

TEACHFORAMERICA

North Carolina · First Quarter Legislative Report

September 30, 2013

“One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.”

--Vision of Teach For America

For more than 20 years, Teach For America has partnered with North Carolina school districts in pursuit of educational excellence. Enabled by the state's increased investment, Teach For America has committed to increasing the number of teachers recruited to the state, opening a region in the Piedmont Triad, expanding placement across Northeastern and Southeastern North Carolina, increasing the number of North Carolinians choosing to teach in North Carolina via the North Carolina Teacher Corps, and increasing the number of corps members retained in North Carolina.

We are pleased to report that, since the state's appropriation, Mathematica Policy Research has completed a major study finding that secondary math teachers from Teach For America provide test score gains equal to an additional 2.6 months of school when compared with new and veteran teachers.¹ This study aligns with three successive studies by The Carolina Institute for Public Policy finding that Teach For America is North Carolina's most effective source of early career teachers based on student achievement data. We are also proud to report that in 2013 the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill became the 6th largest producer of corps members for Teach For America.

We intend to build upon this success in the upcoming year with robust, strategic and intentional recruitment efforts specifically aimed at recruiting North Carolinians to teach and stay in state. We offer this interim report as an update on our progress made from June 1, 2013 through August 31, 2013.

Increase Number of Teachers Provided to North Carolina

We are on pace to exceed our goal of recruiting, training, and placing 300 teachers for the 2014-2015 school year. These teachers will impact more than 18,000 students across the state. This will be the largest and most diverse group of teachers we have ever recruited for the state. Based on last year's data, we project that two of five of our incoming teachers will be teachers of color and a similar number will have come from low income families. A quarter of our incoming teachers will have been the first in their families to attend college.

We are also on pace to reach our goal of generating over 1,500 applicants from North Carolina natives or graduates. We have received 527 applications from North Carolinians to date.

Open the Piedmont Triad Region

We are on pace to open the Piedmont Triad Region for the 2014-2015 school year. Our progress-to-date includes:

- **Securing Private Funding:** We have used the state's commitment to Teach For America to secure a verbal commitment for private funding of \$3M to \$5M over the next 3 years. This agreement will be finalized by November 2013 and this commitment will secure the private fundraising needed for the initial 3 years of operations in the Piedmont Triad region.
- **Initiating District Partnership:** We are in discussions with the Guilford County School District to provide up to 50 teachers to the Piedmont Triad region for the 2014-2015 school year.
- **Recruiting Teachers:** We have added the North Carolina Piedmont Triad to our list of placement sites and begun recruiting applicants for the region.

¹ Clark, Melissa A., Hanley S. Chiang, Tim Silva, Sheena McConnell, Kathy Sonnenfeld, and Anastasia Erbe. "Teach For America/Teaching Fellows and Effective Teaching in Secondary Math." *Mathematica Policy Research* (2013)

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- **Hiring an Executive Director:** We have formalized the job description and begun sourcing and cultivating a diverse applicant pool to fill this position. We are working with our national human assets team to contact alumni across the nation with ties to North Carolina. We are also collaborating with local stakeholders in this search process to ensure we find the best prospective candidate.

Expand Placement Across Northeastern and Southeastern North Carolina

We have exceeded our goal of providing 175 additional teachers for schools in Northeastern and Southeastern North Carolina for the 2013-2014 school year. We currently have 180 teachers teaching in these areas.

To accomplish this we are:

- **Securing Private Funding:** We have secured commitments for an additional \$4.6 million in private funding over the next three years from donors in Southeastern North Carolina.
- **Building Partnerships:** We successfully built partnerships with the following Southeastern North Carolina public school districts: Clinton City Schools, Duplin County Schools, Lenoir County Schools, and Sampson County Schools. These districts requested 30 teachers for the 2013-2014 school year, which falls short of our goal of providing 50 teachers for the 2013-2014 school year. We are confident that as we build new partnerships and deepen existing relationships, the number of teachers we provide to this area will increase.
- **Supporting Teachers:** We are providing coaching, mentoring, and professional development in 1-on-1, small cohort, and large group settings to our 285 first and second-year teachers working in Eastern North Carolina. This ongoing support is critical to the effectiveness our teachers have demonstrated in the state.

