FINAL

NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM Legislative Study Committee Report January 2001

Background

In the report of the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the 1993 General Assembly of North Carolina, "Leaders for Schools: The Preparation and Advancement of Educational Administrators," one of the ten recommendations was to "Fund opportunities for full-time graduate work for prospective school leaders." The response to the recommendation was the establishment of the Principal Fellows Program (PFP) in 1994 to ensure that the best, most highly qualified students are able to attend the Master of School Administration degree program on a full-time basis and complete the program in two years. The PFP provides a merit-based, competitive scholarship loan, which offers one year of full-time academic study, a yearlong, full-time internship in a public school and enrichment (professional development) activities throughout the two years of the program. The professional development activities assist and enhance the transition from administrative theory to practice for the Principal Fellows (PF).

The legislation mandating the Principal Fellows Program states in §116-74.42.(c) "The Principal Fellows Program shall provide a two-year scholarship loan in the amount of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per year, per recipient, to persons who may be eligible to be selected as school administrators in the public schools of the State by completing a full-time program in school administration in an approved program. Approved programs are those chosen by the Commission from among school administrator programs within the State. No more than 200 principal fellow scholarship loan awards shall be made in each year."

The original allocation of scholarship loans was 50 in 1993 and over the past six years has increased to 181 through additional allocations from the General Assembly (Attachment #1). The scholarship loans are divided between the first and second year students and each year the Principal Fellows Commission (PFC) has awarded all of the available scholarship loans. Attachment #2 shows the number of awards made and the number of participants in the Principal Fellows Program (PFP) since its establishment in 1994. The chart also shows the number of graduates each year since 1996 - the year of the first graduating class. The attrition rate of participants from the PFP/MSA programs has been very low - 2%, thus the retention and graduation rate of participants has been extremely high -98%. Over the seven years of the program, only nine of the 535 recipients have withdrawn from the MSA program before graduating. Principal Fellows are required by the PFP to maintain a 3.2 GPA throughout the two years they are in the MSA degree program, so not only is the program retaining participants through graduation, the PFs are performing at a high academic level throughout the two years.

The legislation mandating the Principal Fellows Program states in §116-74.42 (e) "The Commission . . . shall make an effort to identify and encourage women and minorities and others who may not otherwise consider a career in school administration to apply for the Principal Fellows Program."

Since 1994, the PFP has attracted a large number of female candidates averaging 75% female in each of the seven classes. The minority representation in the program (including African-American, Hispanics and Native American) has averaged 22% over the seven classes (Attachment #3). This exceeds the state's percentage of minority teachers (19%) which is the primary pool for candidates to the program. The Commission considers applicants from other than educational backgrounds/experience and each year has awarded some scholarship loans to individuals from areas such as business, the military, and social work. In addition, the age range of the Principal Fellow participants has been broad, from 24 years of age to 55 years of age with an average of 35 years of age over the seven classes (Attachment #4).

The legislation also states in §116-74.42 (d): "... Scholarship loans under the Principal Fellows Program shall be awarded only to applicants who... agree to work as school administrators in a North Carolina public school or at a school operated by the United States government in North Carolina upon completion of the two-year school administrator program supported by the loan."

There have been 343 graduates since 1996, of the graduates 326 have been employed as assistant principals or principals in NC. Of the 326 employed, seven (2%) have left administrative positions due to various reasons such as changing family situations, moving out of state, attending graduate school, entering into private business, etc., and are now in cash repayment per the terms of the legislation. The investment in the scholarship loans has resulted in 326 individuals who have earned the administrative credentials required in NC (Master of School Administration degree and principal licensure) and have served as administrators in the State of North Carolina. There are currently 183 Principal Fellows in the program scheduled for graduation in the next two years (2001/2002) who will be available for administrative positions statewide. Attachment #5, an executive summary of the PFP since 1994 provides statistics of the number of graduates hired and the map shows the school districts that have employed PF graduates. The promotion rate of PFs from assistant principals to principals may be another indicator of the quality of the training and preparation of PFs. Generally, the average number of years spent as an assistant principal before becoming a principal is 3-5 years; however among PFs, who have only been in the field for a maximum of 4 years, 65 (20%) have already been promoted to principalships. In fact, five PFs have been hired directly as principals upon the satisfactory completion of the MSA programs and conferring of their degrees.

