



NC Education Human Capital Roundtable

NC Pathways to
Excellence for
Teaching Professionals

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The Solution

The NC Education Human Capital Roundtable (Roundtable), a multi-sector coalition of North Carolina education leaders, has met since 2018 to evaluate how to address the teacher shortage in North Carolina and how to create pathways to excellence for NC teaching professionals.

North Carolina should bolster its ability to attract, develop and reward the best educators by implementing clear, sequential pathways for NC teaching professionals to enter and progress in the profession. North Carolina needs to reimagine teachers' licensure and professional career paths in a way that:

-  **INVITES** a more diverse population into the profession
-  **OFFERS** individual advancement and growth opportunities
-  **ENCOURAGES** the best teachers to lead from the classroom
-  **PROVIDES** fair compensation that grows as teachers expand their professional impact

The Problem

North Carolina is facing a teacher shortage that threatens students' access to a quality education.

Major Causes

Complex licensing processes and a lack of professional advancement opportunities.

How did we get here?

As a result of short-term fixes, North Carolina's current teacher licensure process has become overly complex and offers a combination of options with no clarity as to how they all work together. In addition, the ability to advance as a teacher is absent, driving many to leave the classroom or profession altogether. These issues create an unnecessary barrier to teachers entering and staying in the profession.

Your Input is Needed!

Teachers are the difference-makers for students' success. The single best thing the state can do to improve education in North Carolina is to focus on keeping great teachers in the classroom and encouraging more to enter the profession.

The Roundtable has outlined its vision to the State Board of Education and legislative leaders. Now, your input is needed. North Carolinians must work together on a solution that fairly evaluates and supports existing teachers, and increases the quality, quantity and diversity of new teacher candidates.

Let's all act now to change this trajectory, fill critical vacancies with highly effective teachers and attract teaching professionals of the future to North Carolina.

North Carolina Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals:

The North Carolina Education Human Capital Roundtable's Vision for Transforming the Teaching Profession

How would a new licensure system based on the Roundtable's vision differ from our current state system?

Current System Limitations	Vision for a New System	Roundtable Goals
Current system is a complicated web that is difficult to navigate.	Proposed system is more of a passageway with built in options to accommodate diverse candidate needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Set a high but right bar for the profession- Clarify and simplify the current process and regulation- Provide a clear route for candidates to follow from any preparation pathway- Aid recruitment and increase diversity
Current system has 8 nonlinear license types.	Proposed system has a learning permit, four license types and two advanced credentials that follow each other directly and sensibly providing pathways for advancement with built in support and rewards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Set a new policy that prevents future "band-aid" license types- Build in a menu of options- Provide paths for advancement to help retain effective teachers
Current system is built on inputs.	Proposed system is focused on outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- End the practice of licensing based on tests alone that do not uniformly indicate successful performance- Link together the licensure reform vision with EPP accountability and teacher pathways efforts
Current system compensates teachers based on tenure and education level	Proposed system compensates teachers for mastering knowledge and skills, instructional effectiveness, and growth in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Compensate teachers based on competency and quality of instruction- Incentivize growth in a teacher's practice and increased responsibilities that positively grow more students and colleagues

We Can All Win with The Roundtable's Vision

Educators Win

- This idea creates a teacher career pathway similar to other professions.
- Teachers will be able to move up in their careers further and faster—reaching advanced roles and higher salaries faster than ever.
- Teachers will have more choice and 'be in the driver seat.'
- This idea restores state-funded professional development dollars but in an innovative, more personalized way.
- This idea provides intensive, regular early professional development through teacher mentorship.

Teacher Candidates and other College Students Win

- Flexible options will be available for future teachers' careers. The teacher candidate is in the driver's seat!
- On ramps and off ramps are provided at multiple spots, so those interested in teaching can join or leave the profession at any time in their career.
- This idea provides more cost-effective path into the career with a salary for practicing apprentice teachers, higher entry salaries, and reduced college costs for 2+2 pathway students.
- On ramps are provided at multiple spots, so those interested in teaching can join despite their major.

Students and Families Win

- With licensure tied to learning outcomes, students will have access to greater number of effective teachers.
- Teacher quantity, quality, diversity—all three of these aspects are important in this idea and will lead to a better education and experience for students.
- Students and families will have clarity on how a teacher is licensed and more public trust in the license meaning effectiveness.
- This idea allows for more diverse candidates to pursue teaching due to removal of barriers and more pathways into the teaching profession, meaning students will be more likely to see a teacher who reflects themselves.

Educator Preparation Programs (Colleges and Universities) Win

- In this idea, candidates completing a traditional preparation program can make a higher starting salary as a higher licensed educator.
- Allows EPPs to recruit using a different perspective than in the past—using the career continuum as a recruitment strategy.
- Creates conditions for generational innovation—opportunity to rethink partnerships, build innovative programs, opportunity for big innovation (more dollars, candidates, and recognition).
- This idea allows for more diverse candidates to pursue teaching due to removal of barriers and more pathways into the teaching profession.

Community Colleges Win

- This idea fosters outreach opportunities to more candidates including associate degree recipients.
- By providing these opportunities, this idea reduces education costs and increases return on investment.
- This idea allows for more diverse candidates to pursue teaching due to removal of barriers and more pathways into the teaching profession.

Alternative Prep Providers Win

- On ramps are provided at multiple spots, so those interested in teaching can join the profession at any time in their career.
- Opportunities for further innovation by preparation providers is key in this model.

North Carolina Wins!

