

The Public School Forum's Friday Report

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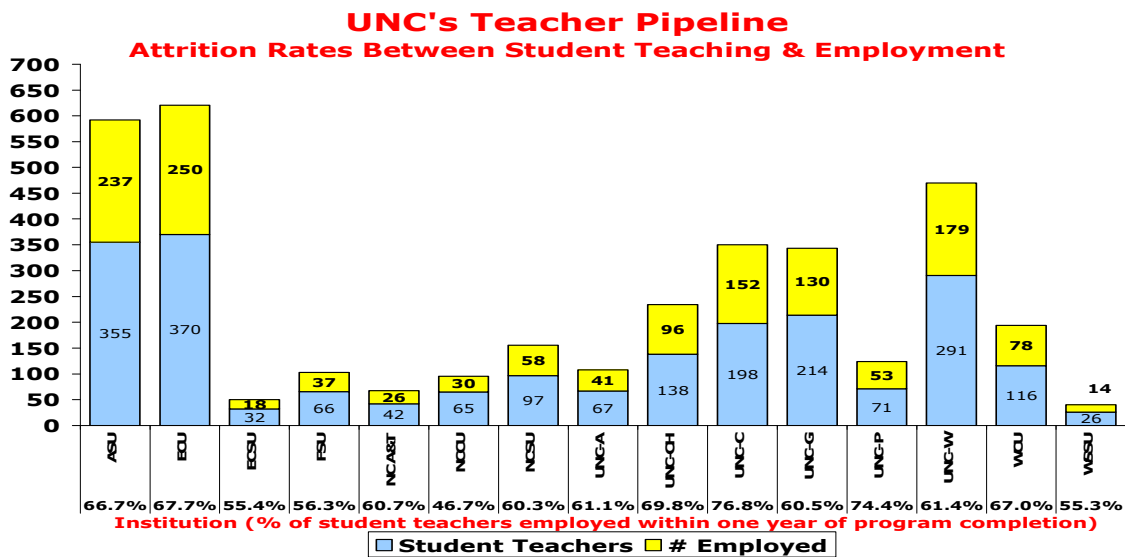
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North Carolina's Teacher Supply: A Growing Problem

According to the Census Bureau, North Carolina has one of the nation's fastest growing school-age populations in the nation. The state has been adding 22,000 students annually for a decade, and the demand for new teachers rises with the enrollment growth. Approximately 11,000 new teachers will be needed annually to keep up with enrollment growth and teacher turnover. The state is considering various proposals and strategies to reduce the turnover rate and to increase the supply of new teachers. The UNC system has a proposal to increase its pipeline of new teachers and alternative license completers by 64 percent, or 5,900 teachers, by 2009-10. UNC projects to increase the number of individuals in traditional teacher education programs by 1,397 by 2009-10, while increasing the number of individuals who complete lateral entry and licensure-only programs by 2,198.

An analysis of information from the 2003-04 Institute of Higher Education (IHE) Report shows a gap between students who complete teacher education programs and those who are employed within one year of program completion (see chart below). The IHE Report shows there were 2,313 students who completed student teaching in 2002-03, 93 percent of those students were licensed, and 70 percent of those students were employed one year later. The attrition rate of student teachers between completing their program and employment is one-third (34.9 percent) or 749 potential teachers. Even with all of the UNC system's projections, the state will continue to confront a severe teacher shortage (see table below).



Note: The number employed is a percentage of the number of student teachers and a percentage of graduates who are licensed to teach. The 15 campuses began with 2,148 student teachers and within one year of program completion only 1,399 were licensed and employed. Source: based upon data from Table X of the 2003-04 Institute of Higher Education Report

Teacher Shortage Continues

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
UNC Projections of Traditional Graduates	2,654	2,957	3,262	3,507	3,710
UNC Alternative Entry Completers (lateral entry & licensure-only)*	1,706	1,842	1,953	2,070	2,198
TOTAL PROJECTION	4,360	4,799	5,215	5,577	5,908
Annual Need for New Teachers	11,164	11,169	10,984	11,063	11,144
Deficit	(6,804)	(6,370)	(5,769)	(5,486)	(5,236)

* UNC estimates a 25% completers' rate each year. This figure also includes lateral entry teachers already employed by school systems

Source: UNC, *Enrollment Targets for UNC Teacher Education*

The figures listed above in the “UNC Projections of Traditional Graduates” assume a 100 percent completion rate, but based upon data from the 2003-04 Institute of Higher Education Report, only 93 percent of student teachers were licensed and of that figure, only 70 percent were employed within one year after completing the program.

