritten:

- "(22) Duty to Monitor the State of the Teaching Profession and Educator Diversity in North Carolina. – The State Board of Education shall monitor and compile ~~an annual report~~ reports on the following:

- a. The state of the teaching profession in North Carolina that includes Carolina. This report shall include data on the decisions of teachers to leave the teaching profession and data on teaching positions that local boards of education are unable to fill, as provided in G.S. 115C-299.5.
- b. Educator diversity in North Carolina. This report shall include data on the diversity of educators and future educators in the State, as provided in G.S. 115C-299.7."

SECTION 1.12.(b) Article 20 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-299.7. Duty to monitor educator diversity.

(a) Definitions. – As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) Diversity categories. – Race and ethnicity.
- (2) Education entity. – Any of the following:
- a. A public school unit, as defined in G.S. 115C-5(7a).
- b. An educator preparation program, as defined in G.S. 115C-269.1(10).
- (3) Educators. – Teachers employed by a public school unit.
- (4) Future educators. – Students enrolled in an educator preparation program.
- (5) Grade level. – Where applicable, the grade level taught by an educator and the grade level attended by a future educator.
- (6) Mobility rates. – The percentage of educators who move from one school or public school unit to another.
- (7) Qualitative data. – Information collected via questionnaire, interview, and other nonquantitative methods.

(b) Education Entity Diversity Report. – No later than July 30, 2022, and annually thereafter, each education entity shall report to the Department of Public Instruction the following information regarding the diversity of educators and future educators in the entity from the previous school year, disaggregated by diversity category and, where applicable, by grade level:

- (1) Total number of educators and future educators.
- (2) The number of persons who apply to work in or attend the education entity as an educator or future educator.
- (3) The number of educators and future educators who are employed by or enrolled in an education entity.
- (4) Retention rates of educators.
- (5) Mobility rates of educators between schools in a public school unit.
- (6) The number of future educators who do the following:
- a. Complete an educator preparation program.
- b. Become licensed in North Carolina.
- c. Become employed in a public school unit.
- (7) Qualitative data from educators and future educators on the diversity and inclusiveness of the education entity, including applicable information on recruitment, educator preparation, retention, mobility, and turnover. This information should include related reasons for educator attrition provided on educator workforce reports.
- (8) Recommendations from the entity to improve diversity of educators and future educators, including strategies to recruit and retain a diverse pool of educators and future educators.

(c) Statewide Diversity Report. – No later than October 15, 2022, and annually thereafter, the Department of Public Instruction shall collect the information provided pursuant to subsection (b) of this section and report that information, organized to include at least the following, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, disaggregated by diversity category and, where applicable, by grade level:

- (1) Statewide data for each education entity, including mobility rates of educators between public school units.
- (2) Recommendations from the Department to improve diversity among educators and future educators in education entities, including strategies to recruit and retain a diverse pool of educators and future educators.

(d) Statistical Profile. – The Department of Public Instruction shall include the information regarding public school units collected pursuant to this act in the statistical profile of public schools maintained on its website.

(e) Certain Information Excluded. – Nothing in this section shall be construed to require an education entity or the Department of Public Instruction to report any data that reveals confidential or personally identifiable information about an educator or future educator."

ESTABLISH THE OFFICE OF EQUITY AFFAIRS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

SECTION 1.13.(a) Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new Article to read:

"Article 6E.

"Office of Equity Affairs.

"§ 115C-64.35. Establishment, purpose, and duties of Office of Equity Affairs.

(a) There is established within the Department of Public Instruction the Office of Equity Affairs. The purpose of the Office of Equity Affairs is to provide internal oversight within the Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education specific to compliance with the State's constitutional role to provide each child the opportunity to receive a sound basic education and to direct the recruitment and retention of a diverse educator workforce.

(b) The Office of Equity Affairs shall review educational policies, programs, and initiatives and shall provide an independent, objective source of information to be used in evaluating substantial compliance with sound basic education standards and the goal of recruiting and retaining a diverse educator workforce, giving special attention and consideration to outcomes for at-risk students. The Office of Equity Affairs may suggest adjustments to the content and delivery of educational policies, programs, and initiatives to improve their efficacy. The authority of the Office of Equity Affairs to evaluate and advise shall extend to all policies, programs, and initiatives related to ensuring that all students have access to a sound basic education and to the goal of recruiting and retaining a diverse educator workforce.

(c) In carrying out its duties, the Office of Equity Affairs has authority to obtain full and unrestricted access to all records, information, and data in the possession of or legally available to the Department of Public Instruction or State Board of Education.

(d) Beginning no later than January 15, 2022, and semiannually thereafter, the Office of Equity Affairs shall submit a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the (i) implementation of its duties as set forth in this Article, (ii) progress of the Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education in effectively providing each child the opportunity to receive a sound basic education, and (iii) the diversity of the educator workforce. Prior to the reporting of any deficiencies in progress, the Office of Equity Affairs shall give to the Department of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education ample notice of the deficiencies and an opportunity to correct or improve the deficiencies and shall include in the report any efforts to do so. The report shall include any recommended legislation.

"§ 115C-64.36. Administrative organization; organizational independence.

(a) There is established within the Department of Public Instruction the position of Deputy Superintendent of Equity Affairs who shall serve as the chief officer of the Office of Equity Affairs. The Deputy Superintendent shall have professional, administrative, technical, and clerical personnel as may be necessary in carrying out the duties of the position.

(b) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall recommend to the State Board of Education the individual to be appointed as Deputy Superintendent of Equity Affairs, and the recommended appointee shall be appointed upon approval by the State Board of Education. The Deputy Superintendent shall report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education jointly and may be removed only upon the joint agreement of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and a majority of the members of the State Board of Education. The Deputy Superintendent shall be organizationally situated to avoid impairments to independence in his or her own professional judgment on how to best accomplish the purposes of the Office of Equity Affairs."

SECTION 1.13.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2021-2022 fiscal year the sum of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) in recurring funds to permit the Deputy Superintendent of Equity Affairs, as established by this act, to appoint up to four full-time staff to assist in the administration of the Deputy Superintendent's duties under Article 6E of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes, as enacted by this act. Personnel appointed to these positions shall report solely to the Deputy Superintendent of Equity Affairs. The appointments shall not be subject to approval or disapproval by the Superintendent of Public Instruction or the State Board of Education. Of the four time-limited positions, one shall be an administrative assistant position and at least one shall be an attorney position.

NORTH CAROLINA NEW TEACHER SUPPORT PROGRAM

SECTION 1.14. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina the sum of two million two hundred thousand dollars (\$2,200,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to provide mentoring and coaching support to beginning teachers who are employed in public schools identified as low-performing or high-poverty at no cost to the local school administrative units.

ADVANCED TEACHING ROLES CHANGES

SECTION 1.15.(a) G.S. 115C-311(i) reads as rewritten:

"(i) Class Size Flexibility. – Notwithstanding G.S. 115C-301, with the approval of the State Board of Education, Advanced Teaching Roles schools selected to participate in the program may exceed the maximum class size requirements for kindergarten through third grade ~~during the term of up to three years in which State funds are awarded to the local school administrative unit where the school is located. At the conclusion of the term, any class size flexibility approved for an Advanced Teaching Roles school pursuant to this subsection shall expire grade."~~

SECTION 1.15.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2021-2022 fiscal year the sum of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) in recurring funds to support teacher compensation models and advanced teaching roles and to develop implementation plans for teacher compensation models and advanced teaching roles pursuant to G.S. 115C-311. These funds shall not revert at the end of the fiscal year but shall remain available until expended.

SECTION 1.15.(c) Of the funds appropriated to the Department of Public Instruction to support teacher compensation models and advanced teaching roles and to develop associated implementation plans pursuant to this section, the Department may use up to four percent (4%) each fiscal year to evaluate the program, contract with an independent research organization to evaluate the program, or continue any preexisting contract with an independent research organization formed pursuant to Section 8.7 of S.L. 2016-94. Any remaining funds may be awarded to selected local school administrative units in accordance with this act to support

teacher compensation models and advanced teaching roles and to develop associated implementation plans.

EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ALLOTMENT

SECTION 1.16.(a) Effective July 1, 2021, there is established the Educator Professional Development Allotment in the State Public School Fund. The State Board of Education shall establish the purposes for which the funds within the new Educator Professional Development funding allotment may be used, including at least the following:

- (1) Educator professional development for targeted public school units and schools requiring multitiered support for prekindergarten through grade three, including the following:
 - a. Child development.
 - b. Early literacy.
 - c. Social and emotional learning.
 - d. Family engagement.
- (2) Implementation of literacy training.
- (3) Mentoring programs for beginning educators.

