

North Carolina Teacher Corps Final Report

Impact, Qualitative Assessment, and Policy Recommendations

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General Disclaimer: The scope of work for the Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation–North Carolina’s (CERE–NC’s) evaluation of the North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC) included a provision for evaluating the Race to the Top-funded expansion of Teach for America–Eastern North Carolina (TFA-ENC) as well. As a result, some reports generated for this evaluation (including the present report) have included information about TFA-ENC. In addition to expansion data, a limited amount of other TFA-ENC data has been incorporated into the reports as part of CERE–NC’s efforts to provide information relevant to the formative development of NCTC and to CERE–NC’s approach to its evaluation.

By including these additional components, CERE–NC has not intended to establish (a) a formal connection between any findings related to TFA-ENC and expected outcomes for NCTC, (b) guidelines for the direction of the development of NCTC, or (c) changes in the overall structure of the evaluation. All evaluation work has been guided by the Scope of Work for the NCTC and TFA-ENC evaluations as approved by NCDPI in June 2011.

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NORTH CAROLINA TEACHER CORPS FINAL REPORT: IMPACT, QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT, AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Summary

One of the most important goals of North Carolina's Race to the Top (RttT) proposal is to increase the access of students in the state's most challenging and lowest-achieving schools to effective teachers. With this report, the Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation–North Carolina has completed its evaluation of North Carolina's use of RttT funds to develop a North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC) and to expand the presence of Teach for America (TFA) in the state. The evaluation's goals have been to assess the extent to which these programs contribute to an increase in the presence of effective teachers in the high-need schools and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) targeted in the RttT proposal. This final report includes a summative analysis of quantitative and qualitative data gathered during the first two years of the NCTC initiative, as well as a final summary of TFA's RttT-funded expansion.

Summative Findings: North Carolina Teacher Corps

Capacity

- In total, 94 NCTC corps members were employed across 23 LEAs between 2012-13 and 2013-14; however, in neither year did the program meet its targets (100 and 150 corps members, respectively).
- The strength of the candidates admitted to the program (based on undergraduate GPA and the selectivity of their undergraduate institutions) increased in the second year.
- The greatest loss of corps members occurred between their initial acceptance into the program and their employment—that is, before they even entered a classroom. In response, in 2013, NCTC introduced mechanisms to reduce attrition during this period.

Preparation Quality

- The components of NCTC's training that were most beneficial for corps members were: the scope and quality of content provided; the quality, professionalism, and ongoing support of program and training staff; and the in-class training segment that provided valuable hands-on teaching experience.
- Programs like NCTC with limited time for pre-service training can make better use of that training time by: placing more emphasis on the development of the knowledge and skills that most support early-career teachers (such as classroom management); providing in-class experiences ahead of the information-driven segments of their training, to provide corps members with context for what they learn during that training; and placing corps members in classroom training environments that closely align with school and classroom environments in which corps members are likely to secure employment.

Initiative Effectiveness

- Early evidence suggests that retention rates after the initial two-year commitment may be higher for NCTC than for similar programs.
- Evidence is mixed, however, as to whether an emphasis on the recruitment of corps members with North Carolina ties is a key reason for those retention rates; the network of support provided by the program during corps members' first two years appears to have been at least as important, if not more so.

Teacher Effectiveness

- Sufficient quantitative evidence of corps member effectiveness was not available in time for inclusion in this report. However, qualitative evidence suggests that peer and administrator perceptions of corps member classroom performance were similar to their perceptions of the performance of other early-career teachers with non-traditional preparation backgrounds.

Summative Findings: Teach for America-Eastern North Carolina

Capacity

- TFA placed or retained 157 corps members in Eastern North Carolina at the beginning of school year 2011-12, 219 corps members at the beginning of 2012-13, and 280 corps members at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year. Overall, between 2010-11 and 2013-14, RttT funds helped TFA-ENC exceed its overall goal for growth in Eastern North Carolina.
- Since 2008, about 87% of TFA-ENC corps members have completed two full years of teaching, though the preliminary retention rate for the 2012 cohort (75%)—recorded at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, before that cohort completed its two-year commitment—already was much lower than the rate for the four preceding cohorts.

Teacher Effectiveness

- TFA corps members continue to be rated both quantitatively and qualitatively as highly effective teachers, relative to their early-career peers.

Administration of North Carolina Teacher Corps by Teach for America¹

- During the 2013 session, the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation that named TFA as the administrator of NCTC as of July 1, 2014, beginning with the 2014-15 cohort. The 2013-14 cohort will be supported in its second year by RttT no-cost extension funding.
- TFA plans to expand its presence in Eastern North Carolina by providing an estimated 8 to 12 first-year corps members to Pitt County Schools—one of the former NCTC LEAs—for the 2014-15 school year.
- TFA's support for a third North Carolina chapter, also beginning in 2014-15, will provide 30 corps members to Guilford County Schools—another former NCTC LEA.

¹ <http://www.ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/HTML/S402v7.html>; see Section 8.21.

Introduction

This report is the final summative report for the evaluation of North Carolina's Race to the Top-funded North Carolina Teacher Corps initiative and Teacher for America expansion in Eastern North Carolina. The first two formative reports, released in October 2012 and November 2013, are available online; summaries of findings from those reports that are summative in nature are included in this report.²

Context

Education experts and researchers agree that effective teachers are critical to the academic success of students, but all too often, students who struggle the most do not have access to them. Concern about the uneven access of low-performing, poor, and minority students to effective teachers was a foundational motivation for the United States Department of Education's Race to the Top (RttT) program, which encouraged applicants to propose ways in which states could work to counter this persistent trend. In response, North Carolina's proposal offered several state-level initiatives for achieving a more equitable distribution of effective teachers statewide, including:

- Strengthening the development of novice teachers in the lowest-performing schools (New Teacher Support Program);
- Making further use of blended classes for students in an attempt to expand curriculum offerings and provide effective instruction when effective teachers for a subject are not available locally (Virtual Public School Blended Learning);
- Employing strategic staffing approaches to optimize the distribution of available human capital (State and Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives); and
- Increasing the number of highly-qualified teachers in low-income rural areas and high-need urban schools. (North Carolina Teacher Corps and expansion of Teach for America in eastern North Carolina)

For these last initiatives, North Carolina's RttT proposal included support for two separate but related staffing approaches: (1) development of a North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC), a program that would recruit and train in-state talent for employment in teaching positions in high-need schools not served by Teach for America (TFA); and (2) expansion of the TFA chapter in eastern North Carolina (TFA-ENC).

The 2012-13 school year marked an important turning point in the state's support of TFA and NCTC. In July 2012, the North Carolina General Assembly formally recognized the establishment of NCTC³, but in July 2013, the General Assembly passed legislation that transferred operation of the organization to TFA, beginning in 2014-15.⁴ In addition to directly

² http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/NCTC_PreliminaryReport_10-29-2012.pdf; http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/FINAL_NCTC_Second-Annual-Report_11-07-2013.pdf

³ SL 2012-142; <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2011/Bills/House/HTML/H950v7.html>

⁴ SL 2013-360; <http://ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/HTML/S402v7.html>

addressing the evaluation questions related to both initiatives, this report also notes the impact of these legislatively-mandated changes on the future of NCTC-related efforts in North Carolina.

Descriptions of the Programs

North Carolina Teacher Corps

Mission and goals. The mission of NCTC was to recruit and develop successful recent graduates of North Carolina colleges and universities, as well as mid-career professionals, to serve as teachers in high-need⁵ schools. NCTC teachers—or “corps members”—entered the profession as lateral entry teachers and served in high-need schools across the state, primarily in the subject areas of science, mathematics, and special education. Corps members were asked to make a minimum two-year commitment to their NCTC partner schools.

Eligibility and employment. To be eligible for participation in NCTC, a participant had to have, one of the following in the subject area of her or his potential teaching assignment: (a) a bachelor’s degree; (b) 24 semester hours of credit; or (c) a passing score on the Praxis II teacher licensing examination. Participants also had to meet North Carolina’s minimum academic proficiency requirements for lateral entry licensure.⁶ Eligible candidates were invited to become corps members after successful completion of a multi-step screening process. They then were provided with a list of eligible partner Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to which they could apply. Corps members sought their own employment opportunities, with support from the program.

Training and ongoing support. For its inaugural cohort (2012-13), NCTC provided new corps members with a three-day mid-summer training session, followed by an eleven-day in-school teaching practicum and a final all-day training session. For the 2013-14 cohort, based on feedback from the first cohort, NCTC expanded the training by introducing some of the topics covered in the mid-summer training (introduction to the program, provision of teacher orientation information and materials [e.g., information on North Carolina’s Common Core and Essential Standards, lesson planning, and classroom management strategies]) during a one-day early-summer kick-off event that also included a new topic: interviewing for teaching positions.

Ongoing support included: teacher licensure coursework; a series of periodic professional development sessions tailored to candidate needs; instructional coaching site visits once to twice per month; face-to-face and online mentoring; an online information portal (the NCTC Wiki); and access to professional learning communities (both subject-area based and proximity-based). In fall 2013, NCTC more than doubled its cadre of coaches (from four to nine) to provide better coverage for corps members across the NCTC region.

⁵ Broadly defined; “high-need” can refer to schools formally identified via a federal or state program (such as District and School Transformation), but it also can refer to schools identified as high-need relative to other schools in an LEA, regardless of raw performance or other outcome measures.

⁶ General lateral entry academic achievement requirements: Either an overall GPA of 2.5, or a minimum passing score on the Praxis I plus a GPA of 3.0 in her or his major or in her or his senior year, or five years of relevant experience in the chosen subject area (<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/licensure/lateralentry.pdf>).

Expected outcomes. The state's Detailed Scope of Work for RttT activities (December 2012) outlines the list of expected activities and outcomes associated with the NCTC initiative:

- Develop a program to recruit in-state talent for high-need schools not served by TFA⁷:
 - Plan and recruit during the 2011-12 school year;
 - Train and secure employment for 100 participants in the first cohort for the 2012-13 school year; and
 - Expand the program for the 2013-14 school year by adding 150 new participants.

The transfer of NCTC's responsibilities and programming to TFA for administration beginning in the 2014-15 school year is discussed in greater detail in the final section of this report.

Teach for America

TFA operations in North Carolina are supported by several funding sources other than RttT; the only RttT-supported element of TFA has been its expansion in eastern North Carolina. Programmatic information about TFA is included in the first NCTC report; updated final information about TFA expansion under RttT is included in this report.

Expected outcomes. The state's Detailed Scope of Work for RttT activities outlines the expected activities and outcomes associated with the TFA-ENC expansion initiative:

- Expand the Teach for America presence in North Carolina by 340 corps members between 2010-11 and 2013-14:
 - Expansion targets: Increase by 20 corps members in 2010-11, increase by 90 corps members in 2011-12, increase by 115 corps members in 2012-13, and increase by 115 corps members in 2013-14.