Strengthen the North Carolina Teacher Corps

Teach For America has committed to partnering with the state to inspire more North Carolinians to teach and lead as educators in our state. While we know great teachers exist across the nation, we believe that teachers with personal ties to North Carolina can make a unique contribution to our state, bringing a special sense of urgency and commitment to educating North Carolina's children.

In two years' time, the North Carolina Teacher Corps recruited a total of 338 applicants. They accepted 44% of all applicants, and 92 teachers were ultimately hired by North Carolina schools.

Teach For America has committed to strengthening the North Carolina Teacher Corps by recruiting at least 1,500 applicants this year. Approximately 10% these applicants will demonstrate the personal and professional leadership necessary to be admitted to Teach For America and the North Carolina Teacher Corps. We will inspire a minimum of 100 teachers to join our initial cohort of the re-launched North Carolina Teacher Corps.

Over the past three months, we have begun an aggressive recruitment campaign and started to build the primary structures needed to re-launch the North Carolina Teacher Corps. To date we have:

- **Launched a Cross-team Task Force:** We have formed a task force of regional and national leaders jointly responsible for the successful re-launch of the North Carolina Teacher Corps. The task force is led by Tim Hurley, Teach For America – Charlotte, Executive Director and Senior Vice President at Teach For America.

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- **Established Implementation Milestones:** The task force met in Durham on August 23, 2013 to develop a plan for the re-launch effort. The team set a vision for the North Carolina Teacher Corps, established recruitment benchmarks and goals, and defined marketing and outreach strategies. Since then the task force has engaged in bi-weekly conference calls to monitor our re-launch progress.
- **Engaged a Highly-skilled Task Force:** Members of this Task Force include: Robyn Fehrman, Executive Director-Eastern North Carolina; Rebecca Knicely, Vice President-Recruitment; Sean Waldheim, Vice President-Admissions; Becky O'Neil, Managing Director-Regional Communications; Emily Leahy, Director-Marketing; and Kacie Cope, Manager-Strategy and External Affairs.
- **Launched the "North Carolina: Teach Back Home" Campaign.** We are partnering with our regional and national recruitment teams to launch this campaign. The campaign will reach over 45,000 applicants across the nation.
- **Promoted Teach For America's Veteran Initiative in North Carolina:** The "You Served For America, Now Teach For America" initiative aims to bring top military professionals to our nation's highest-need schools by partnering with branches of the military and veterans' organizations. We will use this recruitment and cultivation effort to deepen North Carolina's teacher candidate pool.

Increase the Number of Corps Members Retained in North Carolina

Currently there are 955 Teach For America alumni in North Carolina, 68% of whom are working in education. We are committed to increasing the number of Teach For America alumni working in education in North Carolina for the duration of their careers. To date we have:

- **Launched the "Teach Beyond Two" and "Make It Home" Campaigns:** The "Teach Beyond Two" campaign expands and strengthens our efforts to encourage and provide support for corps members to continue their work in the classroom beyond their initial two year commitment. The "Make It Home" campaign aims to ensure that young education leaders see North Carolina as a place to build their career – the place to put down roots if they want to make an impact on the towns and communities they love.
- **Initiated Teacher Retention Pilot:** Our Charlotte region won a privately funded innovation grant to pilot a teacher retention initiative with the goal incentivizing and inspiring corps members to opt into a four year teaching commitment. This private funding enabled us to hire a Director of Innovation & Corps Member Retention who will be responsible for the design and implementation of this program. We will share learnings from this pilot across the state to inform our Teach Beyond Two and Make It Home campaigns.

We are grateful for the state's investment and take our responsibilities to the students of North Carolina and the development of great teachers seriously. It is our pleasure to serve the communities of North Carolina with a spirit of urgency and diligence. We look forward to providing you with our second quarter update in December 2013.