Principal Fellows Program Study

A provision to the Appropriations Act of the 2000 session of the North Carolina General Assembly called for a study of the Principal Fellows Program. Specifically *Bill 1840*, Part X.Universities, Section 10.11(b) The Board of Governors of The University of North

Carolina shall, in collaboration with the State Board of Education, convene a representative committee to study the policies and legislation creating the Principal Fellows Program and to make recommendations that would increase the flexibility necessary for the Program to attract a broader age, racial and ethnic makeup of the applicant pool. The committee shall report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by January 15, 2001.

The PF Legislative study committee consisted of eleven (11) members representing the Board of Governors, the State Board of Education, principals, assistant principals, superintendents and schools of education. The committee was convened to conduct the study and formulate recommendations to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. The committee was co-chaired by H.D. Reaves, a member of the Board of Governors and Joseph F. Johnson, Dean of the School of Education, Fayetteville State University. The committee met during the months of September and October 2000 to receive extensive briefings on the background and current status of the PFP and to consider recommendations in accordance with its charge.

Recommendations

Four Recommendations are:

Recommendation #1: Increase the number of scholarship loans available up to the 200 called for in the original legislation (§116-74.42(c)) and consider additional scholarships based on the projections in the annual UNC-GA "Administrator Supply and Demand Study."

Increasing the number of scholarships up to the 200 called for in the original legislation will allow awards to be made to a larger number of candidates who meet the eligibility requirements of the program that will, in turn, increase the age, racial and ethnic range of the pool. For example, in the candidate pool in 2000 (for academic year 2000-2001), 28 applicants met the eligibility requirements, but could not be selected due to the limited number of scholarship loans available to award – 84. Funding additional scholarships over 200 would further allow the PFP to prepare administrators for the increasingly critical shortage in North Carolina.

Recommendation #2: Amend the legislation for the internship stipend to allow the Principal Fellows to receive the stipend over the two years they participate in the program – the recommendation is one third during year one and two-thirds during year two.

Amend the legislation for the stipend paid during the internship experience that would allow the PFs to receive the stipend over the two years they participate in the MSA program while continuing to be pay the stipend at the level of Step 0-4 of the state assistant principal salary schedule. It is recommended that the allocation be one third of the stipend during year one and two-thirds of the stipend during year two – it is important to note this would not increase the current PFP total funding. An example of reallocating would be as follows: the stipend, which is equal to the first step (0-4) on the state assistant principal salary schedule, is currently at the level

of \$31,800 paid in ten increments during the second year while the PF is interning, allocating one third during year one would be \$10,600 plus the \$20,000 scholarship loan for a total of \$30,600 and allocating \$21,200 during year two plus the \$20,000 scholarship loan for a total of \$41,200. Three surveys of prospective applicants (completed in 1996, 1998, and 2000) indicate the primary reason an individual does not apply for the PFP after receiving the application is that "it would create a financial hardship." (See Attachments # 6, #7, #8). The reallocation of the stipend would alleviate the financial hardship, especially during the first year of the program.

Recommendation #3: Cover the retirement costs for Principal Fellows with state funds for the two years they are on a leave of absence participating in the PFP.

Retirement costs for Principal Fellows should be paid by the state for the two years they are on a leave of absence and participating in the PFP. Currently, the PFs must pay the employer/employee costs to the retirement system to maintain their account while on the two-year leave of absence. If they are not able to pay into the system while on the leave of absence – financially many can not afford to do this – they have the options of "buying back" the two years after returning to service with an LEA or working two years longer to achieve a 30 year retirement with the state. Payment of this benefit would be analogous to the health insurance coverage PFs currently have under G.S. 135-40.2(a)(5). This would prove to be an incentive to applicants with more years of experience, i.e. higher age, to participate in the program.

Recommendation #4: Provide funding for the enrichment activities required in the program.

