

NCTF Commission - February 21, 2023  
Proposal 3 – Advocacy Opportunities  
(Resolutions passed unanimously)

**Repayment Status:** Campus directors report that students are choosing to not stay in the program or even seek being in the program due to the length of time that it would take to repay a relatively small loan (one that in many cases, does not cover all costs). Furthermore, the stringent emphasis that students must be teaching STEM or SPED in a school means that some graduates of the program who are actually teaching, are still having to pay the loan back in cash repayment. Also the definition of low-performing changes every year so it is conceivable that a student may start at a low-performing school and their repayment schedule change due to their school status. Finally, SEAA has determined that if a student receives funding in any part of the academic year, they have to pay back 1 full year of service even if the funding was only for a semester.

Current legislation – 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.**

**Proposal:**

**(A) Substantial change in NCGA** – Definition of low-performing school changed to a “high needs school” - use principal fellows definition to include Title 1 schools, low wealth districts, etc. to expand placement of fellows across the state

**(B) Significant change with NCGA 116-209.63** – Repayment schedule as follows for service repayment

(a) Teaching in low-performing (or high need school) in any area = 1:1 repayment schedule

(b) Teaching in STEM/SPED in non-low performing school = 1:1 repayment

(c) Teaching outside of STEM/SPED in non-low performing school = 2:1 repayment (currently not even offered for service repayment)

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**Increase Awarded Amounts** – The current maximum amount of an award for each semester is \$4125. This amount does not cover the full tuition, fees, and books at 5 of the 8 institutions. This amount was set in 2017 before costs have risen for college students. Additionally, this amount may not be enough of an enticement to attract new candidates to the teaching profession if they still have to take out additional loans to attend college.

**Proposal:**

- (A) **Impactful Change in NCGS** – Increase awards for fellows to \$6000 or highest tuition cost at UNC systems schools per semester under current parameters.
  - (B) **Significant Change in NCGS 116-209.62** – Increase awards to a maximum of \$7500 per semester for fellows to cover all expenses.
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**EPP Expansion** – Current legislation stipulates that a maximum of eight (8) institutions are eligible for the NCTF program. There is no listed process for establishing a review or open window for other EPPs to apply to be a part of the program. With the program being at a limited number of schools and with the limited number of licensure programs at several of those institutions, the application pool is constricted to only those students in NC who are willing to go to those colleges/universities in those specific areas. Some of the largest EPPs in the state are not able to be a part of the NCTF program.

**Proposal:**

- (A) **Impactful Change in NCGS** – Establish a review window for EPPs to apply/reapply for participation. Window should be every 4 years for one-half of the schools which is four (4).
  - (B) **Significant Change in NCGS 116-209.62** – Expand program to more EPPs to a maximum number of 12 and unlimited number of community college approved EPPs.
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**Expansion of Program Areas beyond STEM/SPED** – Recent reports have highlighted the challenges in the teacher pipeline and the shortage of highly qualified teachers in all areas of education that exists in North Carolina.

**Proposal:**

- (A) **Impactful Change in NCGS** – Add other highly-needed fields as determined by DPI data from 2021-2022 school year or most current data
- (B) **Significant Change in NCGS 116-209.62** – Expand program to more or all teacher licensure fields