

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2015

**H.B. 902**  
**Apr 15, 2015**  
**HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK**

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HOUSE DRH20286-MKa-143B (03/25)

Short Title: Transforming Principal Preparation. (Public)

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

Referred to:

- 1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM TO ELEVATE  
3 EDUCATORS IN NORTH CAROLINA BY TRANSFORMING THE PREPARATION  
4 OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS.  
5 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:  
6 **SECTION 1.(a)** Purpose. – The purpose of this act is to establish a competitive  
7 grant program for eligible entities to elevate educators in North Carolina public schools by  
8 transforming the preparation of principals across the State. The State Education Assistance  
9 Authority (Authority) shall administer this grant program through a cooperative agreement with  
10 a private, nonprofit corporation to provide funds for the preparation and support of highly  
11 effective future school principals in North Carolina.  
12 **SECTION 1.(b)** Definitions. – For the purposes of this act, the following  
13 definitions apply:  
14 (1) Eligible entity. – A for-profit or nonprofit organization or an institution of  
15 higher education that has an evidence-based plan for preparing school  
16 leaders who implement school leadership practices linked to increased  
17 student achievement.  
18 (2) High-need school. – A public school, including a charter school, that meets  
19 one or more of the following criteria:  
20 a. Is a school identified under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and  
21 Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.  
22 b. Is a persistently low-achieving school, as identified by the  
23 Department of Public Instruction for purposes of federal  
24 accountability.  
25 c. A middle school containing any of grades five through eight that  
26 feeds into a high school with less than a sixty percent (60%)  
27 four-year cohort graduation rate.  
28 d. A high school with less than a sixty percent (60%) four-year cohort  
29 graduation rate.  
30 (3) Principal. – The highest administrative official in a public school building  
31 with primary responsibility for the instructional leadership, talent  
32 management, and organizational development of the school.  
33 (4) School leader. – An individual employed in a school leadership role,  
34 including principal or assistant principal roles.  
35 (5) Student achievement. – At the whole school level, after three years of  
36 leading a school, consistent and methodologically sound measures of:



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- 1 a. Student academic achievement.
- 2 b. Aggregated individual student academic growth.
- 3 c. Additional outcomes, such as high school graduation rates, the
- 4 percentage of students taking advanced-level coursework, or the
- 5 percentage of students who obtain a career-related credential through
- 6 a national business certification exam.

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

11 **SECTION 1.(d)** Contract With a Nonprofit for Administration. – By September 1,  
12 2015, the Authority shall issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a private, nonprofit  
13 corporation to contract with the Authority for the administration of the program, including  
14 making recommendations to the Authority for the award of grants, as authorized by this act.  
15 The nonprofit corporation applying to the Authority shall meet at least the following  
16 requirements:

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

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

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

- 48 (1) The extent to which the entity has a demonstrated record of preparing school  
49 leaders who implement school leadership practices linked to increased  
50 student achievement.

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

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

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

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

- 45 (1) Recruiting and selecting, based on a rigorous evaluation of the competencies  
46 of the school leader candidates participating in the program and their  
47 potential and desire to become effective school leaders.  
48 (2) Operating a school leader preparation program by doing the following:  
49 a. Utilizing a research-based content and curriculum, including  
50 embedded participant assessments to evaluate candidates before  
51 program completion, that prepares candidates to do the following:

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

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

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

42 **SECTION 1.(j)** Reporting Requirements. – Recipients of grants under the program  
43 shall submit an annual report to the nonprofit corporation contracting with the Authority,  
44 beginning in the third year of the grant, with any information requested by the nonprofit  
45 corporation. Whenever practicable and within a reasonable amount of time, grant recipients  
46 shall also make all materials developed as part of the program and with grant funds publically  
47 available to contribute to the broader sharing of promising practices. Materials shall not include  
48 personally identifiable information regarding individuals involved or associated with the  
49 program, including, without limitation, applicants, participants, supervisors, evaluators, faculty,  
50 and staff, without their prior written consent. The nonprofit corporation shall work with

1 recipients and local school administrative units, as needed, to enable the collection, analysis,  
2 and evaluation of at least the following relevant data, within necessary privacy constraints:

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

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

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

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

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