Purpose of the Report

The Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation–North Carolina (CERE–NC)⁸ has conducted the evaluation of North Carolina's RttT initiatives. In previous reports, the roles of the RttT Evaluation Team have been to (1) document the activities of the RttT initiatives and (2) provide timely, formative data, analyses, and recommendations to help the initiative teams improve their ongoing work. The goal of the final series of reports, to the extent allowable by available data, is to (3) provide summative evaluation results to help determine whether the RttT initiatives met their goals and to inform future policy and program decisions to sustain, modify, or discontinue initiatives after the grant-funded period.

An overriding goal of the evaluation of the development of NCTC and of the expansion of TFA-ENC has been to determine whether and to what extent they collectively or individually

⁷ An exception was made in 2012-13 to allow NCTC corps member placement in Durham County, which is served by TFA, but only at one school.

⁸ CERE–NC is a partnership of the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University, and the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

contribute to an increase in the presence of effective teachers in target schools and LEAs. This report completes the process of examining the impact of these plans by assessing quantitative data from the 2012-13 school year and qualitative data gathered during the 2013-14 school year.

Relevant Overall Research Questions for Teacher and Leader Supply and Distribution

The NCTC and TFA-ENC evaluation is one of several included in the larger evaluation of the initiatives designed to impact the supply and distribution of effective teachers and leaders (listed above). There are four overarching questions that guide all of the evaluations of these initiatives:

- What is the nature and quality of the experience: a) for students and b) for participating teachers?
- Are students affected by these programs better off than similar students in similar schools and districts not served by these programs?
- Are these initiatives cost-effective and sustainable?
- To what extent do the initiatives meet critical needs for teachers and principals and improve equitable access to higher-quality teachers and leaders in targeted geographic and content areas?

Questions Specific to the NCTC and TFA-ENC Evaluation

In addition, there are specific evaluation questions that govern the evaluations of the NCTC and TFA-ENC initiatives. They include:

Capacity

1. Do TFA-ENC and NCTC meet demand for beginning teachers in high-need schools?
2. What does operating the NCTC program cost? Specifically, is the program cost-effective, relative to the alternatives?

Preparation Quality

3. What is the quality of the NCTC Summer Institute experience? Specifically, how do teachers prepared by NCTC rate their experience, in terms of the preparation it provides them for their teaching assignments?
4. Has overall TFA-ENC corps member quality changed as a result of TFA-ENC's expansion and/or the advent of NCTC recruitment efforts?

Initiative Effectiveness

5. Are NCTC teachers more likely than a) other new teachers in general and b) TFA corps members in particular to remain in teaching beyond their original commitment?
6. What role does recruitment of North Carolina students have on retention of non-traditional, selectively-chosen teacher candidates?

7. What role does grouping teachers together in high-need schools⁹ have on retention of NCTC and TFA-ENC teachers?

Teacher Effectiveness

8. Are TFA-ENC and NCTC teachers more effective than traditionally-prepared teachers? Specifically, how do outcomes of students served by TFA-ENC and NCTC teachers compare to students who took similar courses in the same schools with teachers who entered the profession via other portals?

It is important to note that, because TFA-ENC's contracted use of RttT funds only applies to increasing the number of corps members serving in Eastern North Carolina, the evaluation questions with TFA components focus only on issues directly related to that expansion. The effectiveness of TFA corps members in terms of their estimated impact on student achievement has been one of the foci of a separate series of reports completed annually by one of the three CERE-NC partners, the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC).¹⁰ CERE-NC has relied on that series and other related work on North Carolina teacher effectiveness to provide estimations of TFA corps member effectiveness.

Because 2012-13 was the first year for NCTC corps members in North Carolina schools, their effectiveness is not included in the upcoming EPIC report (which includes data through the 2011-12 school year); future teacher portals reports may include estimations of NCTC corps member effectiveness relative to other teacher portals. This summative report does include, however, preliminary analyses, using 2012-13 data; more details are included in the **Data and Methods** and **Summative Findings: North Carolina Teacher Corps** sections, below.

Structure of the Report

The focus of this final summative report is on answering succinctly, to the extent possible with current data, all of the evaluation questions for this initiative. The report ends with summative policy recommendations for TFA and the state for the continued operation of NCTC in post-RttT years.

⁹ The first report referred to these groupings as “teaching pods”; in subsequent reports (including this one), the Evaluation Team has referred to these groupings as “clusters.” The “pod” or “cluster” concept refers to the idea of intentionally placing corps members in groups at individual schools or LEAs, which, though not required as part of North Carolina’s RttT plan, has informed TFA placement in recent years and is an option for NCTC as it grows. The Team has learned that the school-level cluster concept also has informed some RttT-funded LEA-level local strategic staffing plans (see, for instance, descriptions of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools’ and Pitt County Schools’ strategic staffing plans in this report: http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Strategic-staffing_1stYear-Report_-FINAL-09-24-2012.pdf).

¹⁰ The most recent of these reports (February 2014) can be found at: http://publicpolicy.unc.edu/files/2014/02/Teacher-Preparation-and-Performance_FINAL.pdf

Data and Methods

Data

NCTC and TFA-ENC Corps Member Surveys

A pre/post survey for NCTC and TFA-ENC corps members was designed in early spring 2011 and, based on field tests (i.e., fall 2011 and spring 2012 administration to TFA-ENC corps members only), was expanded in summer 2012.¹¹ The revised version of the survey was administered online to NCTC members in fall 2012, spring 2013, fall 2013, and spring 2014.

Per negotiations, TFA-ENC intended to add the revised survey to a longer survey they administered in fall 2012 and spring 2013; however, coordinated efforts to ensure the two surveys were merged ahead of TFA-ENC's fall survey administration date were unsuccessful. As a result, survey data from both of these administrations are unavailable. This report includes TFA corps member responses from the fall 2013 and spring 2014 surveys only.

Items on the survey (Appendix A)—which were designed to elicit reflections from corps members about changes in their perceptions across each school year of such topics as advantages and disadvantages of being a part of a larger group, or “cluster,” of corps members, feelings of isolation, likelihood of remaining in teaching beyond the two-year commitment—were the same in all four administrations. Results from the final two administrations are included in Appendix A.

Corps Member and Non-Corps Member Novice Teacher Focus Groups; Host Principal Interviews

In summer 2013, as NCTC was completing employment of its second cohort of first-year corps members across participating LEAs, the Evaluation Team reviewed corps member distribution across those LEAs and schools and selected two LEAs in which more than two corps members found employment. The two sites selected included:

- One mid-size urban LEA with a moderately high proportion of students eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch (60%), a graduation rate (82%) similar to the state average, and a moderate teacher turnover rate (17%); and
- One urbanizing rural LEA with a moderately low proportion of students eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch (36%), a high graduation rate (91%), and a moderate teacher turnover rate (14%).

Evaluation Team members scheduled spring 2014 focus groups with four first- and two second-year NCTC members in each of these LEAs. Follow-up telephone interviews were scheduled with two additional second-year corps members who participated in fall 2012 interviews but moved to new LEAs for the 2013-14 school year. When possible, separate focus groups were scheduled with early-career non-corps members (teachers at the same schools with less than

¹¹ The original TFA-ENC survey (2011-12) included only eight of the current ten survey items.

three full years of teaching experience, typically trained in traditional teacher preparation programs). Three non-corps members who were willing to participate were identified in one of the two LEAs in the spring. In addition, the Team conducted telephone interviews with three principals at participating schools in three LEAs (including both LEAs identified above). The focus group and interview protocols are included in Appendix B.

Estimations of Teacher Value-Added

The eighth evaluation question asks whether NCTC and TFA teachers contribute to student academic gains that are greater than, about the same as, or less than academic gains for students taught by novice teachers who entered the profession by other pathways. One way to address this question at the individual teacher level is to use results from Standard 6 of the state's teacher evaluation process, the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System (NCEES).¹² The State estimates educators' impact on student growth for NCEES annually using the SAS Institute's Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS); however, by State Board of Education policy,¹³ *formal* estimations of a teacher's effectiveness status as defined by Standard 6 require three years of data. Since no NCTC teachers have taught long enough to generate three years of data, and since most TFA teachers leave teaching after their second year, the Evaluation Team was not able to use the official three-year rolling average value for Standard 6 to address this question.

Instead, as noted above, this evaluation has relied on the work of CERE-NC partner EPIC to provide estimations of the value added by TFA teachers relative to other early-career teachers who entered the profession via more traditional portals.¹⁴ These estimations are included once again in this final report for North Carolina TFA corps members for the 2011-12 school year.

NCTC corps members were not included in the most recent EPIC estimations (which use data only through the 2011-12 school year—the year before the first cohort of NCTC corps members entered the classroom); however, this report does include initial, unofficial estimations of the added value of the first cohort of NCTC corps members who taught tested high school subjects in 2012-13. Because data for the first cohort of NCTC corps members were available for only one year of teaching, information about their EVAAS estimates are included in this report primarily as illustrative examples of the type of analysis that can be conducted once data across three or more years are available for members of this cohort and of the second cohort who remain in teaching for at least three years.

¹² <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/effectiveness-model/ncees/>

¹³ Policy TCP-C-006 (<http://sbepolicy.dpi.state.nc.us/>)

¹⁴ Bastian, K. C., and Patterson, K. M. (2014). *Teacher Preparation and Performance in North Carolina Public Schools*. Chapel Hill, NC: Education Policy Initiative at Carolina. http://publicpolicy.unc.edu/files/2014/02/Teacher-Preparation-and-Performance_FINAL.pdf

Methods

Survey Analysis

The survey was developed in fall 2011. A preliminary review of the eight scaled survey items¹⁵ suggested that Items 1 through 6 were indicators of a common factor—*Sense of Community*—and that Items 7 and 8 were indicators of a different, but related, common factor—*Strength of Community*. To supplement this preliminary review, two types of factor analysis were conducted using *Mplus* statistical software to identify (via exploratory factor analysis) and confirm (via confirmatory factor analysis) the underlying factor structure of the survey items. The factor analysis conducted on the fall 2011 survey data provided initial support for the theoretically predetermined two-factor structure, and the items loaded onto their respective factors as predicted by the preliminary review. Additional support for the two-factor structure was provided by the confirmatory factor analysis conducted on the spring 2012 survey data. More extensive technical notes are included in a previous report¹⁶.

For the current report, analysis of survey results consisted of identifying item-level descriptive statistics that supplemented relevant areas of the report’s findings section.

Focus Group and Interview Data Analysis

Each of the audio-recorded focus group sessions and interviews was transcribed. The coding themes identified for the TFA-ENC focus group data analysis completed for the first report and modified for the NCTC focus group data analysis completed for the second report were utilized in the analyses of the NCTC transcripts in this final report. The eight coding themes include: recruitment; placement; professional development (including informal support structures); teacher quality; integration; isolation; retention; and program feedback from participating principals.

Code definitions are included in Appendix C. Qualitative analysis software (Atlas.ti) was used to manage and code the transcripts. Each research team member coded at least one transcript in its entirety. After all of the data were coded by theme and subtheme, each researcher analyzed one of the eight thematic areas.