SECTION 1.16.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to be used to fund the Educator Professional Development Allotment. Funds shall be allotted to local school administrative units based on average daily membership.

EDUCATOR WAGE COMPARABILITY STUDY

SECTION 1.17.(a) The State Board of Education shall conduct a wage comparability study to determine competitive pay for public school employees in comparison to salaries in similar professions in North Carolina. As part of its study, the State Board shall do at least the following:

- (1) Compare salaries for public school employees to salaries for professions in North Carolina that require similar education and credentials.
- (2) Identify the level of compensation needed to provide a competitive salary to public school employees in accordance with subdivision (1) of this subsection.
- (3) Identify specific State, regional, and local salary actions required to attract, recruit, and retain high-quality public school employees, particularly to low-wealth local school administrative units and high-poverty public schools.

SECTION 1.17.(b) The State Board of Education shall report on the findings of this study to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by March 1, 2022.

SECTION 1.17.(c) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) in nonrecurring funds to conduct the educator wage comparability study required by this section.

TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE

SECTION 1.18.(a) The following monthly teacher salary schedule shall apply for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to licensed personnel of the public schools who are classified as teachers. The salary schedule is based on years of teaching experience.

2021-2022 Teacher Monthly Salary Schedule

Years of Experience	"A" Teachers
0	\$3,625
1	\$3,780
2	\$3,885

1	3	\$3,990
2	4	\$4,095
3	5	\$4,200
4	6	\$4,305
5	7	\$4,410
6	8	\$4,515
7	9	\$4,620
8	10	\$4,725
9	11	\$4,830
10	12	\$4,935
11	13	\$5,040
12	14	\$5,145
13	15-24	\$5,250
14	25+	\$5,460.

SECTION 1.18.(b) Salary Supplements for Teachers Paid on This Salary Schedule.

- (1) Licensed teachers who have NBPTS certification shall receive a salary supplement each month of twelve percent (12%) of their monthly salary on the "A" salary schedule.
- (2) Licensed teachers who are classified as "M" teachers shall receive a salary supplement each month of ten percent (10%) of their monthly salary on the "A" salary schedule.
- (3) Licensed teachers with licensure based on academic preparation at the six-year degree level shall receive a salary supplement of one hundred twenty-six dollars (\$126.00) per month in addition to the supplement provided to them as "M" teachers.
- (4) Licensed teachers with licensure based on academic preparation at the doctoral degree level shall receive a salary supplement of two hundred fifty-three dollars (\$253.00) per month in addition to the supplement provided to them as "M" teachers.
- (5) Certified school nurses shall receive a salary supplement each month of ten percent (10%) of their monthly salary on the "A" salary schedule.

SECTION 1.18.(c) The first step of the salary schedule for (i) school psychologists, (ii) school speech pathologists who are licensed as speech pathologists at the master's degree level or higher, and (iii) school audiologists who are licensed as audiologists at the master's degree level or higher shall be equivalent to the sixth step of the "A" salary schedule. These employees shall receive a salary supplement each month of ten percent (10%) of their monthly salary and are eligible to receive salary supplements equivalent to those of teachers for academic preparation at the six-year degree level or the doctoral degree level.

SECTION 1.18.(d) The twenty-sixth step of the salary schedule for (i) school psychologists, (ii) school speech pathologists who are licensed as speech pathologists at the master's degree level or higher, and (iii) school audiologists who are licensed as audiologists at the master's degree level or higher shall be seven and one-half percent (7.5%) higher than the salary received by these same employees on the twenty-fifth step of the salary schedule.

SECTION 1.18.(e) Beginning with the 2014-2015 fiscal year, in lieu of providing annual longevity payments to teachers paid on the teacher salary schedule, the amounts of those longevity payments are included in the monthly amounts under the teacher salary schedule.

SECTION 1.18.(f) A teacher compensated in accordance with this salary schedule for the 2021-2022 school year shall receive an amount equal to the greater of the following:

- (1) The applicable amount on the salary schedule for the applicable school year.

- (2) For teachers who were eligible for longevity for the 2013-2014 school year, the sum of the following:
- a. The salary the teacher received in the 2013-2014 school year pursuant to Section 35.11 of S.L. 2013-360.
 - b. The longevity that the teacher would have received under the longevity system in effect for the 2013-2014 school year provided in Section 35.11 of S.L. 2013-360 based on the teacher's current years of service.
 - c. The annual bonus provided in Section 9.1(e) of S.L. 2014-100.
- (3) For teachers who were not eligible for longevity for the 2013-2014 school year, the sum of the salary and annual bonus the teacher received in the 2014-2015 school year pursuant to Section 9.1 of S.L. 2014-100.

SECTION 1.18.(g) As used in this section, the term "teacher" shall also include instructional support personnel.

SECTION 1.18.(h) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of three hundred eighteen million dollars (\$318,000,000) in recurring funds to increase salaries for teachers and instructional support personnel in accordance with this section.

SECTION 1.18.(i) It is the intent of the General Assembly to adjust compensation for teachers in the 2022-2023 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the educator wage comparability study established by this act.

FUNDS FOR NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION APPLICATION FEE

SECTION 1.19.(a) G.S. 115C-296.2(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) Payment of the NBPTS Participation Fee; Paid Leave. – The State shall provide for payment of the NBPTS participation fee as follows:

- (1) For up to 1,000 teachers each fiscal year, the Department of Public Instruction shall provide grants for the full participation fee.
- (2) For all other teachers, the State shall lend teachers the participation fee and shall provide up to three days of approved paid leave to all teachers participating in the NBPTS program who:
 - ~~(1)~~a. Have completed three full years of teaching in a North Carolina public school; and
 - ~~(2)~~b. Have (i) not previously received State funds for participating in any certification area in the NBPTS program, (ii) repaid any State funds previously received for the NBPTS certification process, or (iii) received a waiver of repayment from the State Board of Education.

Teachers participating in the program shall take paid leave only with the approval of their supervisors."

SECTION 1.19.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of one million nine hundred thousand dollars (\$1,900,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to provide grants to up to 1,000 teachers for the full participation fee for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification pursuant to subsection (a) of this section. From these funds, the Department of Public Instruction shall transfer the sum of up to one million nine hundred thousand dollars (\$1,900,000) to the State Education Assistance Authority each fiscal year to administer the payment of fees to teachers pursuant to G.S. 115C-296.2.

PART II. WELL-PREPARED, HIGH-QUALITY, AND SUPPORTED PRINCIPAL IN EVERY SCHOOL

EXPANSION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA PRINCIPAL FELLOWS AND TRANSFORMING PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

SECTION 2.1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the North Carolina Principal Fellows and TP3 Trust Fund the sum of seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to be used to provide forgivable loans to an additional 100 new principal candidates each year through principal preparation programs provided grants under the North Carolina Principal Fellows and Transforming Principal Preparation Program (Program) established pursuant to Article 5C of Chapter 116 of the General Statutes. Any unexpended funds in the Trust Fund each fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund but shall remain available for the purposes of the Program consistent with G.S. 116-74.41B.

PLAN FOR A STATEWIDE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

SECTION 2.2.(a) The State Board of Education shall develop a plan for the creation of a School Leadership Academy to provide initial and ongoing support to the State's local school administrative units and school leaders. The plan for the School Leadership Academy shall include at least the following components:

- (1) Equity training for all local school administrative units and school leaders.
- (2) Training and ongoing support for local board of education members focused on the needs of successful schools and turnaround schools.
- (3) Mentorship and individualized coaching for novice principals and for experienced principals in high-need schools focused on dismantling impediments to student success in their schools.
- (4) Peer support networks, such as facilitated partnership networks and rapid response hotlines that provide immediate assistance.
- (5) Aligned, ongoing, research-driven professional learning.

SECTION 2.2.(b) By February 15, 2022, the State Board shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management on its proposal for the School Leadership Academy, including the plan for implementation and an estimation of costs.

PRINCIPAL SALARY SCHEDULE

SECTION 2.3.(a) The following annual principal salary schedule is composed of a base schedule and a complementary schedule. The salary schedule shall apply for the 2021-2022 fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021. A principal shall be placed on the step of the base schedule that reflects the total number of years of experience as a licensed principal of the public schools and shall not include years of experience as a licensed teacher or assistant principal. A principal shall be placed on the step of the complementary schedule that reflects the average daily membership (ADM) of the school supervised by the principal from the prior school year, regardless of whether the principal supervised the school in that year. If the school did not have an average daily membership in the prior school year, the projected average daily membership for the school for the current school year shall be used.