- The public will be assured that licensed teachers are demonstrating increased mastery in skills, knowledge, and instructional capabilities more than ever before.
- This idea may entice early career educators and those interested in making a career switch to our state because this model is the first like it in the nation.
- This idea clears the way for a better, more diverse teacher workforce—and restores the respect the profession deserves.
- This is an investment in our teachers and our students—but also an investment for North Carolina’s workforce and economy as a whole—as teaching is the profession that makes all other professions possible.

Additional Details on the Roundtable’s Vision

Paid Apprenticeship Idea —

To attract more diverse candidates into the teaching profession, we must recruit early, lower the cost of a teaching degree, and provide quality hands-on learning experiences. NC has already taken important steps toward lowering the cost of a teaching degree through the NCCCS’ new teaching associate degrees and bachelor’s degrees.

Licensing a year-long or multi-year paid student teaching role for any student with at least an associate degree can entice young, diverse professionals into the field. As a paid position, apprentices earn a wage while getting a bachelor’s degree, which is vital for many minorities and first-generation college students.

Having multiple teacher’s assistants is integral to the collective leadership structure tested in the Advanced Teaching Roles Pilot. This license would standardize the ability for teacher candidates to fill these positions.

Goals	Vision	Rationale
Attract more, diverse teacher pipeline	Create Learning Permit License	Lower the cost of a teaching degree (2+2 pathway)
Recruit early	- Co-teach for 2-3 years while obtaining bachelor’s degree	Wages provided while in school
Try on the profession	- Traditional and non-traditional students can apply	Greatly increase hands-on learning experiences
	- Paid position - more than a teacher assistant, less than a licensed teacher	Connects with collective leadership models

Content and Pedagogical Options —

Research has not consistently shown that PRAXIS tests correlate with highly effective teaching, yet early research does show some correlation between passing edTPA or PPAT and teacher effectiveness. Furthermore, these assessments regularly act as unintended barriers to minority

and low-income teacher candidates. More meaningful alternatives to these assessments of content and pedagogical knowledge are needed.

The Roundtable is interested in exploring further the creation of competency-based micro-credentials for content and pedagogical knowledge and are open to other quality mechanisms or processes. It is important for the micro-credentials used for demonstration of content, pedagogy (and adult leadership skills and competencies) be meaningful and of high-quality. NC DPI will need to establish a process to review and approve these micro-credentials to be sure they are appropriate for the specified use and are of value.

Yet, it is important to note there is [new research out of UNC Charlotte](#) that shows correlation between a teacher having passed the Foundation of Reading test and teacher effectiveness. The Roundtable believes this test, as well as the Foundations of Math or Math Content Knowledge Test should be required for elementary educators.

Goals	Vision	Rationale
Provide agency, options to teachers to prove competency	Menu of Options: 1. Assessments	PRAXIS tests are barriers to diverse workforce and do not correlate to effective teaching
Allow for more meaningful alternatives that better correlate to effective teaching	2. Explore creating competency-based micro-credentials for content and pedagogical knowledge 3. Use demonstrated effectiveness in lieu of testing	edTPA/PPAT and Foundations of Reading and Math have some correlation

What other options could be added?

Professional Advancement Account Idea —

Most high-performing countries include professional learning quality and accountability as one of the measures to gauge a teacher’s effectiveness, as well as a school’s effectiveness. Our idea is to create an incentive and a culture for early career teachers to get help in learning and growing in their practice as educators, tailored to their own needs, based on mentor and principal feedback. This also limits out of cost expenses to teachers. This funding could be allocated to teachers, through the district, and used as a “savings account” to draw down on during the time the teacher holds License 1, 2, or 3. Awards could be a set amount per license, not per year.

Goals	Vision	Rationale
Enable early-career teachers to obtain valuable, individualized learning experiences	Create a Professional Advancement Account for each entry-level license - Allocated per teacher, held by district for oversight	Removes out of pocket costs to teachers for PD
Create a culture encouraging growth and advancement in teaching	- Unused funds revert back to state - NC DPI could create “consumer report” of quality professional learning	Creates a system of transparency as to what PD is of quality
		Gives some autonomy to teachers and leaders re: professional learning

What other creative ways can we help to ensure teachers’ get quality professional growth supports?

Vision for Outputs-based Measures —

The Roundtable advocates for a balanced, multiple measures approach to measuring the effectiveness of teachers.

Goals	Vision	Rationale
Focus professional licensure on outputs like instructional effectiveness and student learning growth	Require teachers to meet a minimum level of effectiveness to obtain and renew a professional teaching license (License 4).	Ensure the professional workforce is of quality
Create a balanced system of multiple useful measures to determine effectiveness	Establish multiple (3+) measures for this purpose.	Use measures that correlate to effectiveness
		Reward professional expertise with higher salary
		Licensure process becomes more student-focused

What should the multiple measures be?

Vision for a New Professional Salary Structure —

The current state salary structure uses input measures only, paying teachers for degrees and years of service. Teachers can only make more money through advanced degrees, National Board Certification, or teaching longer. All these inputs are disputed in [multiple research studies](#) as having little to no correlation with helping students learn more. The Roundtable steadfastly supports a new compensation structured tied to a teachers' skills, abilities, and responsibilities.

Goals	Vision	Rationale
Incentivize growth in practice	Adjust the current minimum salary schedule to the new licensure system	Allows effective teachers to advance in licensure and compensation at a faster rate
Create career advancement for teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reward skills acquisition - Reward proof of competency and effectiveness - Reward leading from the classroom 	Supports a continuous improvement model for teachers
Learn from failed pay-for-performance models		Retains effective classroom teachers
Base pay on competencies and outcomes, over input measures		