Analysis of NCTC Corps Member Value-Added Estimations

As noted above, the Team is able to provide only preliminary, single-year estimations of NCTC corps member contributions to student academic outcomes relative to similar teachers, and only for a subset of the first cohort of NCTC teachers. The first analysis consisted of calculating the mean of the subset’s EVAAS estimates and comparing that to the mean of the EVAAS estimations for all other first-year teachers in the state who taught the same courses. The second analysis consisted of a simple linear regression model in which EVAAS estimates were regressed on a binary indicator for NCTC teachers (in reference to first-year teachers in corresponding subject areas).

¹⁵ The ninth and tenth items were a conditional-response item (“Are you the only NCTC/TFA teacher at your school?”) and an open-ended response item (“Factors that will influence my decision to continue teaching or to leave the classroom after my two-year commitment include (list all that apply):”).

¹⁶ See *North Carolina Teacher Corps: Year 1 Implementation Report*, Appendix C: http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/FINAL_NCTC_Second-Annual-Report_11-07-2013.pdf

Summative Findings: North Carolina Teacher Corps

Capacity

The evaluation questions that guide this section are:

1. Does NCTC meet unmet demand for beginning teachers?
2. What does operating the NCTC program cost? Specifically, is the program cost-effective, relative to the alternatives?

Standards for assessing NCTC capacity:

- *NCTC's recruitment strategy is: (a) **efficient**; and (b) **comprehensive** (e.g., it provides recruits with necessary information, it allows staff to engage with all interested candidates).*
- *Recruits respond positively to recruitment efforts (e.g., recruits submit personal information and/or apply; recruits believe their concerns about participating in NCTC are addressed).*
- *Employment results meet or exceed targets.*
- *Costs per unit (per cohort member) are similar to or less than those of comparable programs.*

Recruitment

Across both years, recruitment efficiency was low (for the 2013-14 cohort, only 8% of interested individuals became employable corps members), but recruitment was very comprehensive, both in terms of geography covered and information provided to potential recruits. NCTC improved recruitment totals between 2012 and 2013 (moving from 30 to 84 employable corps members by the end of each year's Summer Institute), but in neither year was the program able to meet its targets (100 and 150 corps members, respectively).

Only about 22% of all potential NCTC recruits submitted applications, but those who did indicated that the recruitment process was both comprehensive and supportive:

I first met [one of the program coordinators] at a career fair and then . . . I got to know her, I got to know about the program, thought it was a great program. She gave me a lot of good information about it and really promoted it really well, so I got hooked on it and I applied.

[W]hen I discovered that there was lateral entry and there were other programs and I interviewed for other programs, I chose NCTC because of the support that I knew that I would get from them. . . . [I]f it wasn't for NCTC, I wouldn't be able to teach right now.

Employment

The 24 2012-13 corps members who finished their first year were employed in 11 LEAs—nine of the then 17 NCTC-eligible LEAs and two additional LEAs (Cleveland and Durham). Of those

24, 6 were in RttT District and School Transformation (DST) schools, 17 were in LEAs with RttT DST schools, and one was in a non-DST-eligible LEA (Cleveland). Three corps members left before the end of their first year, but five more were added during the 2012-13 school year. Two more of the original cohort left toward the beginning of their second year. At the conclusion of their second year, 22 members of the first cohort—17 original members and all five of the 2012-13 mid-year hires—remained employed across 12 LEAs—11 NCTC-eligible LEAs and one additional LEA (Lexington City).

The number of NCTC-eligible LEAs was increased for 2013-14 from 17 to 30, and 72 members of the second cohort were employed across 21 LEAs. Taken together, 94 inaugural cohort and second cohort corps members were employed during the 2013-14 school year across 23 LEAs.¹⁷ Table 1 and Figure 1 (following pages) detail the LEAs in which corps members were eligible to work, and the LEAs in which they found employment for the 2013-14 school year.

Preliminary Cost Analysis

The evaluation question about NCTC program costs has been addressed initially in CERE-NC's cost analysis of all of the RttT initiatives.¹⁸ For the first year of operation (2012-13), the cost of the initiative was estimated at \$17,824 per employed corps member, which was 11% lower than the budgeted cost of \$20,000 per corps member, even in a start-up year with a small, non-scale-efficient group. It is important to note that these figures may be further upwardly skewed, since they include some recruitment, summer institute, and pre-institute event costs for the subsequent cohort. Estimates of cost for the second, larger cohort were not available before the review process for this report began.

By comparison, some third-party cost-per-corps member estimates for TFA approached \$40,000 in 2009.¹⁹ Of note, while no additional local costs (other than those normally associated with beginning teachers) were imposed on LEAs that choose to hire NCTC members, as NCTC transitions to the TFA teacher placement model (discussed in greater detail below), LEAs will be assessed a TFA per-teacher administrative cost for each new corps member employed. According to TFA, these costs are estimated to be between \$3,000 and \$4,000 per year per corps member.

¹⁷ Four of the LEAs in which corps members are employed for school year 2013-14 are not on NCTC's official eligibility list (Alleghany, Henderson, Lexington City, and Northampton).

¹⁸ *A Preliminary Cost Analysis of North Carolina's Race to the Top Initiatives*, <http://cerenc.org/rttt-evaluation/overall-impact/>.

¹⁹ <http://www.givewell.org/united-states/charities/tfa>

Table 1. LEAs with Corps Members, Final 2012-13 and 2013-14 Figures

LEA	NCTC- Eligible?	Corps Member Employment							
		Final 2012-13		Final 2013-14				Total, 2013-14	
		Cohort I		Cohort I		Cohort II		# Schools	# CMs
		# Schools^	# CMs	# Schools	# CMs	# Schools	# CMs	# Schools	# CMs
Alamance	Yes	0	0	1	1	2	3	3	4
Alleghany*	No	---	---	0	0	1	1	1	1
Anson	Yes	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Caldwell	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cleveland*	No	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columbus	Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumberland	Yes	3	3	2	2	5	5	7	7
Duplin	Yes	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	4
Durham*	Yes	2	2	4	4	13	21	16	25
Edgecombe	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forsyth	Yes	3	3	0	0	5	6	5	6
Gaston	Yes	3	3	4	4	1	2	5	6
Greene	Yes	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Guilford	Yes	1	1	2	2	6	6	7	8
Halifax	Yes	---	---	0	0	1	1	1	1
Harnett	Yes	---	---	0	0	6	7	6	7
Henderson*	No	---	---	0	0	1	1	1	1
Hertford	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hoke	Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lexington City*	No	---	---	1	1	0	0	1	1
Lenior	Yes	---	---	0	0	3	3	3	3
Nash/Rocky Mount	Yes	---	---	0	0	2	2	2	2
Northampton*	No	---	---	0	0	1	1	1	1
Pasquotank	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pitt	Yes	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
Richmond	Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robeson	Yes	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	2
Rockingham	Yes	---	---	0	0	1	1	1	1
Rowan-Salisbury	Yes	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Scotland	Yes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Union	Yes	4	4	2	2	3	4	3	6
Vance	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wayne	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weldon City	Yes	---	---	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilson	Yes	2	2	2	2	1	1	3	3
Totals:		24	24	22	22	58	72	76	94

^ Only 17 LEAs were eligible in 2012-13; that number expanded to 30 for 2013-14.

*Alleghany County (2013-14), Cleveland County (2012-13), Henderson County (2013-14), Lexington City (2013-14), and Northampton County (2013-14) hired corps members but were not included on the list of eligible LEAs. Though served by DST, Durham was not eligible for NCTC services in 2012-13 but was eligible in 2013-14.

Preparation Quality

The evaluation questions that guide this section are:

3. What is the quality of the NCTC Summer Institute experience? Specifically, how do teachers prepared by NCTC rate their experience, in terms of the preparation it provides them for their teaching assignments?
4. Has overall TFA corps member quality changed as a result of TFA-ENC's expansion and/or the advent of NCTC recruitment efforts?

Standards for assessing NCTC Summer Institute and corps member quality:

- *Training is: (a) **relevant** (e.g., it is directly related to corps member experiences teaching in target schools); (b) **comprehensive** (e.g., it addresses multiple preparation needs [employment, policies and procedures, pedagogy, classroom management]); (c) **coordinated** (e.g., individual modules and pre-service and ongoing training sessions complement each other); and (d) of **high quality** (e.g., corps members respond positively to the training, understand its relevance, and acknowledge its usefulness)*
- *NCTC and contracted staff are: (a) **professional**; (b) **supportive** (e.g., interactions with corps members are positive and constructive); and (c) **prepared**.*
- *Cohorts meet or exceed cohort quality standards of comparable programs.*

Summer Institute

The Evaluation Team investigated the quality of the first NCTC Summer Institute by conducting on-site observations of the opening three-day orientation, the in-class teaching practicum, and the final all-day training session. In addition, corps member feedback regarding their Summer Institute experience was gathered during spring 2013 interviews. Findings from the observations and interviews outlined in a previous report were:

- Summer Institute training events about which Corps members were most positive included the in-class teaching experiences and small-group breakout sessions;
- Non-corps member teachers and principals in employing schools generally were positive about the preparation levels of the corps members;
- Corps members unequivocally agreed that the ongoing support provided by NCTC leadership after they found employment was strong and responsive. In particular, they highlighted leadership's constructive feedback, resource provision, dedication, motivation, and overall positive attitude; and
- Corps members recommended four changes for Summer Institutes: (a) increasing the length of the training period; (b) providing some in-class experiences ahead of the information-driven segments of their training, to provide context; (c) placing corps members in more challenging classrooms during training; and (d) including a segment on interviewing for teaching jobs.

The Evaluation Team also conducted observations of each segment of the second Summer Institute (July 2013) and gathered participant feedback during spring 2014 interviews to further assess the quality of the Summer Institute component of the NCTC program. First- and second-year corps members attended the 2013 Summer Institute. A brief summary of the Institute and an overview of notable changes are included here.

Comprehensiveness of scope and relevance to actual teaching experience. The three-day orientation segment of the second Summer Institute covered much of the essential information new teachers require prior to entering the teaching profession. Corps members were exposed to a series of lectures, presentations, and group activities that often were supplemented with materials relevant for beginning teacher (e.g., policy and procedure handouts, lesson planning guides, etc.) or online resources (e.g., links to the Common Core and Essential Standards, 21st Century Skills framework, etc.). Early segments of the orientation focused on general program and state policy and procedural requirements, followed by pedagogical and classroom management training, all of which supported the general knowledge and skill development required of any new teacher to be successful in the classroom.

To address some of the time constraints evident during the first Summer Institute, NCTC expanded its training for the 2013-14 cohort to introduce some of the topics covered in the orientation segment during a one-day kick-off event (delivered in June 2013). This event provided 2013-14 cohort members with their official introduction to some of the more fundamental elements of the teaching profession (e.g., classroom management, lesson planning, and review of the Standard Course of Study and educational terms and acronyms). However, even with this additional day, because the activities and information provided during the orientation period were comprehensive in scope, the time allocated to covering the Institute's range of topics continued to be a challenge, with little opportunity for corps members to reflect on the information they received and to engage in conversations that could help them to develop their understanding of a given topic.