2021-2022 Principal Annual Salary Schedule

Base Schedule

Years of Experience	Annual Salary
0	\$75,330
1	\$77,590
2	\$79,918
3	\$81,916
4	\$83,964
5	\$85,643
6	\$87,356

1	7	\$88,230
2	8	\$89,112
3	9	\$90,003
4	10	\$90,903
5	11	\$91,812
6	12	\$92,730
7	13	\$93,657
8	14	\$94,594
9	15	\$95,540
10	16	\$96,495
11	17	\$97,460
12	18	\$98,435
13	19	\$99,419
14	20+	\$100,413

Complementary Schedule

	Avg. Daily Membership	Annual Salary Supplement
16		
17	0-400	\$0
18	401-700	\$2,500
19	701-1,000	\$4,000
20	1,001-1,600	\$5,500
21	1,601+	\$7,000.

SECTION 2.3.(b) Principals with certification based on academic preparation at the six-year degree level shall be paid an additional salary supplement of one hundred twenty-six dollars (\$126.00) per month, and those at the doctoral degree level shall be paid an additional salary supplement of two hundred fifty-three dollars (\$253.00) per month.

SECTION 2.3.(c) Beginning with the 2017-2018 fiscal year, in lieu of providing annual longevity payments to principals paid on the principal salary schedule, the amounts of those longevity payments are included in the annual amounts under the principal salary schedule.

SECTION 2.3.(d) A principal compensated in accordance with this section for the 2021-2022 fiscal year shall receive an amount equal to the greater of the following:

- (1) The applicable amount on the salary schedule for the applicable school year.
- (2) For principals who were eligible for longevity in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the sum of the following:
 - a. The salary that the principal received in the 2016-2017 fiscal year pursuant to Section 9.1 or Section 9.2 of S.L. 2016-94.
 - b. The longevity that the principal would have received as provided for State employees under the North Carolina Human Resources Act for the 2016-2017 fiscal year based on the principal's current years of service.
- (3) For principals who were not eligible for longevity in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the salary that the principal received in the 2016-2017 fiscal year pursuant to Section 9.1 or Section 9.2 of S.L. 2016-94.
- (4) The salary that the principal received in the 2020-2021 fiscal year pursuant to Section 4 of S.L. 2020-45, as amended by Section 3.1A of S.L. 2020-97.

SECTION 2.3.(e) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2021-2022 fiscal year the sum of twelve million dollars (\$12,000,000) in recurring funds to increase salaries for principals in accordance with this section.

SECTION 2.3.(f) It is the intent of the General Assembly to adjust compensation for principals in the 2022-2023 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the educator wage comparability study established by this act.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SALARIES

SECTION 2.4.(a) For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2021, assistant principals shall receive a monthly salary based on the salary schedule for teachers who are classified as "A" teachers plus nineteen percent (19%). An assistant principal shall be placed on the step on the salary schedule that reflects the total number of years of experience as a certified employee of the public schools. For purposes of this section, an administrator with a one-year provisional assistant principal's certificate shall be considered equivalent to an assistant principal.

SECTION 2.4.(b) Assistant principals with certification based on academic preparation at the six-year degree level shall be paid a salary supplement of one hundred twenty-six dollars (\$126.00) per month and at the doctoral degree level shall be paid a salary supplement of two hundred fifty-three dollars (\$253.00) per month.

SECTION 2.4.(c) Participants in an approved full-time master's in school administration program shall receive up to a 10-month stipend during the internship period of the master's program. The stipend shall be at the beginning salary of an assistant principal or, for a teacher who becomes an intern, at least as much as that person would earn as a teacher on the teacher salary schedule. The North Carolina Principal Fellows and Transforming Principal Preparation Program or the school of education where the intern participates in a full-time master's in school administration program shall supply the Department of Public Instruction with certification of eligible full-time interns.

SECTION 2.4.(d) Beginning with the 2017-2018 fiscal year, in lieu of providing annual longevity payments to assistant principals on the assistant principal salary schedule, the amounts of those longevity payments are included in the monthly amounts provided to assistant principals pursuant to subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 2.4.(e) An assistant principal compensated in accordance with this section for the 2021-2022 fiscal year shall receive an amount equal to the greater of the following:

- (1) The applicable amount on the salary schedule for the applicable year.
- (2) For assistant principals who were eligible for longevity in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the sum of the following:
 - a. The salary the assistant principal received in the 2016-2017 fiscal year pursuant to Section 9.1 or Section 9.2 of S.L. 2016-94.
 - b. The longevity that the assistant principal would have received as provided for State employees under the North Carolina Human Resources Act for the 2016-2017 fiscal year based on the assistant principal's current years of service.
- (3) For assistant principals who were not eligible for longevity in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, the salary the assistant principal received in the 2016-2017 fiscal year pursuant to Section 9.1 or Section 9.2 of S.L. 2016-94.

SECTION 2.4.(f) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the 2021-2022 fiscal year the sum of eighteen million six hundred thousand dollars (\$18,600,000) in recurring funds to increase salaries for assistant principals in accordance with this section.

SECTION 2.4.(g) It is the intent of the General Assembly to adjust compensation for assistant principals in the 2022-2023 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years in accordance with the educator wage comparability study established by this act.

PLAN FOR SCHOOL-BASED ADMINISTRATOR GRANT PROGRAM

SECTION 2.5.(a) No later than March 15, 2022, the State Board of Education shall develop and report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division a plan to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of incentive programs to encourage well-qualified principals and assistant principals to work in high-need schools. These

1 programs may include salary supplements for principals who take positions in chronically
2 low-performing schools, protection for principals against salary reduction for working in
3 high-need or low-performing schools, and rewards for principals and assistant principals for
4 making progress on school performance.

5 **SECTION 2.5.(b)** It is the intent of the General Assembly to implement advisable
6 components of the plan developed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in the 2022-2023
7 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years.

8 9 **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL AUTONOMY AND RESOURCES FOR** 10 **PRINCIPALS AND SUPERINTENDENTS IN LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE** 11 **UNITS**

12 **SECTION 2.6.(a)** No later than November 15, 2021, the Department of Public
13 Instruction shall survey local school administrative units on recommendations to increase
14 autonomy and resources for principals and superintendents. No later than February 15, 2022, the
15 Department shall compile responses from this survey and report them to the Joint Legislative
16 Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division.

17 **SECTION 2.6.(b)** It is the intent of the General Assembly to implement advisable
18 recommendations submitted to the Department pursuant to subsection (a) of this section in the
19 2022-2023 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years.

20 21 **PART III. FINANCE SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES ADEQUATE, EQUITABLE, AND** 22 **EFFICIENT RESOURCES**

23 24 **BUDGET FLEXIBILITY FOR LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION**

25 **SECTION 3.1.(a)** G.S. 115C-105.25(b) reads as rewritten:

26 "(b) Subject to the following limitations, local boards of education may transfer and may
27 approve transfers of funds between funding allotment categories:

28 (1) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.

29 (1a) Funds for career and technical education and other purposes may be
30 transferred only as permitted by federal law and the conditions of federal
31 grants or as provided through any rules that the State Board of Education
32 adopts to ensure compliance with federal regulations.

33 ~~(1b) No funds shall be transferred out of the children with disabilities allotment~~
34 ~~category.~~

35 (2), (2a) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.

36 (3) No funds shall be transferred into the central office administration allotment
37 category.

38 (3a) No funds shall be transferred out of the teacher assistants allotment category.

39 ~~(3b) No funds shall be transferred out of the academically or intellectually gifted~~
40 ~~children allotment category.~~

41 (4), (5) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1, 2013.