In an attempt to help address the demands for more teachers, Representative Joe Tolson has introduced legislation that would allow community colleges to provide coursework to prepare lateral entry teaching candidates. The bill would authorize the State Board of Community Colleges to develop coursework necessary for a lateral entry program. The bill had faced stiff opposition from public and private colleges and universities, but a series of changes has apparently satisfied their concerns.

Supply (cont'd)

The first version of the legislation had authorized that the “State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Community Colleges, shall develop and implement policies permitting individuals with at least a bachelors degree to complete at a community college all or part of the coursework necessary for lateral entry into the teaching profession.” This week the House Education committee voted in favor of a committee substitute of the previous version which reads:

“The State Board of Community may provide a program of study for lateral entry teachers to complete coursework necessary to earn a teaching certificate. To this end, the State Board of Education, in consultation with the State Board of Community Colleges, shall establish a competency-based program of study for lateral entry teachers...This program must meet standards set by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Community Colleges and the State Board of Education shall jointly identify the community college courses and the teacher education program courses that are necessary and appropriate for inclusion in the community college program of study for lateral entry teachers. To the extent possible, any courses that must be completed through an approved teacher education program shall be taught on a community college campus or shall be available through distance learning.”

For more information about the IHE Report, go to <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ihe/2004/index.html> and, information about UNC’ proposal can be found at Forum’s website (www.ncforum.org), and House Bill 563 can be found at www.ncga.state.nc.us.

State News . . .

New Report Warns of Structural Budget Problems

“Many states risk chronic gaps between revenues and necessary expenditures in coming years because of structural weaknesses in their tax systems,” warns the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), a Washington, DC-based organization focused on state and federal fiscal policy. Thirty-nine states, including North Carolina, are at a significant or high risk of structural deficits because of weaknesses in their tax system, according to *Faulty Foundations: State Structural Budget Problems and How to Fix The*. This new study observes that states face these problems independent of the typical budget shortfalls due to economic conditions, but the main culprit is the fact that “state revenues face a more enduring problem often called a *structural deficit*, or the chronic inability of state revenues to grow in tandem with economic growth and the cost of government. States have structural deficits largely because they have failed to modernize their revenue systems to reflect far-reaching changes in the economy.”

Budget (cont'd)

CBPP identifies eight factors that contribute to structural deficits, including the impact of the shift in the nation's economy from goods to services, diminishing corporate taxes, increase of interstate sales, aging of the population, changes in state income taxes, failure of states to maintain proper mix of taxes, supermajority requirements to change taxes, and federal policies that negatively effect states. An area of tax policy highlighted in the report is the changes in the sales tax reliability. The report observes that states continue to raise their sales tax rates to generate adequate revenue from a declining tax base: "States' failure to tax services, as well as their propensity to create other types of sales tax exemptions, is likely the biggest reason why sales tax revenues have not kept pace with economic growth. The sale tax base--that is, the amount of goods and services that are subject to tax each year--has fallen... This reduction has occurred even though total personal consumption expenditures have risen as a share of personal income from 77 percent in 1979 to 81 percent in 2001." Nine states have had sales tax base decline by more the 15 percentage points during this time, including North Carolina's 21.8 percentage point drop.

In addition to their main report, CBPP produced a one-page analysis of each state's structural weaknesses. The Center identifies the "likelihood" of each state confronting a structural deficit. Ten factors are assessed and states were rated as having a "low risk" (no state earned this distinction), "moderate risk", "significant risk", or "high risk." North Carolina one of 21 states facing a significant risk, if changes are not instituted:

- "In North Carolina, the percent of sales subject to sales tax declined by 21.8 percentage points from 1990-2003, exceeding the US median decline of 8.0 percentage points. Moreover, North Carolina's sales tax covers less household services than the average state.
- In North Carolina, corporate income taxes as a share of total taxes declined by 6.4 percentage points from 1989-2002, surpassing the US average decline of 4.1 percentage points
- North Carolina faces spending pressures from: the number of non-elderly disabled people, the number of students with special needs, and the number of high school graduates potentially entering college. Between 1994 and 2000, North Carolina reduced its personal income tax and, to a lesser extent, the sales tax by exempting food and its corporate income tax.
- Between 2001 and 2004, North Carolina increased its sales tax and, to a lesser extent, its personal and corporate income tax. This is problematic since income taxes provide stronger growth over the long term than sales and excise taxes.
- North Carolina has a statutory spending limit that restricts expenditures to 7% of personal income.
- Two other national studies (Hovey 1998 and Boyd 2002) found that North Carolina has a structural gap."