The kick-off event introduced one new element to the NCTC training agenda in direct response to corps member feedback from the first Institute: opportunities to practice interviewing for teaching positions. NCTC recruited several principals from LEAs in which corps members from the first cohort were employed to help prepare corps members for the interview process. These principals worked with corps members individually and in small groups to provide advice about effective interviewing practices and expectations. In addition, principals conducted mock interviews. Informal conversations with corps members after the event yielded largely positive responses to these activities; one participant acknowledged that, even though the exercise added to his anxiety, it was encouraging to have that level of information, and that the experience helped him feel "more informed" about the interview process.

The in-class practicum was the most favorably-reviewed segment of the summer training for many first-year corps members, with several citing the hands-on experience as having the most direct impact on their preparation for delivering instruction in the classroom²¹. First-year corps member feedback in spring 2014 interviews—which, because they typically took place six

²¹ Corps members participate in the in-class practicum segment of the Summer Institute during their first year in the program only.

months after the summer training period, allowed corps members to reflect on the longer-term impact of their training experience—emphasized the alignment between their training and their actual teaching experiences:

[T]he summer teaching was good because my [teacher mentors were] very good and they were very helpful in telling me all the stuff that I didn't think I would need, but . . . it's, like, making a whole lot more sense now for me. So that was good.

The Summer Institute is a lot more real-world, hands-on. [J]ust the program in general. . . . I [also] went through [a traditional preparation program, which was] all books. It's all books and theories and what-have-you, up until you do your methods and your student teaching. But even still, the student teaching is just a few months long and when you're student teaching you are so sheltered because . . . you're observing at first, and then your cooperating teaching lets you slowly take over but you're still sheltered from a lot of real-world teaching. And the NCTC program . . . you get all of that. You see all of it. And on top of that . . . once you do start teaching, you still have that support system.

These positive impressions contrasted with those of the first cohort of corps members, who noted during fall 2012 and spring 2013 interviews (referring to the first Summer Institute) that their in-class training was helpful overall but that the training experience did not adequately represent the school or classroom environments in which they eventually taught. A notable change between the first and second Summer Institute in-class training segments was the expansion of participating schools to accommodate the increase in the number of corps members; conceivably, with the broader variety of new training schools, some environments may have aligned better with corps members' eventual full-time teaching environments.

Coordination and quality. The organization of the training activities and topics delivered over the duration of the second Summer Institute was logical and supportive. As mentioned above, corps members' training began with orientation segments that covered policy and procedural overviews, followed by pedagogy and classroom management techniques. Small-group sessions were embedded throughout the orientation segments and focused on specific grade-level training and opportunities for more personal learning experiences (e.g., one-on-one coaching support). For most corps members, the in-class practicum that followed was aligned with the subject or grade level in which they were eventually employed—also an improvement over the first Institute. Finally, corps members were convened periodically during the in-class training segment, which allowed them to reflect, share, and build on their entire training experience (e.g., make connections between their orientation and the in-class training segments). Most corps members from both cohorts agreed that the Summer Institute experience was “very helpful” and “beneficial.”

Professionalism, supportiveness, and preparedness of program staff. NCTC enlisted the assistance of DST coaches—coaches with experience in supporting reform efforts in the state's lowest-performing schools—to co-facilitate the Summer Institute training, which brought a high level of experience and professionalism to the Institute. Observations conducted during each Summer Institute indicated that all training staff were well-prepared and delivered useful and relevant information essential to the induction of new teachers. Training staff also appeared to be

very successful in their efforts to establish good rapport with corps members, which further supported a productive learning environment.

In interviews, corps members expressed appreciation for opportunities to engage candidly with DST coaches (who were often experienced, veteran teachers) that helped them to build their knowledge and understanding of the profession. The training staff also supported corps members' preparation by delivering a vast amount of information in a way that was manageable for corps members to retain and build on. As one 2013-14 cohort member explained:

I feel like [the training] touched on a lot of the stuff that I am encountering now. . . . [I]t was like a crash course, [but the coaches were] so supportive of me[, saying], "All this stuff's going to be confusing at first but we're going to go through it with you." And the repetition [is important], because we talk about the same things a lot, but each time we go a little bit deeper. So I feel like that was great.

Cohort Quality

As concluded in an earlier report, NCTC cohort quality (in terms of undergraduate GPA, post-secondary institution quality, and leadership potential) improved across the two years of the program (see Appendix D; a more complete analysis can be found in the second evaluation report²²). Average 2012-13 corps member values on these measures were strong, though on comparable measures (GPA and institution quality), corps members on average typically did not exhibit levels as high as those of their TFA-ENC colleagues.

Initiative Effectiveness

The evaluation questions that guide this section are:

5. Are NCTC teachers more likely than a) other new teachers in general and b) TFA corps members in particular to remain in teaching beyond their original commitment?
6. What role does recruitment of North Carolina students have on retention of non-traditional, selectively-chosen teacher candidates?
7. What role does grouping teachers together in high-need schools have on retention of NCTC and TFA-ENC teachers?

Standard for assessing NCTC retention:

- *NCTC corps members are more likely than a) other new teachers and b) recruits to other programs (e.g., TFA) to stay in teaching past their second year.*
- *NCTC corps members with North Carolina ties are more likely than a) other NCTC recruits and b) recruits to other programs (e.g., TFA) to stay in teaching past their second year.*
- *Efforts to retain corps members result in retention rates that meet or exceed rates (a) in comparable programs and (b) for all beginning teachers.*

²² *North Carolina Teacher Corps: Year One Implementation Report* (http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/FINAL_NCTC_Second-Annual-Report_11-07-2013.pdf)

Retention

Because NCTC was delayed in its initial start-up (original plans called for a 2011-12 cohort, which would have completed its original commitment at the end of the 2012-13 school year), a quantitative assessment of retention beyond a second year of teaching was unavailable before the conclusion of this report (which was finalized before teachers during the 2013-14 school year made final decisions about their continued employment for 2014-15). However, data from the most recent survey administration (spring 2014) suggest that many corps members believed that they would continue teaching past their second year; only 8% of respondents confirmed that they did *not* plan to stay beyond their two-year commitment. Qualitative data from previous reports and from the spring 2014 focus groups support these findings from the final survey administration: All of the first- and second-year cohort members interviewed in the spring reported that they planned to teach the following year.

The first-year retention rate for the inaugural 2012-13 cohort (86%) was slightly lower than some estimates of national rates for first-year teachers (90.1%), though it was in line with average teacher retention statewide (86%).²³ In response to its early retention issues, NCTC accepted five new corps members mid-year, and all found employment in one of the target NCTC LEAs before the end of the 2012-13 school year, bringing the total number of 2012-13 corps members to 24 by the end of the 2012-13 school year.²⁴ During the 2013-14 school year, two additional first-cohort corps members withdrew from the program, resulting in a retention rate during the first two years of 81%,²⁵ somewhat lower than the two-year retention rate of TFA-ENC corps members over the past several years (87%).²⁶

By contrast, the end-of-year employment status of the second cohort resulted in a first-year retention rate of 95%, slightly higher than the estimated national rate for first-year teachers and notably higher than the first-year retention rate of their Cohort 1 colleagues. Adjustments to the support provided to corps members for the 2013-14 school year (described in the sections below) may have contributed to this improved retention rate.

All first- and second-year corps members interviewed in spring 2014 indicated that they planned to continue teaching, though only two discussed intentions of pursuing a career in teaching:

I've always wanted to be a teacher, that's what I went to school for. There's nothing else I want to do. I will be in education for forever.

²³ Kaiser, A., and Cross, F. (2011). *Beginning Teacher Attrition and Mobility: Results from the First through Third Waves of the 2007-08 Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study* (NCES 2011-318). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011318.pdf>; Educator Effectiveness Division. (2013). *Report to the North Carolina General Assembly: 2012-2013 Annual Report on Teachers Leaving the Profession*. G.S. 115C-12(22). Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Retrieved from <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/Attachment.aspx?S=10399&AID=19785&MID=1107>

²⁴ See pp. 31-32, previous report: http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/FINAL_NCTC_Second-Annual-Report_11-07-2013.pdf

²⁵ Derived from the 22 currently active Cohort 1 members divided by 27 total Cohort 1 members (23 original members plus the five additional members employed prior to the end of the 2013-14 school year).

²⁶ See p. 33, initial report: http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/NCTC_PreliminaryReport_10-29-2012.pdf

When I decided I was going to be a teacher, I knew that I wasn't going to do it for my lifetime career . . . but now that I feel I've gotten a handle on everything, I feel better equipped to do it for longer.

Efforts to support corps member retention during the recruitment period. To address the attrition rate of corps members during the early stages of the program (between acceptance and their first month of employment), NCTC staff implemented additional recruitment and support strategies in 2013, including:

- Clearer descriptions of the requirements of the NCTC Program for prospective candidates, such as licensure testing requirements and timelines for completion;
- Additional career development support, such as résumé-writing and job interview training.
- Careful matching of corps members to employment in LEAs that aligned with their interests; and
- Efforts to arrange for employment earlier in the summer.

Effect of Recruitment of North Carolina Students on Retention

Due to the brief length of the program, the impacts of the connection between previous residency in North Carolina and longer-term rates of retention (i.e., retention beyond two years) could not be measured definitively, and evidence for connections between North Carolina ties and shorter-term retention outcomes (i.e., retention during the two-year commitment period) are mixed.

On the one hand, of the five Cohort 1 and three Cohort 2 members who left the program prior to completing their two-year commitments, the proportion with clear North Carolina ties (i.e., those either from North Carolina or who completed their undergraduate education at a North Carolina institution; 75%) was lower than the total proportion of corps members from North Carolina (92%)—if North Carolina ties did not contribute to retention, the expectation would be for the proportion of North Carolinians who left early to be the same as or higher than the proportion of North Carolinians in the program. While these observations are based only on two years of data and eight cases and are therefore unreliable on their own, it should be noted that they are supported by data gathered during the most recent survey administered to all active corps members (spring 2014), which suggest that a higher proportion of current NCTC members (67%) than of current TFA-ENC corps members (33%) are planning to stay in teaching beyond their two-year commitments (Appendix A).²⁷

On the other hand, the overall one- and two-year retention rates of NCTC teachers, TFA-ENC teachers (who typically do not originate from North Carolina), and teachers across the nation (noted above) were similar. In addition, evidence from interviews with NCTC teachers further suggests that connections to North Carolina did not have a significant impact on their decision to stay or leave teaching. While several first-year corps members have reported consistently across the two years of the program that they felt isolated—a feeling often associated with attrition among early-career teachers—second-year corps members who participated in spring 2014

²⁷ In addition to teaching, many TFA corps members remain in education in some capacity after their two-year classroom commitments end; data are not yet available regarding NCTC retention in the field of education.

interviews reported that those feelings of isolation mostly dissipated during their second year of teaching, after they adjusted to their new employment settings. Said one corps member, “I’m on a really good team. Last year I was sort of a stand-alone person, but this year I’m on a team and I have a mentor, so I have no feelings of isolation.” Also, when asked whether they planned to continue teaching, corps members did not mention reasons related to geography; instead, future career plans and working conditions at their schools were the primary criteria impacting their decisions. For example, the majority of the second-year corps members who participated in interviews indicated that the degree of support from their school administrators and their immediate colleagues had the most impact on their decision to stay or leave teaching: “The administration is the number one reason [I’m staying at this school] . . . I hear horror stories from people who feel they have no support . . . and I don’t have that problem here.” Another motive some corps members indicated as having an impact on their decisions to remain in teaching—specifically, at their current schools—was their commitment to the students and the mission of their schools: “Even though I would love to teach in [a different county] because I live there, I love my kids. I love the kids that I have and I don’t want to leave them.”