42 (5a) ~~No positions shall be transferred out of the allocation for classroom teachers~~
43 ~~for kindergarten through twelfth grade, except as provided in this subdivision.~~

44 Positions allocated for classroom teachers may be converted to dollar
45 equivalents to contract for visiting international exchange teachers through a
46 visiting international exchange teacher program approved by the State. These
47 positions shall be converted at the statewide average salary for classroom
48 teachers, including benefits. The converted funds shall be used only to provide
49 visiting international exchange teachers with salaries commensurate with their
50 experience levels, to provide any State-approved bonuses, and to cover the
51 costs associated with supporting visiting international exchange teachers

- 1 within the local school administrative unit, including programming and
2 related activities, background checks, medical coverage, and other program
3 administration services in accordance with the federal regulations for the
4 Exchange Visitor Program, 22 C.F.R. Part 62.
- 5 (5b) ~~Positions allocated~~ Except as provided in subdivision (5a) of this subsection,
6 positions allocated for classroom teachers and for instructional support
7 personnel may be converted to dollar equivalents for any purpose authorized
8 by the policies of the State Board of Education. These positions shall be
9 converted at the salary on the first step of the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule.
10 Certified position allotments shall not be transferred to dollars to hire the same
11 type of position.
- 12 (5c) Funds allocated for school building administration may be converted for any
13 purpose authorized by the policies of the State Board of Education. For funds
14 related to principal positions, the salary transferred shall be based on the first
15 step of the Base column of the Principal Salary Schedule. For funds related to
16 assistant principal months of employment, the salary transferred shall be based
17 on the first step of the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule at the salary level for
18 assistant principals. Certified position allotments shall not be transferred to
19 dollars to hire the same type of position.
- 20 (5d) ~~No positions shall be transferred out of the allocation for program~~
21 ~~enhancement teachers for kindergarten through fifth grade except as provided~~
22 ~~in this subdivision. Positions allocated for program enhancement teachers for~~
23 ~~kindergarten through fifth grade may be converted into positions allocated for~~
24 ~~classroom teachers for kindergarten through twelfth grade. For the purposes~~
25 ~~of this subdivision, the term "program enhancement" is as defined in~~
26 ~~G.S. 115C-301(c2).~~
- 27 (6) through (9) Repealed by Session Laws 2013-360, s. 8.14, effective July 1,
28 2013.
- 29 (10) Funds to carry out the elements of the Excellent Public Schools Act that are
30 contained in Section 7A.1 of S.L. 2012-142 shall not be transferred.
- 31 (10a) ~~No funds shall be transferred out of the limited English proficiency allotment~~
32 ~~category.~~
- 33 (11) No funds shall be transferred into or out of the driver education allotment
34 category.
- 35 (12) ~~Funds allotted for textbooks and digital resources may only be used for the~~
36 ~~purchase of textbooks and digital resources. These funds shall not be~~
37 ~~transferred out of the allotment for any other purpose."~~

38 **SECTION 3.1.(b)** This section applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.
39

40 **FUNDING FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

41 **SECTION 3.2.(a)** The State Board of Education shall allocate additional funds for
42 children with disabilities on the basis of up to a total of four thousand five hundred forty-nine
43 dollars and eighty-eight cents (\$4,549.88) per child for fiscal year 2021-2022 and up to a total of
44 four thousand seven hundred four dollars and twenty-eight cents (\$4,704.28) per child for fiscal
45 year 2022-2023. Each local school administrative unit shall receive funds for the total number of
46 children who are identified as children with disabilities in the local school administrative unit.
47 The dollar amounts allocated under this section for children with disabilities shall also be adjusted
48 in accordance with legislative salary increments, retirement rate adjustments, and health benefit
49 adjustments for personnel who serve children with disabilities.

50 **SECTION 3.2.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department
51 of Public Instruction the sum of forty million dollars (\$40,000,000) in recurring funds for the

2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of seventy million dollars (\$70,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement this section.

DISADVANTAGED STUDENT SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING (DSSF)/AT-RISK STUDENT SERVICES/ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

SECTION 3.3.(a) Funds appropriated in this section for disadvantaged student supplemental funding (DSSF) shall be used, consistent with the policies and procedures adopted by the State Board of Education, to do the following:

- (1) Provide instructional positions or instructional support positions.
- (2) Provide professional development.
- (3) Provide intensive in-school or after-school remediation, or both.
- (4) Purchase diagnostic software and progress-monitoring tools.
- (5) Provide funds for teacher bonuses and supplements.

The State Board of Education may require local school administrative units receiving funding under the Disadvantaged Student Supplemental Fund to purchase the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) in order to provide in-depth analysis of student performance and help identify strategies for improving student achievement. This data shall be used exclusively for instructional and curriculum decisions made in the best interest of children and for professional development for their teachers and administrators.

SECTION 3.3.(b) Disadvantaged student supplemental funding shall be allotted to a local school administrative unit based on (i) the unit's eligible DSSF population and (ii) the difference between a teacher-to-student ratio of 1:21 and the following teacher-to-student ratios:

- (1) For counties with wealth greater than ninety percent (90%) of the statewide average, a ratio of 1:19.9.
- (2) For counties with wealth not less than eighty percent (80%) and not greater than ninety percent (90%) of the statewide average, a ratio of 1:19.4.
- (3) For counties with wealth less than eighty percent (80%) of the statewide average, a ratio of 1:19.1.
- (4) For local school administrative units that received DSSF funds in fiscal year 2005-2006, a ratio of 1:16. These local school administrative units shall receive no less than the DSSF amount allotted in fiscal year 2006-2007.

For the purpose of this subsection, wealth shall be calculated under the low-wealth supplemental formula as provided for in this section.

SECTION 3.3.(c) If a local school administrative unit's wealth increases to a level that adversely affects the unit's DSSF allotment ratio, the DSSF allotment for that unit shall be maintained at the prior year level for one additional fiscal year.

SECTION 3.3.(d) For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the State Board of Education shall transfer the At-Risk Student Services/Alternative Schools allotment into the DSSF allotment and allocate these additional funds to local school administrative units under a formula that reallocates At-Risk Student Services funding as an independent supplement to existing DSSF funds and does both of the following:

- (1) Expands the allowable uses of the DSSF allotment to incorporate activities allowed under the current At-Risk Student Services allotment.
- (2) Provides that no local administrative unit receives a decrease in combined funding.

SECTION 3.3.(e) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of thirty-five million dollars (\$35,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of seventy million dollars (\$70,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement this section.

SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING IN LOW-WEALTH COUNTIES

SECTION 3.4.(a) Use of Funds for Supplemental Funding. – All funds received pursuant to this section shall be used only (i) to provide instructional positions, instructional support positions, teacher assistant positions, clerical positions, school computer technicians, instructional supplies and equipment, staff development, and textbooks and digital resources and (ii) for salary supplements for instructional personnel and instructional support personnel. Local boards of education are encouraged to use at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the funds received pursuant to this section to improve the academic performance of children who are performing at Level I or II on either reading or mathematics end-of-grade tests in grades three through eight.

SECTION 3.4.(b) Definitions. – As used in this section, the following definitions apply:

- (1) Anticipated county property tax revenue availability. – The county-adjusted property tax base multiplied by the effective State average tax rate.
- (2) Anticipated State average revenue availability per student. – The sum of all anticipated total county revenue availability divided by the average daily membership for the State.
- (3) Anticipated total county revenue availability. – The sum of the following:
 - a. Anticipated county property tax revenue availability.
 - b. Local sales and use taxes received by the county that are levied under Chapter 1096 of the 1967 Session Laws or under Subchapter VIII of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes.
 - c. Fines and forfeitures deposited in the county school fund for the most recent year for which data are available.
- (4) Anticipated total county revenue availability per student. – The anticipated total county revenue availability for the county divided by the average daily membership of the county.
- (5) Average daily membership. – Average daily membership as defined in the North Carolina Public Schools Allotment Policy Manual adopted by the State Board of Education. If a county contains only part of a local school administrative unit, the average daily membership of that county includes all students who reside within the county and attend that local school administrative unit.
- (6) County-adjusted property tax base. – Computed as follows:
 - a. Subtract the present-use value of agricultural land, horticultural land, and forestland in the county, as defined in G.S. 105-277.2, from the total assessed real property valuation of the county.
 - b. Adjust the resulting amount by multiplying by a weighted average of the three most recent annual sales assessment ratio studies.
 - c. Add to the resulting amount the following:
 1. Present-use value of agricultural land, horticultural land, and forestland, as defined in G.S. 105-277.2.
 2. Value of property of public service companies, determined in accordance with Article 23 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes.
 3. Personal property value for the county.
- (7) County-adjusted property tax base per square mile. – The county-adjusted property tax base divided by the number of square miles of land area in the county.
- (8) County wealth as a percentage of State average wealth. – Computed as follows:

- a. Compute the percentage that the county per capita income is of the State per capita income and weight the resulting percentage by a factor of five-tenths.
 - b. Compute the percentage that the anticipated total county revenue availability per student is of the anticipated State average revenue availability per student and weight the resulting percentage by a factor of four-tenths.
 - c. Compute the percentage that the county-adjusted property tax base per square mile is of the State-adjusted property tax base per square mile and weight the resulting percentage by a factor of one-tenth.
 - d. Add the three weighted percentages to derive the county wealth as a percentage of the State average wealth.
- (9) Effective county tax rate. – The actual county tax rate multiplied by a weighted average of the three most recent annual sales assessment ratio studies.
 - (10) Effective State average tax rate. – The average of effective county tax rates for all counties.
 - (11) Local current expense funds. – The most recent county current expense appropriations to public schools, as reported by local boards of education in the audit report filed with the Secretary of the Local Government Commission pursuant to G.S. 115C-447.
 - (12) Per capita income. – The average for the most recent three years for which data are available of the per capita income according to the most recent report of the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, including any reported modifications for prior years as outlined in the most recent report.
 - (13) Sales assessment ratio studies. – Sales assessment ratio studies performed by the Department of Revenue under G.S. 105-289(h).
 - (14) State average adjusted property tax base per square mile. – The sum of the county-adjusted property tax bases for all counties divided by the number of square miles of land area in the State.
 - (15) State average current expense appropriations per student. – The most recent State total of county current expense appropriations to public schools, as reported by local boards of education in the audit report filed with the Secretary of the Local Government Commission pursuant to G.S. 115C-447.
 - (16) Supplant. – To decrease local per student current expense appropriations from one fiscal year to the next fiscal year.
 - (17) Weighted average of the three most recent annual sales assessment ratio studies. – The weighted average of the three most recent annual sales assessment ratio studies in the most recent years for which county current expense appropriations and adjusted property tax valuations are available. If real property in a county has been revalued one year prior to the most recent sales assessment ratio study, a weighted average of the two most recent sales assessment ratios shall be used. If property has been revalued the year of the most recent sales assessment ratio study, the sales assessment ratio for the year of revaluation shall be used.