For a copy of the report and state analysis, go to www.cbpp.org

New Study Says Graduation Rate in South at Crisis Level

A new study conducted by Harvard University's Civil Rights Project and the Urban Institute found that only 64.5 percent of Southern high school students graduated with their classmates four years after beginning ninth grade, which is about 4 percentage points below the national average. Even more discouraging was Southern graduation rates for Hispanics (56.3 percent) and for Blacks (55.3 percent).

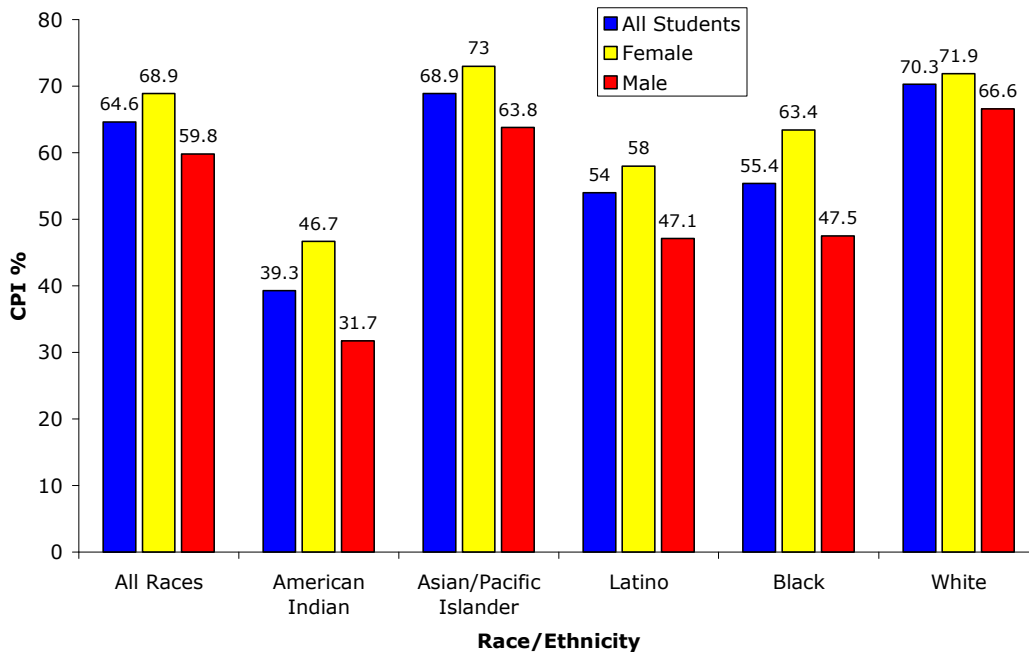
In the study, *Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis in the South*, Christopher Swanson of the Urban Institute used the Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI), which tracks students from the time they enter ninth grade to determine graduation rates four years later. Five Southern states, including Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and North Carolina, were given special focus in the report. Of the states under review, only Louisiana had graduation rates similar to what the researchers found using the CPI (see table). These states usually determine graduation rates based only on percentage of student who enter 12th grade at a particular school.

Graduation Rate Discrepancies

State	Official State Results	CPI Rate	Difference
Florida	65.0%	57.4%	(7.6%)
Georgia	61.8%	57.6%	(4.2%)
Mississippi	80.5%	60.7%	(19.8%)
North Carolina	85.0%	64.6%	(20.4%)

Minority graduation rates were even more abysmal, especially for males. Across the Southern region the graduation rate for Black males average only 47.4 percent and slightly higher for Latinos at 50.9 percent. In only one of the five special focus states, Louisiana, did more than half of Black males graduate on time (51.1 percent). In North Carolina only two subgroups, Asian/Pacific Islander and White, had graduation rates for males above 50 percent. (see chart below).

North Carolina Graduation Rates by Race and Gender 2002



Source: Civil Rights Project, *Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis in the South*

Swanson also observed that lower graduation rates tend to occur in school districts with higher levels of racial segregation.

Researchers concluded that “The severity of this situation is further underscored by the dearth of schools in many of these states which ‘beat the odds’ by graduating a higher than expected percentage of their students.” Researchers from John Hopkins University looked for schools with: at least 40% are free/reduced lunch, 25% or more of students are Black or Latino, and where promoting power, defined as a school’s success in moving students from grade to grade, averaged over three years (2000-2002), was at least 80%. Based upon these factors, they could not find any “beat the odds” schools in Georgia, only two in Florida, four in North Carolina, twelve in Louisiana, and fifteen in Mississippi.