Effect of Grouping Teachers Together in High-Need Schools on Retention

While corps members perceived clustering—or grouping more than one corps member in the same school—to be a positive aspect of the program, it may not have directly impacted retention significantly. Reflecting the impressions of their TFA-ENC peers (noted in previous reports²⁸ and later in this report), corps members reported that working in the same school with other teachers from their programs did help to reduce feelings of isolation, but that the presence of their peers was more of a bonus than a necessity: “I don’t think that I needed it, but it was nice. It was nice to have that relationship, someone you can talk to, you relate to them at that point.”

Instead, NCTC’s overall system of support, which provided some of the benefits of clustering to a larger number of corps members (e.g., those in schools without other corps members), may have been more beneficial than clustering alone. In particular, NCTC’s periodic collaborative working sessions on Saturdays provided opportunities for corps members to share successes and challenges and further develop instructional techniques together. NCTC inaugural cohort members said that these sessions were helpful and a good way to stay in touch with their peers.

In addition, program participants cited the importance of the instructional support they received from NCTC staff and their guidance in completing lateral entry teaching requirements as other key retention factors. NCTC staff acted as instructional coaches and mentors to the cohort members, periodically visiting their classrooms to observe and provide feedback. The program staff made themselves readily available to the corps members for information and technical assistance over email and telephone:

[Including support provided by my school and my LEA], the NCTC program, in general, has been my biggest support system so far.

I reached out to [one of the staff members] when I was stressing out and she personally came and checked on me. That really turned the next couple of weeks around for me. . . . She personally came and saw me and really helped me out.

²⁸ http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/NCTC_PreliminaryReport_10-29-2012.pdf

Teacher Effectiveness

The evaluation question that guides this section is:

8. Are NCTC teachers more effective than traditionally-prepared teachers? Specifically, how do outcomes of students served by NCTC teachers compare to students who took similar courses in the same schools with teachers who entered the profession via other portals?

Standards for assessing NCTC corps member effectiveness:

- *Academic outcomes of students served by NCTC corps members are comparable to or exceed outcomes for students who took similar courses in the same or similar schools with teachers who entered the profession via other portals.*

Quantitative Assessment of NCTC Teacher Quality

As noted in the **Data and Methods** section, above, because of the timing of the first cohort’s first year, the Team is able to include here only preliminary estimates of Cohort 1 corps member impact on student outcomes relative to the estimated impact of other first-year teachers in similar teaching situations. Because the state does not use value-added measures for first-year teachers with no prior history of academic impact as part of formal educator evaluations, and because of the small number of Cohort 1 corps members with first-year value-added results, readers should not consider these results to be reliable on their own or to suggest any definitive evaluation of the quality of the cohort or of the program as a whole; rather, this information is included in this report primarily as an illustrative example of the type of analysis that can be conducted once data across three or more years are available for NCTC corps members—not as definitive assessments of their first-year effectiveness.

EVAAS estimates of the value added by the 12 NCTC corps members who taught tested secondary courses were lower than estimates for other first-year teachers across the state who taught the same courses; however, this difference was not statistically significant (Table 2). A simple regression in which the only covariate was a binary variable (whether the teacher were an NCTC member or not) resulted in similar results.

Table 2. Mean EVAAS Estimates of Value Added, NCTC vs. Other 1st-Year Teachers

Group	<i>n</i>	Mean EVAAS Estimate
NC Teacher Corps	12	-0.989
All Other 1 st -Year Teachers in Same Subjects	1672	-0.685

Note: Subjects include Algebra I, English II, English/Language Arts I, English/Language Arts III, science, and social studies

Behind this mean value-added measure lies a wide range of individual measures for the 12 corps members, with estimations for some individual NCTC teachers indicating that they met or even exceeded expected growth. As noted above, until data for a larger sample of corps members are available (for instance, after 2013-14 data become available), analyses like these can serve only as examples of the types of analyses that will be available for future cohorts.

Taken together, these preliminary results reveal little about the actual value added by the first cohort during their first year—both because the difference between their value-added estimates and those of other first-year teachers was not significant and also because of the very small number of corps members for whom estimates were available. It is also not entirely surprising that their mean value-added estimates were negative, given that they were all first-year teachers teaching in challenging schools. Nevertheless, these results do suggest the value of conducting a careful examination of the measured impact of NCTC members once a larger number of corps members have completed more than one year of teaching and more data are available.

Qualitative Assessment of NCTC Teacher Quality

In the absence of comprehensive quantitative data, the Evaluation Team has relied on qualitative data for additional indications of the quality of the first two cohorts of corps members. Focus groups and interviews have indicated consistently that impressions of corps members' teaching abilities have ranged from neutral to positive among both their non-corps member peers and their principals. Some principals saw little to no difference in the performance of NCTC Corp Members and other early-career lateral entry teachers:

I think they came in about the same as [other] lateral entry teachers.

NCTC teachers are no different than anyone stepping in the classroom for the first time. What makes them different is the lack of having some sort of teaching experience going into it. But once again, I wouldn't say that it's any different than [other] lateral entry teacher[s].

One principal viewed their lack of experience as a detriment, but he clarified that his critique applied to lateral entry teachers more broadly, not just to NCTC members: "I think all teachers that are lateral entry—that do not come in with that student teaching experience and those interning experiences—are at a dramatic deficit."

Overall, though, most corps members appeared to exceed their principals' expectations. For example, as one principal shared during his spring 2014 interview:

Compared to other teachers that generally come in, [NCTC teachers are] much more prepared. . . . [T]hey actually are quite attuned to what is necessarily needed in the classroom, you know, [like] good classroom management, things that you generally don't see right at the beginning, but that you do see with them.

These sentiments were echoed in the comments of some corps members' non-NCTC peers: "It's obvious that she loves what she does. I mean, her life is math. You can just observe that it's in everything that she does and she really loves what she does."

Of note, spring 2014 comments about corps member classroom management reflected a positive change from school year 2012-13 in principals' impressions of NCTC corps members' abilities in that area. While the previous year's comments reflected the challenges that NCTC members experienced in effectively managing behavior in their classrooms—there had been a consistent shared opinion that, of all the challenges NCTC corps members face in their first years as

teachers, classroom management was by far the largest—principals in spring 2014 noted improvements in corps members’ classroom management skills:

Classroom management is huge and . . . [with respect to] the[ir] preparedness for the classroom . . . very brand-new teachers generally are shy at the beginning, generally hesitate on making decisions. These [NCTC] teachers . . . don’t hesitate. They jump right in and do what they need to do.

Summative Findings: Teach for America-Eastern North Carolina

Capacity

The evaluation question that guides this section is:

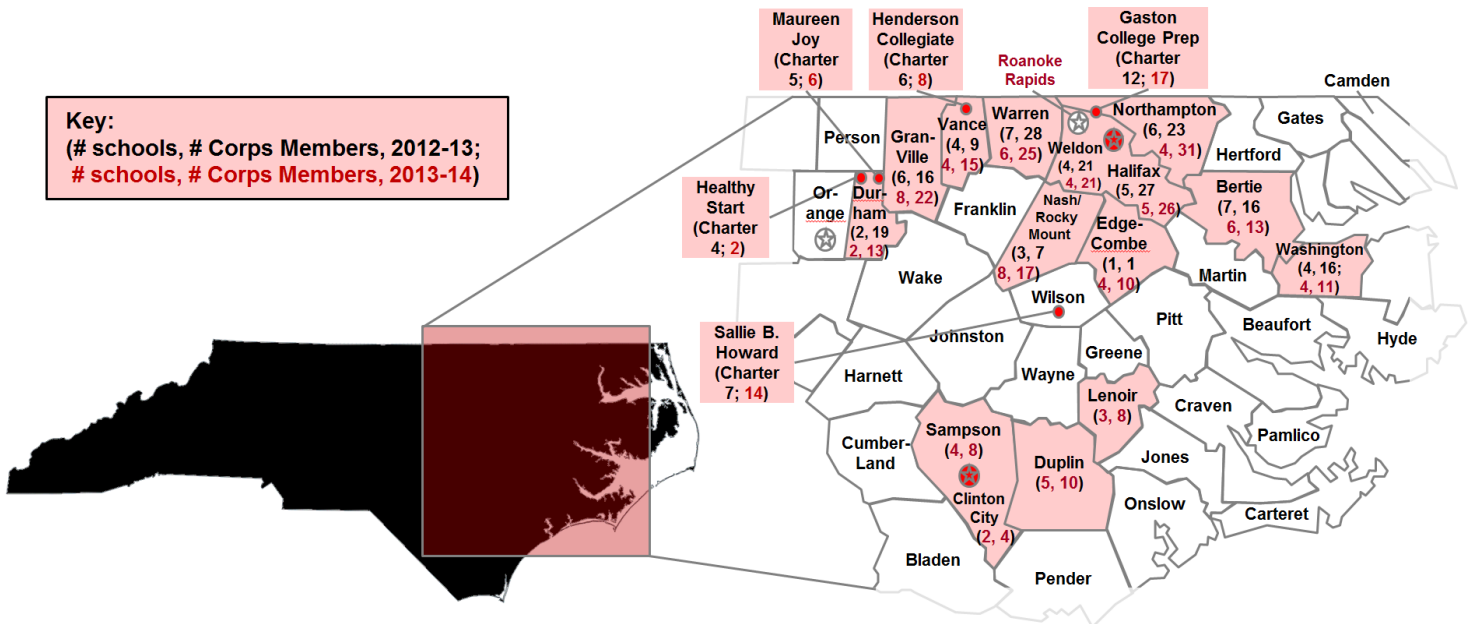
1. Does TFA-ENC meet demand for beginning teachers in high-need schools?

Standards for assessing TFA recruitment:

- *Placement results meet or exceed targets.*

North Carolina’s revised Detailed Scope of Work for its RttT initiatives (December 2012) and its contract with TFA-ENC include targets for the growth of TFA-ENC in North Carolina. For the 2012-13 school year, the target size for the full complement of TFA-ENC corps members was 217, with 115 first-year corps members supported by RttT funds, and, for the 2013-14 school year, the target size was 240, again with 115 first-year corps members supported by RttT funds. In 2012-13, 219 corps members either returned (89) or were initially placed (130) in Northeast North Carolina schools, exceeding the contracted target for 2012-13. The 2012-13 cohort retained 100 corps members for the 2013-14 school year, and 180 corps members were added as part of the 2013-14 cohort, for a total of 280. This total again exceeded the target number as specified in TFA-ENC’s contract. Placement totals by LEA are indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. TFA-ENC Placement, 2012-13 and 2013-14.