SECTION 3.4.(c) Eligibility for Funds. – Except as provided in subsection (g) of this section, the State Board of Education shall allocate these funds to local school administrative units located in whole or in part in counties in which the county wealth as a percentage of the State average wealth is less than one hundred percent (100%).

SECTION 3.4.(d) Allocation of Funds. – Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, the amount received per average daily membership for a county shall be the difference

between one hundred ten percent (110%) of the State average current expense appropriations per student and the current expense appropriations per student that the county could provide given the county's wealth and an average effort to fund public schools. To derive the current expense appropriations per student that the county could be able to provide given the county's wealth and an average effort to fund public schools, multiply the county's wealth as a percentage of State average wealth by the State average current expense appropriations per student. The funds for the local school administrative units located in whole or in part in the county shall be allocated to each local school administrative unit located in whole or in part in the county based on the average daily membership of the county's students in the school units. If the funds appropriated for supplemental funding are not adequate to fund the formula fully, each local school administrative unit shall receive a pro rata share of the funds appropriated for supplemental funding.

SECTION 3.4.(e) Formula for Distribution of Supplemental Funding Pursuant to This Section Only. – The formula in this section is solely a basis for distribution of supplemental funding for low-wealth counties. It is the intent of the General Assembly to incrementally increase appropriations for low-wealth allotment to provide eligible counties supplemental funding equal to one hundred ten percent (110%) of the statewide local revenue per student by fiscal year 2027-2028. The State Board of Education shall adjust the formula to ensure each local school administrative unit receives a pro rata share of the additional funds appropriated for the low-wealth allotment in this section for supplemental funding.

SECTION 3.4.(f) Minimum Effort Required. – A county shall receive full funding under this section if the county (i) maintains an effective county tax rate that is at least one hundred percent (100%) of the effective State average tax rate in the most recent year for which data are available or (ii) maintains a county appropriation per student to the school local current expense fund of at least one hundred percent (100%) of the current expense appropriations per student to the school local current expense fund that the county could provide given the county's wealth and an average effort to fund public schools. A county that maintains a county appropriation per student to the school local current expense fund of less than one hundred percent (100%) of the current expense appropriations per student to the school local current expense fund that the county could provide given the county's wealth and an average effort to fund public schools shall receive funding under this section at the same percentage that the county's appropriation per student to the school local current expense fund is of the current expense appropriations per student to the school local current expense fund that the county could provide given the county's wealth and an average effort to fund public schools.

SECTION 3.4.(g) Nonsupplant Requirement. – A county in which a local school administrative unit receives funds under this section shall use the funds to supplement local current expense funds and shall not supplant local current expense funds. For the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium, the State Board of Education shall not allocate funds under this section to a county found to have used these funds to supplant local per student current expense funds. The State Board of Education shall make a finding that a county has used these funds to supplant local current expense funds in the prior year, or the year for which the most recent data are available, if all of the following criteria apply:

- (1) The current expense appropriations per student of the county for the current year are less than ninety-five percent (95%) of the average of local current expense appropriations per student for the three prior fiscal years.
- (2) The county cannot show (i) that it has remedied the deficiency in funding or (ii) that extraordinary circumstances caused the county to supplant local current expense funds with funds allocated under this section.

The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to implement the requirements of this subsection.

SECTION 3.4.(h) Counties Containing a Base of the Armed Forces. – Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, for the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium, counties containing a base of the Armed Forces of the United States that have an average daily membership of more than 17,000 students shall receive whichever is the higher amount in each fiscal year as follows: either the amount of supplemental funding the county received as a low-wealth county in the 2012-2013 fiscal year or the amount of supplemental funding the county is eligible to receive as a low-wealth county pursuant to the formula for distribution of supplemental funding under the other provisions of this section.

SECTION 3.4.(i) Funds for EVAAS Data. – Notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, local school administrative units may utilize funds allocated under this section to purchase services that allow for extraction of data from the Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS).

SECTION 3.4.(j) Reports. – For the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium, the State Board of Education shall report to the Fiscal Research Division prior to May 15 of each year if it determines that counties have supplanted funds.

SECTION 3.4.(k) Department of Revenue Reports. – The Department of Revenue shall provide to the Department of Public Instruction a preliminary report for the current fiscal year of the assessed value of the property tax base for each county prior to March 1 of each year and a final report prior to May 1 of each year. The reports shall include for each county the annual sales assessment ratio and the taxable values of (i) total real property, (ii) the portion of total real property represented by the present-use value of agricultural land, horticultural land, and forestland, as defined in G.S. 105-277.2, (iii) property of public service companies determined in accordance with Article 23 of Chapter 105 of the General Statutes, and (iv) personal property.

SECTION 3.4.(l) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of forty million dollars (\$40,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement this section.

FUNDING FOR LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY STUDENTS

SECTION 3.5.(a) The State Board of Education shall allocate funds for services to students with limited proficiency in the English language to local school administrative units and to charter schools based on the three-year weighted headcount of students in the units or charter school with limited English proficiency. The State Board of Education shall adopt formulas for computing the allotments that do not include a cap on funds allocated.

SECTION 3.5.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement this section.

TEACHER ASSISTANT ALLOTMENT

SECTION 3.6.(a) Section 8.47(b) of S.L. 2015-41 is repealed.

SECTION 3.6.(b) Article 21 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-316.5. Appropriation for teacher assistants.

(a) To the extent funds are made available, the State Board of Education shall establish a funding allotment for teacher assistant positions. The State Board is authorized to adopt rules for the allocation of teacher assistant positions pursuant to this allotment. Funds allocated pursuant to this section shall be distributed based on the following:

(1) An estimated statewide average salary and benefits per teacher assistant position.

(2) The requirements of subsection (d) of this section.

(b) Beginning with the 2021-2022 fiscal year, there is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the following fiscal years the following amounts to the teacher assistant allotment:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>\$20,000,000</u>
<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>\$30,000,000</u>
<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>\$67,500,000</u>
<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>\$105,100,000</u>
<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>\$142,600,000</u>
<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>\$180,100,000</u>
<u>2027-2028 and each subsequent fiscal year thereafter</u>	<u>\$217,700,000.</u>

(c) When developing the base budget, as defined by G.S. 143C-1-1, for each fiscal year specified in subsection (b) of this section, the Director of the Budget shall include the appropriated amount for that fiscal year.

(d) Funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (b) of this section shall be allocated to local school administrative units to increase positions for teacher assistants in the following fiscal years to the following statewide ratios of teacher assistants to students in kindergarten through grade three:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Teacher Assistants</u>
<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>1:43</u>
<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>1:42.6</u>
<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>1:40</u>
<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>1:36</u>
<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>1:33</u>
<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>1:30</u>
<u>2027-2028 and each subsequent fiscal year thereafter</u>	<u>1:27."</u>

INCREASE FUNDING FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

SECTION 3.7. Article 21 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-316.5. Appropriation for certain instructional support personnel.

(a) Beginning with the 2021-2022 fiscal year, there is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction for the following fiscal years the following amounts to the instructional support allotment:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>\$40,000,000</u>
<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>\$80,000,000</u>
<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>\$212,600,000</u>
<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>\$345,300,000</u>
<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>\$477,900,000</u>
<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>\$610,600,000</u>
<u>2027-2028 and each subsequent fiscal year thereafter</u>	<u>\$743,200,000.</u>

(b) When developing the base budget, as defined by G.S. 143C-1-1, for each fiscal year specified in subsection (a) of this section, the Director of the Budget shall include the appropriated amount for that fiscal year.