Graduation (cont'd)

The researchers identified the graduation rates in the South at a crisis level, and contend that little is being done to hold schools and districts accountable at either the state or federal levels. While Congress has inserted graduation accountability provisions in NCLB, the researchers found that weak consequences have made it a useless requirement. States must improve their annual test scores performance, with the goal of 100 percent proficiency by 2014, and face consequences for failing to improve. The study authors' contrast the AYP improvement with the graduation rate mandate: "Specifically, districts that fail to meet the 90% goal will still make AYP if they achieve as little as 1/10 of 1% progress over the prior year. At that rate, Charlotte, starting at a graduation rate of 57.1 %, has 329 years to meet the 90% graduation rate goal, yet only nine more years to meet the testing goals!..." "Because of misleading and inaccurate reporting of dropout and graduation rates, and an exclusive preoccupation with testing data, the public remains largely unaware of this educational and civil rights crisis."

For a full copy of the study go to

http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/dropouts/dropouts_south05.php

Georgia Adopts New High School Math Standards

The Georgia State Board of Education recently approved a rigorous new math curriculum based on a Japanese model. The new math standards for Georgia high schools will require teachers to combine elements of algebra, geometry, statistics, and other topics into their classes, instead of teaching them as separate branches of math. The curriculum, which will be phased in over several years, is the final piece in an overhaul of state teaching standards that began more than two years ago. The state board previously approved new expectations for social studies, science and English/language arts for public school students in elementary through high school.

New math standards that will prepare students for the integrated approach in high school will begin this coming school year with sixth-graders. That class will become the first high school students, in 2008-09, who will take the integrated courses.

Georgia (cont'd)

Although the state board adopted the changes unanimously, some members cautioned the State Superintendent Kathy Cox that teachers will need significant professional development to become comfortable with the new approach. Julie Burke, a teacher at North Springs High School in Fulton County who teaches geometry and Advanced Placement statistics, predicts that teachers who see themselves as "algebra" or "geometry" instructors may resist at first, but others will come around. "Math shouldn't be cut into pieces like that," she said.

Additionally, all students will have to take the equivalent of Algebra II to graduate from high school, a significant increase of current minimum standards. Cox estimated only 20 percent of high school graduates now meet that requirement. "When we raise the expectations and we fully prepare the teachers, kids respond to that," Cox said. "We've got talented teachers. We've got talented students. The problem is we've got this age-old perception that some kids don't need math."

Florida First State to Win Concessions on NCLB

U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings's approval changes requested by Florida to their No Child Left Behind plan make the state the first to be granted concessions to the federal law, according to the *St. Petersburg Times*. Last year only 716 of Florida's 3,068 schools met their adequate yearly progress goals (23 percent), but if the new flexibility had been in effect another 400 schools would have made adequate yearly progress, which would raise the percentage to 36.4 percent.

Spellings agreed to allow Florida to modify the timetable its students must meet proficiency standards in reading and math. For example, this year 31 percent of students were required to meet standards in reading. The percent was supposed to increase to 48 percent next year, however, under the new timetable it will only increase to 37 percent.

Spellings also agreed to a change in the state's definition of subgroups that must meet standards. Many of Florida's schools have as many as 20 subgroups and currently each group must be counted if there are 30 or more of those students enrolled in a school. Spellings allowed for this number to be changed to 15 percent of a school's student population. Spellings said flexibility on that point was a nod to Florida's diverse student population, not a means to water down standards.

Florida's third request remains under consideration. The state wants NCLB to allow for growth, in much the same way the Florida system does. Other states have also asked for this change, and Spellings said she is forming a panel to see if the idea has merit. The first appointment to the panel was Florida Department of Education Commissioner John Winn.

Forum News . . .

Forum Offices Closed Monday

The *Friday Report* will not be published next week and will return June 3. The Public School Forum will be closed Monday, May 30 in observance of Memorial Day. We will reopen Tuesday morning.

The first Memorial Day was celebrated in 1868 to commemorate soldiers from the Civil War. General John Logan, head of an organization of former soldiers and sailors, established “Declaration Day”:

“The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form of ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.”

For more information and an historical overview, go to <http://www.usmemorialday.org/>

The *Friday Report* is published weekly by the Public School Forum of NC and is distributed to Forum Board members, legislators active in education policy, the press, and Forum subscribers. Archived editions can be found at www.ncforum.org/doelib