Preparation Quality

The evaluation question that guides this section is:

4. Has overall TFA-ENC corps member quality changed as a result of TFA-ENC’s expansion and/or the advent of NCTC recruitment efforts?

Standard for assessing changes in TFA cohort quality:

- *Measures of incoming TFA-ENC cohort grade point averages, post-secondary institution quality, and leadership potential remain unchanged or improve over life of the NCTC initiative.*

Several of the TFA-ENC corps member demographics for the past six school years (2008-09 through 2013-14) suggest that TFA-ENC presence in the region continues to undergo notable transformation. Some of these transformations (such as the ongoing increase in the size of the corps member cohorts, noted above) are reflective of support provided by North Carolina’s RttT funding and the required expansion of TFA-ENC; reasons for other patterns appear to be related to changes in corps member recruitment and acceptance as a result of the expansion efforts.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

The average GPA among candidates who were extended offers to join TFA-ENC (including the current 2013-14 cohort) is very high (mean=3.60) and has changed little since the advent of NCTC, suggesting no change in cohort quality on this measure as a result of the presence in the state of a similar program. It is worth noting that the range of GPAs is broad (2.53-4.00), indicating that TFA considers GPA but continues to not let that single factor drive selection (Table 3).

Table 3. TFA-ENC Invited Corps Member GPA by Cohort

	TFA-ENC Invited Corps Member Cohort Year						Overall
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012^	2013	
<i>n</i>	99	80	69	117	157	211	733*
<i>Mean</i>	3.62	3.65	3.58	3.62	3.62	3.56	3.60
<i>Percent of Cohort in Highest GPA Range (4.0-3.7)</i>	50.5%	50.0%	40.3%	44.4%	49.7	40.4	45.7

*No cumulative GPA provided for three corps members in 2010 cohort and two corps members in 2013 cohort.

^These data represent updates to data reported for this cohort in previous reports provided by TFA.

Post-Secondary Institution Quality

TFA relies on *US News & World Report* rankings of US colleges and universities to derive its selectivity ranking of corps member post-secondary schools. TFA recruits heavily from what it labels “Most Selective” and “More Selective” schools (the second- and third-most selective

groups of schools²⁹), which account for 69% of all accepted candidates across the six most recent cohorts—a proportion that, like GPA, has not changed significantly over the RttT period.

Leadership Potential

TFA staff members rate the leadership potential of the candidates at several points during the interview and selection process and assign (and continuously update throughout the recruitment process) subjective ratings of this potential on a 5-point scale, based on perceptions of a candidate’s previous leadership experience (as detailed in résumés and applications, and later clarified via interviews). The average leadership score among the six most recent cohorts of TFA-ENC candidates was about 3.47 (SD=.918). The majority (just over 72%) of candidates were ranked by TFA as having “average” (3) or “high” (4) leadership potential, and 14.5% were ranked with the “highest” leadership potential (5). There are some interesting differences across cohorts, however, as well as a possible notable trend. Examining the combined scores of “high” and “highest” across cohorts, only 29.3% of the 2008 cohort and 23.8% of the 2009 cohort were assessed as having either “high” or “highest” leadership potential, but 47.2% of the 2010 cohort, 44.4% of the 2011 cohort, and 43.2% of the 2012 cohort were ranked at this level, and the most recent cohort (2013) has the largest proportion of corps members (62.3%) ranked at the highest two levels. In addition, the 2013 cohort also has the smallest proportion of corps members (7.1%) ranked at the lowest two levels for leadership potential (Table 4).

Table 4. TFA-ENC Cohort by Leadership Score

Leadership Potential Ranking	TFA-ENC Corps Member Cohort Entry Year												Total*	
	2008		2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		n	Percent
	n	Percent of Cohort	n	Percent of Cohort	n	Percent of Cohort	n	Percent of Cohort	n	Percent of Cohort	n	Percent of Cohort		
High (4, 5)	29	29.3%	19	23.8%	34	47.2%	52	44.4%	67	43.2%	132	62.3%	334	46.7%
Average (3)	43	43.4%	43	53.8%	22	30.6%	43	36.8%	70	45.2%	65	30.7%	287	40.1%
Low (1, 2)	26	26.3%	18	22.5%	6	8.3%	11	9.4%	18	11.6%	15	7.1%	94	13.2%
Average Score	3.07		3.05		3.63		3.53		3.41		3.78		3.47	

*No leadership scores provided for one corps member in 2008 cohort, for 10 in 2010 cohort, for 11 in 2011 cohort, and one in 2013 cohort.

As with GPAs, the range of ratings in this category also suggests that TFA does not allow this variable to drive selection exclusively, either; fully 13.2% (about 1 out of every 8) of accepted candidates for TFA-ENC were rated at the two lowest levels (1 and 2). Interestingly, there continues to be a weak but statistically significant inverse relationship between leadership potential ratings and GPA among accepted candidates across the six years ($r=-.196$; $p=.000$)—in other words, as leadership scores rise among candidates, mean GPAs tend to fall, and vice versa, further supporting the notion that the TFA selection process does not isolate one characteristic as being more important than all others.

²⁹ Ratings are: “Premiere,” “Most Selective,” “More Selective,” “Selective,” “Less Selective,” “Least Selective,” and “Not Rated.”

Initiative Effectiveness

The evaluation question that guides this section is:

7. What role does grouping teachers together in high-need schools have on retention of TFA-ENC teachers?

Standard for assessing TFA retention:

- *Efforts to retain corps members result in retention rates that meet or exceed rates (a) in comparable programs and (b) for all beginning teachers.*

Retention

For this section, retention rates were calculated based on the number of corps members who started TFA’s Summer Institute, which includes corps members who never were placed in a school.³⁰ In total between 2008 and 2012, there were 481 such TFA-ENC corps members, and 399 of those (83%) were placed in schools and either completed their two-year commitments or remained in good standing at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year.³¹ Two-year attrition rates among the 2008 and 2009 cohorts (who completed their commitments in spring 2010 and spring 2011) were similar at 11.1% and 8.7%, respectively. The two-year retention for the 2010 cohort, however, was lower, with an attrition rate of 15.9%, and, as cohort size increased each year thereafter, attrition rates continued to increase. The 2011 cohort (members of which completed their commitments in spring 2013) experienced an attrition rate of 19%, and the 2012 cohort already had an attrition rate of 25% at the beginning of its second year (Table 5). In almost all cases, corps members across these five cohorts who left the program before completion of their two-year commitments did so voluntarily; only six corps members were dismissed.

Table 5. TFA-ENC Corps Member Completion or Retention, by Cohort, 2008-2012

		TFA-ENC Corps Member Cohort Entry Year					Overall (2008-12)
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 [^]	
Corps members who completed their commitment	<i>n</i>	88	73	53	85	100	399
	Percent of Cohort	88.9%	91.3%	84.1%	81.0%	74.6%	83.0%
Corps members who resigned early or were terminated*	<i>n</i>	11	7	10	20	34	82
	Percent of Cohort	11.1%	8.7%	15.9%	19.0%	25.4%	17.0%

* Includes corps members who attended Summer Institute but either did not complete it or completed it but were not placed in a school; does not include corps members granted emergency release.

[^]Not final figures; data reflect retention/attrition rates as of the beginning of the 2012 cohort’s second year of their two-year commitment.

³⁰ Among original members of the 2008 through 2012 cohorts, seven corps members were granted releases for emergency reasons between the start of Summer Institute and the end of their teaching commitments; they were not included in any of these totals or calculations.

³¹ *Note:* Data available only through fall 2013; final retention data not available for the 2012 cohort until summer 2014. The Evaluation Team will continue to track attrition rates through the end of the RttT period.

Clustering and Retention

Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, TFA-ENC increased efforts to place clusters of corps members in the same school. In 2012-13, TFA-ENC placed clusters comprised of three teachers or larger in 33 (or 65%) of the 51 schools in which corps members were placed; in 2013-14, TFA-ENC placed clusters in 44 (59%) of its 74 schools.

The impact of these clusters of corps members on retention and other aspects of corps members' experiences are explored in greater detail in the Evaluation Team's first formative report. In summary, that report concluded that cluster placement may have been beneficial for corps members: at the end of the 2011-12 school year, about 85% of TFA-ENC corps members indicated that they valued having other corps members in their schools. In focus group sessions, TFA-ENC corps members indicated more strongly than did their NCTC peers (see above) that placement with other corps members with whom they could share the first-year teaching experience—and to whom they felt a degree of loyalty—provided them with the support they needed to complete their first year of teaching. Focus group data also suggested that corps member placement in clusters facilitated the development of relationships and cohesion between corps members, and in cases where clusters were not too large, even between themselves, other school staff, and the larger community. The report concluded that there appeared to be an optimal TFA cluster size of between three and five corps members—corps members in larger clusters noted that such cluster sizes tended to limit their exposure to veteran teachers and supported their own tendencies to interact only with other corps members, thus limiting their integration into their schools and communities. In response, starting in 2012-13, TFA-ENC reduced the size of its larger clusters.

Cohort Characteristics and Early Departure or Dismissal

For the first evaluation report, the Evaluation Team also conducted an initial investigation of possible connections between TFA-ENC corps member selection characteristics and early departure and dismissal, and that investigation is updated here. Results of the earlier analyses revealed no statistically significant relationships between selection characteristics and attrition, but, as noted above, TFA corps member attrition has increased since that analysis. The updated analyses for this report again included three characteristics—GPA, leadership score, and college and university selectivity—to determine if any of them appeared to be correlated with early departure and dismissal. As before, and even given the increased proportion of early departures, in no cases did there appear to be any connection between these characteristics and a corps member's likelihood to either decline a position with TFA-ENC or fail to complete her or his two-year commitment.³² It should be noted that no other variables (i.e., potential control variables) were available to include in the regression models; factors other than the selection

³² A binary variable—TFA corps member status (in good standing or not in good standing)—was regressed onto three independent variables: (1) undergraduate institution selectivity; (2) leadership potential; and (3) cumulative GPA. None of these three independent variables was found to have a statistically significant relationship to corps member status ($n=342$; $p[\textit{selectivity}]=.173$; $p[\textit{GPA}]=.523$; $p[\textit{leadership}]=.803$). The analysis was completed for corps members in the 2008 through 2011 cohorts only; the 2012 and 2013 cohorts, as well as any corps members who left the program for personal emergencies, were excluded from this analysis because they are active corps members in groups that may experience additional dropout.

characteristics analyzed for this report likely play a greater role in corps member's ultimate decision to leave the program prematurely.³³

Teacher Effectiveness

The evaluation question that guides this section is:

8. Are TFA-ENC teachers more effective than traditionally-prepared teachers? Specifically, how do outcomes of students served by TFA-ENC teachers compare to students who took similar courses in the same schools with teachers who entered the profession via other portals?