(c) Funds appropriated pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall be allocated to local school administrative units to increase positions for certain instructional support personnel in the following fiscal years as follows:

(1) For school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists, to the following statewide ratios of personnel to students:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Counselors</u>	<u>Social Workers</u>	<u>Psychologists</u>
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<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>1:348</u>	<u>1:1,235</u>	<u>1:1,931</u>
<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>1:343</u>	<u>1:1,188</u>	<u>1:1,861</u>
<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>1:324</u>	<u>1:1,030</u>	<u>1:1,629</u>
<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>1:306</u>	<u>1:873</u>	<u>1:1,397</u>
<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>1:287</u>	<u>1:715</u>	<u>1:1,164</u>
<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>1:269</u>	<u>1:558</u>	<u>1:932</u>
<u>2027-2028 and each</u>			
<u>subsequent fiscal year thereafter</u>	<u>1:250</u>	<u>1:400</u>	<u>1:700.</u>

(2) For school nurses and school media coordinators, to the following statewide ratios of personnel to students and, in the 2027-2028 fiscal year and subsequent fiscal years, to the greater of the following statewide ratio of personnel to students or an amount necessary to provide at least one school nurse per school with 100 or more students and one school media coordinator per school with 200 or more students:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Nurses</u>	<u>Media Coordinators</u>
<u>2021-2022</u>	<u>1:1,694</u>	<u>1:779</u>
<u>2022-2023</u>	<u>1:1,633</u>	<u>1:770</u>
<u>2023-2024</u>	<u>1:1,432</u>	<u>1:742</u>
<u>2024-2025</u>	<u>1:1,232</u>	<u>1:714</u>
<u>2025-2026</u>	<u>1:1,031</u>	<u>1:686</u>
<u>2026-2027</u>	<u>1:831</u>	<u>1:658</u>
<u>2027-2028 and each</u>		
<u>subsequent fiscal year thereafter</u>	<u>1:630</u>	<u>1:630."</u>

PART IV. ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM THAT RELIABLY ASSESSES MULTIPLE MEASURES OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

ADJUST WEIGHTING BETWEEN PROFICIENCY AND GROWTH

SECTION 4.1.(a) G.S. 115C-83.15(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Calculation of the Overall School Performance Scores and Grades. – The State Board of Education shall calculate the overall school performance score by adding the school achievement score, as provided in subsection (b) of this section, and the school growth score, as determined using EVAAS as provided in subsection (c) of this section, earned by a school. The school achievement score shall account for ~~eighty-five~~ eighty-one percent ~~(80%)~~, ~~(51%)~~, and the school growth score shall account for ~~twenty-four~~ twenty percent ~~(20%)~~, ~~(49%)~~ of the total sum. For all schools, the total school performance score shall be converted to a 100-point scale and used to determine an overall school performance grade. The overall school performance grade shall be based on the following scale and shall not be modified to add any other designation related to other performance measures, such as a "plus" or "minus":

...."

SECTION 4.1.(b) The Department of Public Instruction shall amend the State plan under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, to reflect the changes to achievement and growth score weighting in this section.

SECTION 4.1.(c) This section applies beginning with school performance scores issued based on data from the 2021-2022 school year.

STUDY ON ADDITIONAL MEASURES IN THE SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

SECTION 4.2. The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Public Instruction, shall study methods of adding to the State school accountability system indicators that provide information on the opportunity of students to access a sound basic

education. Additional indicators recommended shall not be inconsistent with the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act, and shall not replace indicators included in the State school accountability system under Part 1B of Article 8 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. The State Board of Education shall submit a report with its recommended changes regarding the school accountability system to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on or before June 15, 2022.

PART V. ASSISTANCE AND TURNAROUND FUNCTION THAT PROVIDES NECESSARY SUPPORT TO LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS AND LOW-PERFORMING LOCAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

DISTRICT AND REGIONAL SUPPORT MODEL

SECTION 5.1. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of nineteen million dollars (\$19,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to be used to continue to implement the District and Regional Support model developed by the State Board of Education to support the improvement of low-performing and high-poverty schools. Implementation shall (i) provide support in needed content areas and instructional and leadership coaching and (ii) include direct, comprehensive, and progressive turnaround assistance to the State's chronically low-performing schools and low-performing districts.

REVIEW AND UPDATE CURRICULUM ADOPTION PROCESSES

SECTION 5.2. Before March 15, 2022, the State Board of Education shall review, update, and strengthen the State-level process for reviewing and adopting core curriculum resources. The State Board of Education shall provide statewide and regional support, resources, and professional learning opportunities to assist schools and districts in selecting and successfully employing high-quality, standards-aligned, culturally responsive, evidence-based resources and practices to assist educators in applying innovative practices that promote continuous improvement. No later than June 30, 2022, the Department of Public Instruction shall provide a model implementation plan to each local school administrative unit.

SUPPORT FOR HIGH-POVERTY SCHOOLS

SECTION 5.3.(a) Article 13 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-209.2. Community schools support program.

(a) **Program Established.** – The Department of Public Instruction shall establish a program (Program) to provide support to high-poverty schools that adopt a community school model or other evidence-based models to address out-of-school barriers to learning.

(b) **Definitions.** – The following definitions shall apply in this section:

(1) **Community school model.** – The model following the Department of Public Instruction's Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's guidance.

(2) **Evidence-based model.** – Any model established using evidence-based methods that, in the discretion of the State Board of Education, achieve the goals set in the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model.

(c) **Participation.** – The Department of Public Instruction shall disseminate an application form for participation in the Program for the following school year no later than June 1 of each year. No later than July 1, any school that uses a community school model or other evidence-based model to address out-of-school barriers to learning may apply to participate in the Program. No later than August 1 of each school year that funds are made available for this

purpose, the Department of Public Instruction shall select geographically and culturally diverse schools from among the applicants for that school year to participate in the Program. Priority shall be given to schools that have high rates of student poverty.

(d) Implementation. – Each participating local school administrative unit shall hire one full-time school-based coordinator per participating school. The school-based coordinator shall assess local needs and assets and organize the integration of social, academic, and health supports in coordination with school support personnel. The school-based coordinator shall also assess the school's access to technical assistance and professional support to effectively plan and implement the community school model or other evidence-based model. No later than July 15 of each school year that a school participates in the Program, the school-based coordinator shall submit to the Department of Public Instruction a request for funds for goods or services beneficial to meeting the goals of the community school model or other evidence-based model for the following school year. No later than August 15 of each school year, the Department of Public Instruction shall evaluate each funding request and allocate funds as it deems necessary.

(e) Report. – No later than October 15 of each school year, the Department of Public Instruction, in consultation with each school-based coordinator, shall provide a report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the following:

(1) The amount of funds requested by each school.

(2) The purposes of funds requested by each school.

(3) The amount of funds allocated to each school.

(4) The use of funds allocated to each school.

(5) Any effects of the model on school outcomes, including attendance rates, academic outcomes, or any other measure the school-based coordinator or the Department deems relevant.

(6) Any other information the Department deems relevant."

SECTION 5.3.(b) Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of six million dollars (\$6,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year for the implementation of this Program.

SECTION 5.3.(c) This section applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

SECTION 5.4.(a) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of three million nine hundred thousand dollars (\$3,900,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to be used to fund the reduced-price lunch copays for all students who qualify for reduced-price lunches under the National School Lunch Program. Funds shall be used to ensure that qualifying students receive free lunches.

SECTION 5.4.(b) Part 2 of Article 17 of Chapter 115C of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 115C-264.5. School meal debt report.

No later than October 15, 2023, and annually thereafter, the State Board of Education shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on unpaid meal charges in local school administrative units. At a minimum, the report shall include the following information:

(1) The percentage of students of all grade levels in each local school administrative unit who (i) qualify for and participate in reduced-price meals and (ii) do not carry an unpaid meal charge.

(2) The total amount of funds received by each local school administrative unit related to unpaid meal charges.

(3) Summaries of approaches adopted by each local school administrative unit regarding unpaid meal charges.

- (4) Options for a statewide policy on the uniform administration of unpaid meal charges in local school administrative units. Every option shall ensure that students are not prevented from receiving nutritious meals because of an unpaid meal charge."

