



Report to the North Carolina General Assembly

TeachNC Recruitment Initiative Report
Session Law 2021-180 Section 7.20(a)

Date Due: March 15, 2022
DPI Chronological Schedule, 2020-2021

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Legislation (NC Session Law 2021-180):

TEACHNC RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE

SECTION 7.20.(a) The Department of Public Instruction shall adopt the TeachNC recruitment initiative as a comprehensive web platform for future teachers to find information and connect with resources on (i) the teaching profession, (ii) opportunities for educators in North Carolina, and (iii) the process of obtaining an educator's license in the State.

SECTION 7.20.(b) The Department shall report to the Senate Appropriations Committee on Education/Higher Education, the House Appropriations Committee on Education, the Fiscal Research Division, and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by March 15, 2022, and annually thereafter, on implementation of the platform, including integration of the technology with outside entities, such as educator preparation programs (EPPs) and businesses, and data on user outcomes, including at least the following:

- (1) The number of user accounts, visitors to the website, and web-initiated chats.
- (2) The number of users who were seeking teacher licensure who applied to institutions with an EPP after visiting the TeachNC web platform and, of those users, the number of users who successfully enrolled into institutions with an EPP and who completed teacher licensure programs.
- (3) The number of users who applied for employment in public schools after visiting the TeachNC web platform and the number of teachers who continue to teach in the public schools after finding employment utilizing TeachNC. The report submitted by March 15, 2022, shall also include any recommendations by the Department on potential cost-sharing arrangements or public-private partnerships with outside entities for ongoing sustainability or continued growth of the recruitment initiative.

Section 1: Website Data

In partnership with Teach.org, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has gathered data related to the number of individuals who have created a user account on the TeachNC website, how many visitors have accessed the TeachNC website, and how many chat sessions have been conducted by visitors to the website. These data are reported below in Table 1 by academic year. For the purposes of this report, TeachNC defines an academic year as the period of August 31st to September 1st of the following year.

Table 1: Website Usage Data			
	2019-2020 AY	2020-2021 AY	Total
Number of User Accounts*	4,195	8,329	12,844
Visitors to the Website	59,904	114,037	173,941
Web-initiated Chats	868	3,240	4,108
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including all time "signups"; does not account for people who have unsubscribed 			

From Table 1, one can see that the number of user accounts has grown substantially from the initial year of 4,195 to last year's count of 8,329 (an increase of 98.5%). Similarly, visitors to the website have increased 90.4 percent from the 2019-20 reporting period to the 2020-21 reporting period. Web-initiated chats, which appear to be a reliable indicator of application to a North Carolina educator preparation program, increased 273.3 percent from the 2019-20 academic year to the 2020-2021 academic year. These strong increases in web traffic in the second academic year are an indication that the TeachNC program is gaining recognition with potential educators as resource for investigating the teaching profession in North Carolina.

Section 2: NC Educator Preparation Program Application, Enrollment, and Completion

The TeachNC program is designed to attract potential candidates to the teaching profession in North Carolina. It is critical to understand the extent to which these marketing efforts materialize in their users applying to, enrolling in, and ultimately completing a North Carolina educator preparation program (EPP). TeachNC provided the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) with a list of their users who indicated that they had applied to and/or enrolled in an EPP after having interacted with the TeachNC staff. Staff at NCDPI then took that list of users and compared it enrollment data from the State's EPPs to confirm the self-reported status from the users. NCDPI staff were able to identify 545 applicants from the 2019-2020 academic year who applied to a North Carolina EPP subsequent to registering with TeachNC. In the 2020-2021 academic year, that number rose to 1,631, a 199.3 percent increase over the prior year. The combined total of applicants across the two academic years is 2,176. This number will serve as the basis for determining how many of the TeachNC users went on to enroll in an EPP, and in the next section, how many obtained a license and employment in North Carolina.