Standards for assessing NCTC corps member effectiveness:

- *Academic outcomes of students served by TFA corps members are comparable to or exceed outcomes for students who took similar courses in the same or similar schools with teachers who entered the profession via other portals.*
- *Feedback from colleagues indicates strengths in less quantifiable areas of teacher effectiveness.*

Quantitative Assessment of TFA-ENC Teacher Quality

Historical studies of the impacts of North Carolina TFA corps members on student outcomes have generated largely positive results. For example, in one study, results for mathematics teachers suggested a positive effect on students of having a TFA teacher (relative to other teachers of similar experience) of 13.2% of a standard deviation (with a standard error of 3.7).³⁴ Another study found that the impact of TFA teachers was about 15.3% of a standard deviation in mathematics (with a standard error of 4.6).³⁵

More recently, CERE-NC partner EPIC's updated study of the relative effectiveness of early-career teachers in North Carolina (based on their preparation programs and using data through the 2011-12 school year) indicates that the value added by North Carolina TFA corps members was significantly higher than that of other early-career teachers in elementary and middle grades mathematics and science who were prepared in traditional public in-state programs, with notable differences at the middle grades level. The value added by TFA corps members in reading was positive but not statistically significantly so in elementary grades, but in middle grades, the value added by TFA corps members was again significantly higher. Finally, the value added by TFA corps members in high school mathematics, science, and social studies also was significantly higher.³⁶

³³ The narrative analysis section on retention included in Appendix K of the first evaluation report provides additional insights into reasons for early departure of corps members.

³⁴ Xu, Hannaway, & Taylor (2011)

³⁵ Glazerman, Mayer and Decker (2006)

³⁶ Bastian, K. C., and Patterson, K. M. (2014). *Teacher Preparation and Performance in North Carolina Public Schools*. Chapel Hill, NC: Education Policy Initiative at Carolina. http://publicpolicy.unc.edu/files/2014/02/Teacher-Preparation-and-Performance_FINAL.pdf

Qualitative Assessments of TFA-ENC Teacher Quality

The first evaluation report also included an analysis of qualitative evidence of TFA-ENC cohort quality, the results of which are summarized here.³⁷ Several themes related to the perceived quality of TFA-ENC corps members emerged during focus group discussions, including: tenacity; classroom management; pedagogy and delivery of instructional content; and rigor.³⁸

Tenacity. Tenacity refers to a teacher's ability to persist in the face of adversity or challenges. Focus group participants suggested that TFA-ENC corps members typically fell into one of two classes: either they exhibited a strong commitment and dedication to the job, or they dropped out fairly early in the year, possibly from feeling "burnt out," or as a result of an inability to manage their classrooms. Thus, non-corps member teachers identified tenacity as a key characteristic of most TFA-ENC teachers.

Classroom management. Though feedback about TFA-ENC corps member classroom management was sparse, the opinions that were shared varied considerably, with some non-corps members reporting that TFA-ENC corps members lacked classroom management skills, while others indicated that corps members grew over the course of the year in their classroom management skills. Respondents also noted corps members' ability to develop a student-teacher relationship based on discipline and respect.

General pedagogy and content-specific knowledge. Non-corps members were divided in their perceptions of the strength and quality of their TFA-ENC colleagues' pedagogy in general and of their content-specific knowledge. The general perception shared by non-corps members was that corps members knew their content well but that at the start of the academic year "they . . . don't know how to relate it down to the middle school level," suggesting a disconnect between their content knowledge and their ability to share that knowledge with their students in a pedagogically-sound way. However, comments made toward the end of the academic year suggested that corps members' instructional delivery improved with time and experience.

Instructional rigor. Very little information was shared by non-corps members during focus groups regarding their perceptions of TFA-ENC corps members' instructional rigor, but those who did share suggested that their TFA colleagues met the expectations established by their schools, though in some cases their perceptions were that they might have pushed their students too hard.

³⁷ The UNC EPIC study cited above also included findings related to qualitative assessments of TFA corps member through 2011-12. In that study, TFA corps members typically were rated higher than their peers prepared in traditional public in-state programs on each of the five qualitatively-measured North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards.

³⁸ Note, however, that the majority of responses related to teacher quality were provided by non-corps member teachers at only one of the four schools where focus groups were conducted, and that very few TFA-ENC participants themselves discussed issues related to their perceptions of teacher quality. As a result, and as noted in the original report, conclusions drawn from the analyses should be treated with caution, as they do not necessarily present opinions from a wide or representative range of participants.

Administration of North Carolina Teacher Corps by Teach for America

In July 2012, the North Carolina General Assembly formally recognized the establishment of NCTC,³⁹ but in July 2013, the General Assembly passed legislation that named TFA as the administrator of NCTC, beginning with the 2014-15 cohort.⁴⁰ The legislation states that, effective July 1, 2014, the State Board of Education would enter into contract with TFA to, among other things, “establish three new programs designed to increase the recruitment of candidates who are residents of North Carolina and increase the number of candidates who remain working in North Carolina public schools beyond their initial two-year TFA commitment.”⁴¹

Details of the progress of the transition of the administration of the NCTC program to TFA are limited due to the timing of this report and to the date on which TFA began its formal administration of the 2014-15 NCTC cohort (July 1, 2014). Initial documentation provided by TFA suggests that TFA will increase in-state efforts to promote current TFA programs and increase recruitment of North Carolina students and professionals to these programs (Appendix E); as of July 2014, TFA-ENC has recruited 137 such corps members (of the total cohort of 315 new corps members) from 23 North Carolina colleges and universities for the 2014-15 school year.⁴² Promotional materials also indicate that any current or future candidate with North Carolina ties (i.e., corps members who graduated from a North Carolina college or university, or who are current residents) will be considered members of the North Carolina Teacher Corps. Initial feedback from TFA-ENC leadership suggested that TFA planned to expand its presence in Eastern North Carolina by serving one additional LEA (Pitt County Schools)—an NCTC LEA in school years 2012-13 and 2013-14—via recruitment of between 8 and 12 first-year corps members to that LEA for the 2014-15 school year. In addition, TFA is opening a new chapter in the state’s Piedmont Triad region, which will support 30 new corps members in Guilford County Schools—also a former NCTC LEA—in 2014-15. Plans to provide services to the 28 other former NCTC LEAs (see Table 1 and Figure 1, above) are unclear.

³⁹ SL 2012-142; <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Sessions/2011/Bills/House/HTML/H950v7.html>

⁴⁰ SL 2013-360; <http://ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/HTML/S402v7.html>; NCTC will continue to provide support for the 2013-14 cohort through the 2014-15 school year via RttT no-cost extension funding.

⁴¹ SB 402, Section 8.21; SL 2013-360; <http://ncleg.net/Sessions/2013/Bills/Senate/HTML/S402v7.html>

⁴² As indicated in an email from TFA-ENC to NCDPI (July 9, 2014). The total cohort size (315) is approximate; cohort numbers were not finalized until after the completion of this report.

Summative Conclusions

Data collected during the 2013-14 school year for this final report built on the baseline data presented in the first report and the follow-up analyses in the second report to support summative conclusions of the two-year NCTC initiative and the RttT-funded expansion of TFA in Northeast North Carolina.

North Carolina Teacher Corps

- *Recruitment.* In total, 94 NCTC corps members were employed across 23 LEAs between 2012-13 and 2013-14; however, in neither year did the program meet its targets (100 and 150 corps members, respectively). The strength of the candidates admitted to the program (based on undergraduate GPA and the selectivity of their undergraduate institutions) increased in the second year (see Appendix D).
- *Retention.* The greatest loss of corps members occurred between their initial acceptance into the program and their employment—that is, before they even entered a classroom. In 2013, NCTC introduced mechanisms to reduce attrition during this period, such as providing clearer communication about program requirements (e.g., licensure testing), increasing career development opportunities and support via the summer training, more carefully matching corps members to employment that aligns with their interests, and to the extent possible, securing employment for corps members earlier in the summer.

While attrition was high between the recruitment and employment stages, evidence gathered via focus groups and surveys suggests that retention rates after the initial two-year commitment may be higher for NCTC than for similar programs. Evidence is mixed, however, as to whether an emphasis on the recruitment of corps members with North Carolina ties is a key reason for those retention rates; the network of support provided by the program during corps members' first two years appears to have been at least as important, if not more so.

- *Preparation Quality.* The components of NCTC's training that were most beneficial for corps members were: the scope and quality of content provided; the quality, professionalism, and ongoing support of program and training staff; and the in-class training segment that provided valuable hands-on teaching experience.

Programs like NCTC with limited time for pre-service training can make better use of that training time by: placing more emphasis on the development of the knowledge and skills that most support early-career teachers (such as classroom management); providing in-class experiences ahead of the information-driven segments of their training, to provide corps members with context for what they learn during that training; and placing corps members in classroom training environments that closely align with school and classroom environments in which corps members are likely to secure employment.

- *Teacher Effectiveness.* Sufficient quantitative evidence to determine the effectiveness of corps members was not yet available at the time this report was completed. However, evidence gathered via focus groups and interviews with non-NCTC teachers and principals suggests that their perceptions of corps member classroom performance were similar to their perceptions of the performance of other early-career teachers with non-traditional teacher

preparation backgrounds. Principals most often cited a lack of pre-service experience and ineffective classroom management as corps members' greatest challenges, though principals were more positive about the classroom management skills of the second cohort.

In sum, though the evaluation revealed areas of specific weakness in the initiative that would need to be addressed if it continued (e.g., converting potential recruits into corps members, providing extensive pre-teaching preparation, finding employment for all trained corps members), overall, the initiative appeared either to meet or to be on a trajectory toward meeting many of its goals. When asked if, given an opportunity to make the decision again, they would choose to take part in NCTC, all interviewed teachers agreed that they would: “[The NCTC program] has been incredible . . . I’d definitely recommend it to anybody who was trying to go lateral entry as opposed to going on your own.”

Teach for America

- TFA placed or retained 157 corps members in Eastern North Carolina at the beginning of school year 2011-12, 219 corps members at the beginning of 2012-13, and 280 corps members at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year. Overall, between 2010-11 and 2013-14, RttT funds helped TFA-ENC exceed its overall goal for growth in Eastern North Carolina.
- TFA corps members continue to be rated both quantitatively and qualitatively as highly effective teachers, relative to their early-career peers.
- Since 2008, about 87% of TFA-ENC corps members have completed two full years of teaching; however, the preliminary retention rate for the 2012 cohort (75%)—recorded at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, before that cohort completed its two-year commitment—already was much lower than the rate for the four preceding cohorts.

Administration of NCTC by TFA for 2014-15 and Beyond

- During the 2013 session, the North Carolina General Assembly passed legislation that named TFA as the administrator of NCTC as of July 1, 2014, beginning with the 2014-15 cohort. The 2013-14 cohort will be supported in its second year by RttT no-cost extension funding.
- TFA plans to expand its presence in Eastern North Carolina by providing an estimated 8 to 12 first-year corps members to Pitt County Schools—one of the former NCTC LEAs—for the 2014-15 school year.
- TFA’s support for a third North Carolina chapter, also beginning in 2014-15, will provide 30 corps members to Guilford County Schools—another former NCTC LEA.

Appendix A. North Carolina Teacher Corps Member and Teach For America Corps Member Survey Items and Results

Descriptive statistics for items from the fall 2013 and spring 2014 survey administrations to NCTC and TFA corps members.