PART VI. SYSTEM OF EARLY EDUCATION THAT PROVIDES ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY PREKINDERGARTEN AND OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

EXPAND NC PREKINDERGARTEN (NC PRE-K) PROGRAM

SECTION 6.1.(a) Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education, the sum of twenty-six million five hundred thousand dollars (\$26,500,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of forty-five million four hundred thousand dollars (\$45,400,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year for the purpose of expanding the NC Prekindergarten (NC Pre-K) program for eligible children who are 4 years of age by allocating funds for each of the following:

- (1) Begin incrementally increasing State funding for each NC Pre-K slot with the goal of paying one hundred percent (100%) of the actual cost by the end of the 2027-2028 fiscal year.
- (2) Gradually increasing the number of eligible children able to be served in the NC Pre-K program with the goal of reaching at least seventy-five percent (75%) of eligible children in each county by the end of the 2027-2028 fiscal year.
- (3) Raising the rate for the county administrator to provide oversight, monitoring, enrollment, and support to ten percent (10%) by the end of the 2022-2023 fiscal year.
- (4) Phasing-in extension of the NC Pre-K program year from 10 to 12 months in accordance with subsection (b) of this section.

SECTION 6.1.(b) Extend NC Pre-K Program Year to 12 Months. – Section 11B.1 of S.L. 2017-57 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"SECTION 11B.1.(a1) Extend NC Pre-K Program Year. – It is the intent of the General Assembly to gradually extend the NC Pre-K program to cover 12 months of the program year with full implementation statewide by the end of the 2027-2028 fiscal year. To that end, the Division of Child Development and Early Education (Division) shall develop and implement a plan that (i) includes establishing a pilot program to extend the NC Pre-K program year from 10 to 12 months and (ii) is based on county capacity to implement the extension. The Division shall select up to three counties to participate in the pilot program that includes, at a minimum, representation from a private classroom setting, a public classroom setting that operates on a year-round basis, and an underserved area. The Division shall submit a report to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services by December 31, 2023. The report shall include each of the following:

- (1) The number of students participating in the pilot program.
- (2) The number of students participating who are in an NC Pre-K classroom in a child care center versus those in an NC Pre-K classroom in a public school.
- (3) The number of schools and child care centers participating in the program, including identifying those that are private and those that are public.
- (4) The number of NC Pre-K classrooms participating in the program.
- (5) The additional costs needed to implement the program.
- (6) The challenges and successes of implementing the program in both NC Pre-K classrooms in child care centers and NC Pre-K classrooms in public schools."

INCREASE HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN FROM BIRTH/INCREASE FUNDS FOR CHILD CARE SUBSIDY

SECTION 6.2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education (Division), the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in recurring funds for each year of the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium to increase funds for the child care subsidy program and provide for program improvements, including, but not limited to, increasing compensation for the child care workforce and ensuring that eligible families receive assistance through the elimination of waitlists. The Division shall consider the child care subsidy market rates recommended in the 2018 Child Care Market Rate Study when determining uses for the funds appropriated under this section.

EXPAND AND IMPROVE ACCESS TO INDIVIDUALIZED EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES FOR ELIGIBLE CHILDREN/NC INFANT-TODDLER PROGRAM

SECTION 6.3.(a) Funds for NC Infant-Toddler Program. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, the sum of seven million seven hundred thousand dollars (\$7,700,000) in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to provide funds for the North Carolina Infant-Toddler Program, a program that provides supports and services for families and their children, from birth to 3 years of age, who have special needs. These funds shall be used to take steps toward doing the following:

- (1) Increasing State and local staffing in the provision of services to families with infants and toddlers with developmental delays and established medical conditions who are eligible for the NC Infant-Toddler Program.
- (2) Expanding funding for interpreter services.
- (3) Establishing a centralized provider network system.
- (4) Providing professional development focused on early childhood mental health.
- (5) Addressing salary inequities affecting provider retention and recruitment.

SECTION 6.3.(b) Feasibility Study & Infrastructure Readiness Assessment/Expansion of NC Toddler-Infant Program. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, the sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to be allocated as follows:

- (1) \$150,000 to conduct a feasibility study to examine eligibility criteria and cost implications for expansion of the NC Infant-Toddler Program.
- (2) \$100,000 to conduct a system and infrastructure readiness assessment to determine areas of need and system challenges that need to be addressed before expanding the NC Infant-Toddler Program. The Division of Public Health shall solicit public input and feedback on the plan developed pursuant to this subdivision.

INCREASE SMART START FUNDING

SECTION 6.4. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early Education, the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) for each year of the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium to gradually increase funding for the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc. (Smart Start), with the goal of fully funding Smart Start by the end of the 2027-2028 fiscal year. Funds allocated to the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc., pursuant to this section shall be distributed to Smart Start

1 local partnerships to improve statewide early child system infrastructure and support a cohesive
2 continuum of services for families and children from birth through 5 years of age.

4 **INCREASE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR WORKFORCE**

5 **SECTION 6.5.(a)** Funds for WAGE\$ and AWARD\$ Programs. – There is
6 appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division
7 of Child Development and Early Education, the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in
8 recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of twenty-six million dollars
9 (\$26,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to increase funding for and expand
10 participation statewide in the Child Care WAGE\$ program and the Infant-Toddler Educator
11 AWARD\$ program, both of which provide salary supplements for early childhood educators.

12 **SECTION 6.5.(b)** Recruitment Strategies and Professional Development. – There is
13 appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division
14 of Child Development and Early Education, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000)
15 in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of one million two hundred fifty
16 thousand dollars (\$1,250,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to implement
17 strategies to recruit early childhood educators and provide ongoing professional development,
18 including coaching, technical assistance, assistance with degree attainment, and licensure
19 support.

21 **FACILITATE RELIABLE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY DATA SUPPORTING** 22 **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

23 **SECTION 6.6.(a)** Real-Time Workforce Data System. – There is appropriated from
24 the General Fund to the Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child
25 Development and Early Education, the sum of one million two hundred thousand dollars
26 (\$1,200,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of five hundred
27 thousand dollars (\$500,000) in nonrecurring funds for the 2022-2023 fiscal year to develop and
28 implement a real-time workforce data system that supports building a pipeline of early childhood
29 educators.

30 **SECTION 6.6.(b)** Expand and Improve Current Early Childhood Data Systems. –
31 The Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development and Early
32 Education (Division), shall, within existing funds appropriated to the Division for the 2021-2023
33 fiscal biennium, expand and improve the North Carolina Early Childhood Integrated Data System
34 (NC ECIDS) and the North Carolina Early Childhood Action plan data dashboards to track child
35 outcomes and provide access to State data for State and local users and researchers with the goal
36 of connecting this data to the NC Longitudinal Data System (NCLDS).

37 **SECTION 6.6.(c)** Build Local Capacity/Early Childhood Data. – The Department
38 of Health and Human Services (Department), Division of Child Development and Early
39 Education (Division), within existing funds appropriated to the Division for the 2021-2023 fiscal
40 biennium, shall collaborate with the Divisions of Social Services and Public Health, as
41 appropriate, in developing and implementing a plan to provide technical assistance to build local
42 capacity to use quality early childhood data across child health, child welfare, and early childhood
43 education for local planning.

45 **PART VII. ALIGNMENT OF HIGH SCHOOL TO POSTSECONDARY AND CAREER** 46 **EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS**

48 **DUAL ENROLLMENT COURSE ALIGNMENT STUDY**

49 **SECTION 7.1.(a)** The State Board of Education, in consultation with the Board of
50 Governors of The University of North Carolina and the State Board of Community Colleges,
51 shall conduct a study of all dual enrollment courses offered as part of the Career and College

1 Promise Program that satisfy basic high school graduation requirements to ensure that the content
2 and skills taught in those courses is aligned to the content and skills outlined in the Standard
3 Course of Study for the requisite courses that meet graduation requirements. The study shall
4 identify if dual enrollment courses are or are not aligned with the Standard Course of Study and,
5 if not aligned, what content or skills are not aligned. The State Board of Education shall report
6 on the findings of this study to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal
7 Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by March 15, 2022.