The enrichment activities are required by the PFP legislation and provide an enhanced training/preparation experience for the PFs. However, there have never been funds allocated for this purpose. The enrichment activities that have been provided by the state director for the past six years have been funded through grants from private foundations and through the generous services of numerous educational leaders and subject area experts from across North Carolina. The incentive to the candidates by fully funding these activities are the activities supplement and complement the MSA coursework and internship to provide a richer, broader and more intensified training experience which better prepares the PFs to assume the responsibilities of school based administration.

The committee is confident that the recommendations will serve to increase the flexibility of the PFP to attract a broader age, racial and ethnic make-up of the applicant pool.

Additional Observations and Suggestions

Although the following observations and suggestions are outside the scope of the legislative study, the study committee encourages the Principal Fellows Commission to consider them seriously in the spirit of continuous improvement of the Principal Fellows Program.

- The PF Commission should continue their annual review of the scholarship loan eligibility requirements for indicators of any undue impact on a particular gender, ethnic or age group.
- The PF Commission should request, through appropriate channels, additional staff for the PFP. Currently one director supported by one clerical position administers the statewide program.
- The PF Commission should request, through appropriate channels, a salary adjustment for the PFP director's salary based on scope of responsibility and for equity with other state directors of professional development programs.

NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

Scholarship Loan Funds Received

Budget Years	Number Received	Dollar Amount
1993-95	50	\$ 1,000,000
1995-96	50	\$ 1,000,000
1996-97	50	\$ 1,000,000
1997-98	12	\$ 240,000
1998-99	<u>19</u> 181	\$ 380,000 \$ 3,620,000
1999-2000	0	\$ 0

NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

ENROLLMENT/GRADUATION/EMPLOYMENT RATES

Year	Enrolled*	Graduated	Employed
1994-1995	39		
1995-1996	107	38	36 (95%)
1996-1997	150	67	64 (96%)**
1997-1998	160	76	72 (95%)
1998-1999	162	83	80 (96%)
1999-2000	179	79	74 (94%)
2000-2001	183	99 (projected)	

^{*}Total includes first and second year students.

11/3/00

^{**}One PF from Class 2 is deceased.

NC Principal Fellows Program Statistical Profile 1994-2000

	White	<u>Black</u>	American Indian	<u>Hispanic</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Minority</u> <u>Total/Percentage</u>
Class 1 1994-95	32	4	1	1	0	6 / 16%
(N=38)						
Class 2 1995-96	58	7	1	2	0	10 / 15%
(N=68)						
Class 3 1996-97	55	18	1	1	1	21 / 28%
(N=76)						
Class 4 1997-98	65	17	0	1	0	18 / 22%
(N=83)						
Class 5 1998-99	64	13	1	0	1	15 / 19%
(N=79)						
Class 6 1999-00	65	31	2	1	1	35 / 35%
(N=100)			E.			
Class 7 2000-01	73	9	0	1	1	11 / 13%
(N=84)						
TOTALS	411	99	6	7	4	116 / 22%
(N=528)						

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NC Principal Fellows Program Recipient Age Profile 1994-2000

25	AGE RANGE	AVERAGE AGE
Class 1	25 – 49	36
(N=38)		
	- a	
Class 2	25 - 52	36
(N=68)		
Class 3	24 – 53	34
(N=76)	2. 20	
Class 4	25 – 53	34
(N=83)	23 – 33	34
Class 5	25 – 51	34
(N=79)		
Class 6	26 – 55	34
(N=100)		
Class 7	26 – 53	35
(N=84)	20 00	33
TOTALS	24 55	25
(N=528)	24 – 55	35

NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM 1994 - 2000

A scholarship loan program which is merit-based and funded by the North Carolina General Assembly, the NC Principal Fellows Program assists interested individuals to prepare for a career in school administration, e.g. assistant principal or principal. Each scholarship loan provides funding for up to two years in the amount of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per year to support students who enroll in and complete the full-time, two-year Master of School Administration (MSA) degree at one of the participating institutions of the University of North Carolina. Recipients of the scholarship loan must be willing to practice at an approved site in NC as a full-time school administrator for four years or repay the scholarship loan in cash.