From the number of applicants associated with TeachNC, NCDPI can confirm that 432 (19.9%) of these individuals enrolled in a State Board of Education-approved educator preparation program. Additionally, there were 51 TeachNC users that indicated that they had enrolled in an EPP, but the EPP was not a North Carolina EPP. The North Carolina State Board of Education does recognize educator preparation from another state insofar that the EPP is approved as an EPP in the state in which it resides. Therefore, these 51 users have the potential to apply for a North Carolina teaching license once they have completed their preparation in another

state. NCDPI staff were also able to confirm that 48 TeachNC users (2.2%), who had applied for admission to a NC EPP, did not ultimately enroll with the EPP. Finally, there were 1,645 TeachNC users (75.6%) for whom NCDPI staff can neither confirm nor deny admission to an NC EPP. The reason for NCDPI's inability to confirm enrollment for these individuals will be discussed in the conclusion of this report.

On the issue of EPP completion, the partnership between TeachNC and NCDPI is too recent to expect to see completion rates for these individuals who are matriculating into the State's educator preparation programs. If a TeachNC user has not yet completed an undergraduate degree, he/she may be enrolling in an undergraduate program with the intention of formal enrollment in the EPP during the junior year of university. If a TeachNC user has completed an undergraduate degree, he/she is likely enrolling in the EPP for the sole purpose of educator licensure. In either case, it is reasonable to expect the individual to need three or four years to demonstrate completion of the program. Subsequent reports from NCDPI on the efficacy of the TeachNC program will include information on the completion rates for TeachNC users.

Section 3: Licensing and Employment

In this section, NCDPI staff examines the 2,176 TeachNC users who obtained a North Carolina educator's license. NCDPI can confirm that 515 of the TeachNC users (23.7%) were issued a license at some time after their initial contact with TeachNC. It is a finding of note that the number of licensed teachers is greater than the number of users who were enrolled in a NC EPP. This phenomenon is possible given that individuals, who intend to pursue a residency license in North Carolina, can obtain an emergency permit to teach in advance of applying for a residency license. The emergency license allows an individual to take additional coursework (usually additional content courses) in advance of formal application to a residency program in one of the State's EPPs. Additionally, there were 339 TeachNC users (15.6%) that did not obtain a NC educator's license. Finally, there were 1,322 TeachNC users (60.8%) for whom NCDPI cannot confirm, nor deny, the receipt of a North Carolina educator's license.

In terms of employment with a North Carolina public school, the employment rates are consistent with the licensing data reported above. In other words, every TeachNC user who obtained a North Carolina educator's license is employed with a North Carolina public school. It is quite likely that NCDPI will see these numbers increase in the coming months as recruitment efforts in the State heighten.

Section 4: Opportunities for Growth and Partnerships

NCDPI recognizes that staff cannot confirm the status of the majority of the TeachNC users in terms of their application and/or enrollment in an NC EPP or their licensure and/or employment in the State. This challenge arises from the fact that TeachNC is not in a position to collect the data from its users that is needed to create a definitive match with EPP application and enrollment data, as well as licensure and employment data with the State. NCDPI and TeachNC staff had discussions early in the partnership about what data might be collected from users who were interested in pursuing teaching in North Carolina. It was determined that users of the TeachNC website might be hesitant to provide sensitive information (e.g., date of birth, last four digits of the social security number, etc.) even when there was strong interest in pursuing a teaching career. It was determined that a "lighter touch" was more appropriate. As a result, NCDPI staff had little more than first and

last name to track these individuals through the EPP, licensure, and employment systems. NCDPI used a variety of techniques to generate as many confirmations as possible (e.g., “fuzzy logic” in matching first and last names, matching on personal email addresses, surveys and phone calls with our EPPs, etc.). NCDPI will continue to work with TeachNC to develop strategies to track TeachNC users more effectively. One possible approach is to ask applicants for EPPs and licensure to report whether they worked with TeachNC prior to their application for either of these processes.

The North Carolina General Assembly also requested suggestions on how NCDPI can develop public-private partnerships to ensure the sustainability of this work moving forward. In addition to funding the TeachNC partnership with NCDPI, the General Assembly also provided for a full-time position to oversee the TeachNC partnership and educator recruitment efforts in the State. NCDPI can report that the full-time position has been filled and this work is of the highest priority to the agency. This staff member will work to ensure that the agency will be able to effectively track TeachNC users through the entire process – from initial interest in teaching in North Carolina to employment in our State’s public schools.