8 **SECTION 7.1.(b)** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department
9 of Public Instruction the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in nonrecurring funds for the
10 2021-2022 fiscal year to conduct the study required by subsection (a) of this section.
11

12 **CAREER AND COLLEGE READY GRADUATE PROGRAM/DPI**

13 **SECTION 7.2.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
14 Public Instruction the sum of five hundred forty-six thousand dollars (\$546,000) in recurring
15 funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to provide funds for the NROC Project subscription costs and
16 for a staff member position at the Department of Public Instruction to support the Career and
17 College Ready Graduate Program in collaboration with the Community College System.
18

19 **COOPERATIVE INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL FUNDING**

20 **SECTION 7.3.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
21 Public Instruction the sum of two million one hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$2,185,000)
22 in recurring funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to be allocated to local school administrative
23 units, based on the development tier area designation of each local school administrative unit as
24 defined in G.S. 143B-437.08, as of July 1, 2021, in amounts consistent with those set forth in
25 Section 7.22 of S.L. 2017-57, as supplemental funding for the following cooperative innovative
26 high schools, beginning with the 2021-2022 school year:

- 27 (1) The Center for Industry, Technology, and Innovation.
- 28 (2) The Innovation Early College High School.
- 29 (3) The Marine Sciences and Technologies Early College High School.
- 30 (4) The Roanoke Rapids Early College High School.
- 31 (5) The Southeast Area Technical High School.
- 32 (6) Halifax Early College High School.
- 33 (7) Stanly STEM Early College High School.
- 34 (8) Gaston Early College of Medical Sciences High School.
35

36 **REVISE NCVPS FUNDING**

37 **SECTION 7.4.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
38 Public Instruction the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000) in recurring
39 funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year and the sum of three million dollars (\$3,000,000) for the
40 2022-2023 fiscal year to offset the costs for local administrative units and charter schools to
41 remove barriers to student participation in North Carolina Virtual Public Schools. The funds shall
42 be allocated with a priority to cover the costs of courses for students enrolled in public schools
43 located in low-wealth counties.
44

45 **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION CREDENTIALING**

46 **SECTION 7.5.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
47 Public Instruction the sum of six million five hundred thousand dollars (\$6,500,000) in recurring
48 funds for the 2021-2022 fiscal year to expand support for credentials and certifications for career
49 and technical education program students.
50

51 **SCHOOL CALENDAR FLEXIBILITY/CC CALENDAR**

SECTION 7.6.(a) G.S. 115C-84.2(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Opening and Closing Dates. – Local boards of education shall determine the dates of opening and closing the public schools under subdivision (a)(1) of this section. Except for year-round schools, the opening date for students shall be no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26, and the closing date for students shall be no later than the Friday closest to June 11. On a showing of good cause, the State Board of Education may waive the requirement that the opening date for students be no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 and may allow the local board of education to set an opening date no earlier than the Monday closest to August 19, to the extent that school calendars are able to provide sufficient days to accommodate anticipated makeup days due to school closings. A local board may revise the scheduled closing date if necessary in order to comply with the minimum requirements for instructional days or instructional time. For purposes of this subsection, the term "good cause" means that schools in any local school administrative unit in a county have been closed eight days per year during any four of the last 10 years because of severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency situations.

The required opening and closing dates under this subsection shall not apply to any school that a local board designated as having a modified calendar for the 2003-2004 school year or to any school that was part of a planned program in the 2003-2004 school year for a system of modified calendar schools, so long as the school operates under a modified calendar.

Notwithstanding the required opening and closing dates under this subsection, a local board of education may align the calendar of schools in the local school administrative unit with the calendar of a community college serving the city or county in which the unit is located."

SECTION 7.6.(b) This section is effective when this act becomes law and applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

STUDY ON BARRIERS OF ACCESS TO HIGH SCHOOL COURSES LEADING TO COLLEGE CREDIT

SECTION 7.7.(a) The State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Office of State Budget and Management, shall conduct a study examining the barriers and supports impacting all students' ability to complete high school courses leading to college credit, an associate degree, or a career-ready credential, including an examination of access, equity, resources, fees, and personnel. The State Board of Education shall report on the findings of this study to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Office of State Budget and Management by March 15, 2022.

SECTION 7.7.(b) There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of Public Instruction the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be used to conduct the study required by subsection (a) of this section.

COLLEGE ADVISING CORPS/COLLEGE ADVISERS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SECTION 7.8.(a) Purpose of the College Advising Corps Program. – From the funds appropriated in subsection (b) of this section, the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina shall make funds available to the National College Advising Corps, Inc. (CAC), to support an expansion of the placement of college advisers in North Carolina public schools through their program over a three-year period. CAC is a college access nonprofit organization with the mission to increase the number of underrepresented, low-income, or first-generation postsecondary degree or certificate students entering and completing their postsecondary education at community colleges and universities. In furthering this mission, CAC operates an innovative model of partnering with schools, communities, families, and postsecondary institutions, including providing for a two-year service opportunity to recent college graduates as near-peer college advisers working full-time in the public schools, with an emphasis on engaging college advisers who have similar backgrounds to the students the program seeks to

1 serve. Near-peer college advisers perform various services for those students that are key
2 components to the proven success of the program, including (i) attending postsecondary campus
3 visits, fairs, and workshops with students, (ii) assisting with registering for college entrance
4 exams, (iii) assisting with Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) registrations and
5 completions, (iv) identifying available scholarships, (v) assisting with postsecondary
6 applications, and (vi) engaging with parents.

7 **SECTION 7.8.(b)** Funds for the Program. – Due to the effectiveness of the
8 innovative model operated by CAC and the potential for significantly impacting the highest-need
9 students as described in subsection (a) of this section, the following funds are appropriated from
10 the General Fund to the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina to be provided
11 each fiscal year of the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium to CAC for the purpose of expanding the
12 placement of college advisers in accordance with the requirements of this section:

- 13 (1) For the 2021-2022 fiscal year, the sum of two million four hundred fifteen
14 thousand dollars (\$2,415,000) in recurring funds.
- 15 (2) For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, an additional sum of two million five hundred
16 seventy-two thousand dollars (\$2,572,000) in recurring funds.

17 It is the intent of the General Assembly to appropriate from the General Fund to the
18 Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina an additional sum of three hundred
19 thirty-three thousand three hundred thirty-three dollars (\$333,333) in recurring funds for a net
20 appropriation of five million three hundred twenty thousand three hundred thirty-three dollars
21 (\$5,320,333) in recurring funds to be provided to CAC for the 2023-2024 fiscal year and
22 subsequent fiscal years for the purpose of expanding the placement of college advisers to all 100
23 counties of the State in the third year of the expansion of the CAC program.

24 **SECTION 7.8.(c)** Matching Funds. – Funds made available to CAC pursuant to this
25 section shall be matched by CAC on the basis of two dollars (\$2.00) in non-State funds for every
26 one dollar (\$1.00) in State funds. Availability of these matching funds shall not revert to the
27 General Fund but shall continue to be available for the purposes set forth in this section.

28 **SECTION 7.8.(d)** Use of Funds. – CAC shall focus the first two years of the
29 expansion of its program using the funds provided to it under this section by placing college
30 advisers in counties designated as tier one and tier two. For the third year of the expansion, CAC
31 shall use the funds provided to it to place college advisers in the remaining counties designated
32 as tier three in order to achieve placement of college advisers in all 100 counties of the State. In
33 addition, CAC shall select at least three additional postsecondary institutions to partner with in
34 order to increase the number of recent graduates working as near-peer college advisers to meet
35 the needs of the program expansion. Once CAC has reached the goal of placement of college
36 advisers in 100 counties, the funds provided to it for the program shall be used to continue the
37 mission of the program to increase access for North Carolina public school students to
38 postsecondary degree or certificate attainment at community colleges and universities.

39 **SECTION 7.8.(e)** Reporting Requirements. – CAC shall submit a report by June 1
40 of each year in which CAC spends State funds made available to it pursuant to this section to the
41 Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee and the Fiscal Research Division on the
42 progress of expanding the placement of college advisers, data on the effectiveness of the program
43 in increasing access for students to postsecondary education, and the use of State funds.

44 **CAREER DEVELOPMENT COORDINATORS**

45 **SECTION 7.9.** There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Department of
46 Public Instruction the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) in recurring funds in the
47 2021-2022 fiscal year for a Career and Postsecondary Planning Director position in the
48 Department's career and technical education division to focus on career planning in grades five
49 through 12 and the sum of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in recurring funds for the 2022-2023
50

fiscal year to increase the number of school-based career development coordinators for grades six through eight and grades nine through 12.

PART VIII. MISCELLANEOUS

STATE BUDGET ACT APPLIES

SECTION 8.1. The provisions of the State Budget Act, Chapter 143C of the General Statutes, are reenacted and shall remain in full force and effect and are incorporated in this act by reference.

EFFECT OF HEADINGS

SECTION 8.2. The headings to the Parts, subparts, and sections of this act are a convenience to the reader and are for reference only. The headings do not expand, limit, or define the text of this act, except for effective dates referring to a Part or subpart.

SEVERABILITY CLAUSE

SECTION 8.3. If any section or provision of this act is declared unconstitutional or invalid by the courts, it does not affect the validity of this act as a whole or any part other than the part so declared to be unconstitutional or invalid.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 8.4. Except as otherwise provided, this act becomes effective July 1, 2021.