Program Components

One year of academic work: Fellows spend the first year of the program completing comprehensive academic requirements at the university.

A yearlong, full-time internship: During the second year of the program Fellows serve under a master principal completing a full-time internship in a public school. During the internship the Principal Fellow receives a stipend through an appropriation from the NC Department of Public Instruction.

Enrichment Activities: Throughout the two years Fellows participate in professional development activities provided by the director of the PFP and the MSA campuses.

Employment as a school-based administrator: Upon graduation from the MSA program, Fellows seek employment as administrators in NC public schools and must serve for a minimum of four years as repayment of the PFP scholarship loan or pay back in cash.

The Record

Established in 1994, the NC Principal Fellows Commission has awarded scholarship loans to seven classes of Principal Fellows. Five classes of Fellows have graduated from the MSA programs at the participating institutions of the University of North Carolina - ASU, ECU, FSU, NCSU, UNC-C, UNC-CH, UNC-G, UNC-W and WCU. There has been statewide representation in the PFP and graduates have been employed by school districts across the state.

535 Fellow recipients	84 School districts represented in the PFP
343 Fellow graduates	85 School districts have employed Principal Fellows as administrators
327 Fellows employed as administrators	183 Fellows are currently in the program

NC Principal Fellows Employment by District Stokes

Attachment #6a NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

SURVEY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS FOR 1996-97

During the 1995-96 school year, you requested and were mailed an application for the NC Principal Fellows Program scholarship loan for 1996-97. We did not receive a completed application back from you and are interested in learning the reason you chose not to apply for the scholarship loan. We are continually striving to improve our program and application process and hope responses to this survey will assist us in this endeavor.

The demographic information requested below will be used for analytical purposes only. Responses will be reported in aggregate form; no person's responses will be individually identified.

Gender (check one)	Race (check one)	
Male Female	African American Asian or Pacific Islander	White Hispanic American Indian
Number of years you have	worked in schools	Age
County of residence		
Please check all reasons, an	nd the primary reason, which may have	contributed to your decision not to apply:
All Primary (Check all (Check that apply) only one)	
5 6 7 8	deadline. I was not at a point in my life, earning a master's degree. It would have created a finance take a leave of absence from my positi I could not commit to the four North Carolina Personal circumstances. eason(s) why you chose not to apply to	ion criteria. criterion. in time to complete the application by the /career where I felt I could spend two years cial hardship to accept the scholarship and on. (4) years service repayment requirement in

Your response will be treated in confidence, and we appreciate your assistance in returning this survey by June 28, 1996.

*

SUMMARY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS SURVEY 1996

118 surveys mailed (40% of applications requested and not returned)48 responses received back (41% response rate)

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Male - 22%

Avg. number years of Experience - 8

Female - 77%

Average age - 35

White - 58%

African American - 39%

County of Residence - responses from 28 counties

Hispanic - 2%

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES - PRIMARY REASON

Reason 1	<u>All</u> 2 (4.9%)	African American 0	Others 2 (7.7%)
Reason 2	9 (22.0%)	3 (20%)	6 (23.1%)
Reason 3	2 (4.9%)	0	2 (7.7%)
Reason 4	2 (4.9%)	1 (6.66%)	1 (3.8%)
Reason 5	2 (4.9%)	0	2 (7.7%)
Reason 6	18 (43.9%)	8 (53.33%)	10 (38.5%)
Reason 7	1 (2.4%)	1 (6.66%)	0
Reason 8	5 (12.2%)	2 (13.33%)	3 (11.5%)

Other reasons listed:

Family responsibilities		
PFP not understood	7	
PFP sites not in good location	2	
Will be a future applicant	6	

8/96

Attachment #7a NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

SURVEY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS FOR 1998-99

During the 1997-98 school year you requested and were mailed an application for the NC Principal Fellows Program scholarship loan for 1998-99. We did not receive a completed application back from you and are interested in learning the reason you chose not to apply for the scholarship loan. We are continually striving to improve our program and application process and hope responses to this survey will assist us in this endeavor.

The demographic information requested below will be used for analytical purposes only. Responses will be reported in aggregate form; no person's responses will be individually identified.

Gender (check one)	Race (check one)	
Male Female	African American Asian or Pacific Islander	White Hispanic American Indian
Number of years you	u have worked in schools	Age
County of residence		
	sons, and the primary reason, which may hav	ve contributed to your decision not to apply:
(Check all (C	rimary Check nly one)	
1 2 3 4	The application took too lonI did not meet all of the seleI did not meet the 3.2 GPA of the program deadline.	ction criteria.
5 6	earning a master's degree.	fe/career where I felt I could spend two years ncial hardship to accept the scholarship and
7 8	take a leave of absence fromI could not commit to the fo North CarolinaPersonal circumstances.	n my position. our (4) years service repayment requirement in
	other reason(s) you chose not to apply to the	e Principal Fellows Program:
S		

Your response will be treated in confidence; we appreciate your assistance in returning this survey by June, 1998.

SUMMARY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS SURVEY 1998

531 surveys mailed (applications requested and not returned) **122** completed responses received (23% response rate)

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Male – 30% Female – 70%

White - 68% African-American - 30% Hispanic - 1% American Indian - 2%

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES - PRIMARY REASON*

Reason 1: 4 (3%)

Reason 2: 14 (12%)

Reason 3: 15 (13%)

Reason 4: 11 (9%)

Reason 5: 14 (12%)

Reason 6: 38 (32%)

Reason 7: 8 (7%)

Reason 8: 12 (10%)

*117 indicated primary reason for not applying

7/1998

NC PRINCIPAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

SURVEY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS FOR 2000-2001

During the 1999-2000 school year you requested and received an application for the NC Principal Fellows Program scholarship loan for 2000-2001. We did not receive a completed application back from you and are interested in learning the reason you chose not to apply for the scholarship loan. We are continually striving to improve our program and application process and hope responses to this survey will assist us in this endeavor.

The demographic information requested below will be used for analytical purposes only. Responses will be reported in aggregate form; no person's responses will be individually identified.

Gender ((check one)	Race (check one)	
Ma	ale male	African American Asian or Pacific Islander	White Hispanic American Indian
Number	of years you ha	ve worked in schools	Age
County	of residence		
Please c	heck all reasons	, and the primary reason, which may h	ave contributed to your decision not to apply:
	All (Check all that apply)	Primary (Check only one)	
1. 2. 3. 4.		The application took too legislation. I did not meet all of the segment of the programment of the programment of the programment.	lection criteria.
5.	<u></u>)		life/career where I felt I could spend two years
6.		take a leave of absence from my po	
7.	2	I could not commit to the North Carolina	four (4) years service repayment requirement in
8.		I decided to attend a part-	ime MSA program.
9.	-	Personal circumstances.	
Please d	escribe any othe	er reason(s) you chose not to apply to t	he Principal Fellows Program:

Your response will be treated in confidence; we appreciate your assistance in returning this survey by July, 2000. It can be returned to us by simply folding so that the address and postage franking are on the outside fold, sealing with tape and mailing.

SUMMARY OF PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS SURVEY 2000

462 surveys mailed (applications requested and not returned) **105** responses received (23% response rate)

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Male – 24% Female – 75%

White – 66% African-American – 32% Other (not a U.S. citizen) – 1%

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES - PRIMARY REASON

	All	African-American	Others
Reason 1:	1 (1%)	0	1 (1%)
Reason 2:	7 (7%)	0	7 (10%)
Reason 3:	11 (10%)	3 (9%)	8 (11%)
Reason 4:	10 (10%)	5 (15%)	5 (7%)
Reason 5:	14 (13%)	2 (6%)	12 (17%)
Reason 6:	37 (35%)	15 (45%)	22 (31%)
Reason 7:	6 (6%)	1 (3%)	5 (7%)
Reason 8:	3 (3%)	1 (3%)	2 (3%)
Reason 9:	16 (15%)	6 (18%)	10 (14%)

NC Principal Fellows Program Legislative Study Committee

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