North Carolina Teacher Corps

Fall 2013

Factor	Item	N	Mean	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Sense of Community	I value having other NCTC members at my school/district/cohort.	53	4.26	0.0%	0.0%	20.8%	32.1%	47.2%
	I feel isolated at this school.	53	2.17	34.0%	37.7%	9.4%	15.1%	3.8%
	I receive valuable feedback about my teaching from other NCTC members at my school/district/cohort.	53	3.30	0.0%	18.9%	43.4%	26.4%	11.3%
	I feel supported by other NCTC members at my school/district/cohort.	53	3.91	0.0%	5.7%	28.3%	35.8%	30.2%
	Having other NCTC members in my school/district/cohort will be or was critical to my decision to return for my second year of teaching.	47	2.55	19.1%	25.5%	38.3%	14.9%	2.1%
	I plan to stay beyond my two-year commitment to teaching.	53	4.23	0.0%	3.8%	11.3%	43.4%	41.5%
Strength of Community	Frequency of discussing school-related issues with other NCTC members	52	2.44	40.4%	17.3%	17.3%	7.7%	17.3%
	Frequency of participation in non-school-related activities with other NCTC members	53	2.00	47.2%	20.8%	19.9%	11.3%	1.9%

Note: Items either asked about school (n = 14), district (n = 33), or cohort (n = 6) depending on whether the respondent indicated that he or she was the only NCTC teacher at his or her school and/or district.

Factor	Item	N	Mean	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Sense of Community	I value having other NCTC members at my school/district/cohort.	67	4.04	1.5%	1.5%	23.9%	37.3%	35.8%
	I feel isolated at this school.	67	2.28	28.4%	40.3%	10.4%	16.4%	4.5%
	I receive valuable feedback about my teaching from other NCTC members at my school/district/cohort.	67	3.25	4.5%	14.9%	41.8%	28.4%	10.4%
	I feel supported by other NCTC members at my school/district/cohort.	66	3.71	4.5%	7.6%	21.2%	45.5%	21.2%
	Having other NCTC members in my school/district/cohort will be or was critical to my decision to return for my second year of teaching.	57	2.70	17.5%	28.1%	29.8%	15.8%	8.8%
	I plan to stay beyond my two-year commitment to teaching.	66	3.95	1.5%	7.6%	24.2%	27.3%	39.4%
				<i>Never</i>	<i>Less than once a month</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Bi-weekly to weekly</i>	<i>Daily</i>
Strength of Community	Frequency of discussing school-related issues with other NCTC members	67	2.42	28.4%	26.9%	28.4%	7.5%	9.0%
	Frequency of participation in non-school-related activities with other NCTC members	65	1.80	49.2%	30.8%	12.3%	6.2%	1.5%

Note: Items either asked about school (n = 17), district (n = 40), or cohort (n = 10) depending on whether the respondent indicated that he or she was the only NCTC teacher at his or her school and/or district.

Factor	Item	N	Mean	<i>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</i>						
				<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>			
Sense of Community	I value having other TFA corps members at my school/district/cohort.	96	4.49	0.0%	1.0%	11.5%	25.0%	62.5%		
	I feel isolated at this school.	94	1.80	43.6%	39.4%	10.6%	6.4%	0.0%		
	I receive valuable feedback about my teaching from other TFA corps members at my school/district/cohort.	96	3.28	43.6%	39.4%	10.6%	6.4%	0.0%		
	I feel supported by other TFA corps members at my school/ district/cohort.	96	4.23	7.3%	17.7%	28.1%	33.3%	13.5%		
	Having other TFA corps members in my school/district/cohort will be or was critical to my decision to return for my second year of teaching.	91	3.10	2.1%	3.1%	8.3%	42.7%	43.8%		
	I plan to stay beyond my two-year commitment to teaching.	96	3.15	16.5%	17.6%	22.0%	27.5%	16.5%		
				<i>Less than</i> <i>once a</i> <i>month</i>						
				<i>Never</i>				<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Bi-weekly to weekly</i>	<i>Daily</i>
Strength of Community	Frequency of discussing school-related issues with other TFA corps members	93	4.02	8.6%	7.5%	10.8%	19.4%	53.8%		
	Frequency of participation in non-school-related activities with other TFA corps members	95	3.58	7.4%	11.6%	18.9%	42.1%	20.0%		

Note: Items either asked about school (n = 56), district (n = 35), or cohort (n = 5) depending on whether the respondent indicated that he or she was the only TFA teacher at his or her school and/or district.

Factor	Item	N	Mean	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Sense of Community	I value having other TFA corps members at my school/district/cohort.	92	4.45	1.1%	3.3%	8.7%	23.9%	63.0%
	I feel isolated at this school.	92	2.12	29.3%	43.5%	16.3%	7.6%	3.3%
	I receive valuable feedback about my teaching from other TFA corps members at my school/district/cohort.	92	3.24	4.3%	21.7%	26.1%	41.3%	6.5%
	I feel supported by other TFA corps members at my school/district/cohort.	92	4.11	0.0%	6.5%	9.8%	50.0%	33.7%
	Having other TFA corps members in my school/district/cohort will be or was critical to my decision to return for my second year of teaching.	83	3.4	10.8%	13.3%	24.1%	28.9%	22.9%
	I plan to stay beyond my two-year commitment to teaching.	92	2.93	14.1%	20.7%	32.6%	22.8%	9.8%

		N	Mean	<i>Never</i>	<i>Less than once a month</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Bi-weekly to weekly</i>	<i>Daily</i>
Strength of Community	Frequency of discussing school-related issues with other corps TFA corps members	92	3.77	7.6%	13.0%	12.0%	29.3%	38.0%
	Frequency of participation in non-school-related activities with other TFA corps members	91	3.31	9.9%	20.9%	13.2%	40.7%	15.4%

Note: Items either asked about school (n = 53), district (n = 30), or cohort (n = 9) depending on whether the respondent indicated that he or she was the only TFA teacher at his or her school and/or district.

Appendix B. Focus Group and Interview Protocols, Fall 2013

NC Teacher Corps Member Focus Group Questions

Overall / Introduction

- How would you describe your NCTC experience to this point?

Initiative Effectiveness / Recruitment and Retention

- Did you consider other teaching opportunities? If so, what were they, and why did you choose NCTC?
- What do you think are the benefits of being placed with other NCTC members at your school? What are the drawbacks?
- Do you think being placed with other NCTC members affects your thinking about returning next year to this school?
- Have you experienced any feelings of isolation during your time here at [name of school]? In [name of community]? If yes:
 - What role does being away from your family play in these feelings?
 - What role does being away from a larger city play?
 - What other factors do you think contribute to these feelings of isolation?
 - Has being with other NCTC members helped reduce these feelings? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Do you plan to remain in teaching at this school next year? Why or why not? Are you considering remaining in teaching beyond your commitment? Why or why not?

Non-NCTC New Teacher Focus Group Questions

Overall / Introduction

- How would you describe your first-year experience to this point? Your experience working with NCTC members at your school? [Probe for positive and negative interactions]

Initiative Effectiveness / Recruitment and Retention

- When you were an undergraduate, were you aware of opportunities like *Teach for America* or *NCTC* [Insert brief description of each program here, if necessary]?
 - Did you consider applying for a position through one or more of those programs? Why or why not?
 - Would you make the same choice again? Why or why not?
- How would you describe the preparedness for teaching in this school of the NCTC teachers? Do you believe they were as well-prepared for their first year of teaching as you were?
 - Could you please elaborate on your perceptions of their content knowledge mastery?
 - Could you please elaborate on your perceptions of their instructional delivery effectiveness?
 - Could you please elaborate on your perceptions of their classroom management skills?
- NCTC places teachers in groups of three or more at some schools. Do you think that having several NCTC teachers at your school has impacted their individual or collective effectiveness?
- Have you experienced any feelings of isolation during your time here at X [name of school]? In [name of community]?
 - What role does being away from your family play in these feelings?
 - What role does being away from a larger city play?
- Do you think NCTC teachers feel isolated at this school? In this community? Why or why not?
- Are you planning to return to this school next year? Why or why not?
 - [If returning]: Are you considering remaining in teaching for more than two years? Why or why not?
 - [If not planning to return]: Are you planning to return to teaching somewhere else? If so, where?
 - [If not planning to return to teaching]: Are you planning to stay in education in some capacity? If so, describe.

Principal Interview Items

- How would you describe your experience with the NCTC teachers to this point?
- What supports and/or resources do you provide specifically to your NCTC teachers?
- How prepared were NCTC staff for teaching at your school?
 - Could you please elaborate on your perceptions of their *content knowledge mastery*?
 - Could you please elaborate on your perceptions of their *instructional delivery effectiveness*?
 - Could you please elaborate on your perceptions of their *classroom management skills*?
- How well do you think NCTC teachers are assimilating a) in the school, b) with other teachers, and c) in the community?
- Do you sense that your NCTC teachers feel isolated at this school? Why or why not?
- [If more than one NCTC teacher is assigned to the school] To what extent do you think the fact that there are *multiple* Corps Members at your school impacts their individual or collective effectiveness? In what ways?
- What is your sense of the likelihood that your NCTC teachers will choose to continue teaching at your school next year? What about after their commitment to NCTC ends?
- How would you characterize differences (if any) between your NCTC teachers and your other early-career teachers who are not affiliated with NCTC?
 - To what extent do you think your NCTC teachers are more or less effective in the classroom than your other early-career teachers?
 - Are there certain content areas for which you think your NCTC teachers are better suited?
- How do you think the presence of NCTC teachers [will impact/has impacted] the culture of your school?
- What are your impressions of the NCTC program at this point? What improvements would you suggest?

Appendix C. Coding Scheme for Focus Group Results

Integration: the degree to which corps members work their way in or are worked into different contexts associated with their placement.

- *Integration Community:* community living (i.e. integration into a rural context)
- *Integration School:* degree to which corps members have been assimilated into the school culture; i.e, corps members are interacting well/poorly with school members

Isolation: the degree to which corps members feel disconnected from based on proximity

- *Isolation Family:* discussion about feelings of separation from family
- *Isolation Geographic:* feelings of separation due to distance from where they want to be (e.g., far from city/cultural centers)

Professional Development: pre-service and on-going training/mentorship that bolster teacher quality

- *PD Ongoing Training:* Catch-all “in school” professional development training
 - *PD Ongoing Training ACC (TFA Only):* Once a month TFA-ENC training
 - *PD Ongoing Training Mentoring:* mention of mentor relationship with TFA Staffer assigned to their area, or mentoring at the local school, any level of guidance from anyone else who is helping them
- *PD Preparation:* Non-corps member’s perceptions of corps members preparedness for the teaching experience
 - *PD Preparation Cultural Sensitivity:* training targeted specifically toward being sensitive to cultural differences that corps member may encounter in their school; e.g. working with rural students from low SES backgrounds, ethnic differences,
 - *PD Preparation Pre-service Training:* Explicit discussion about pre-service training experiences or lack thereof
- *PD Support Systems:* Informal or non-TFA-provided professional development support, such as local PLCs, organic networks of corps members, etc.

Placement: How teachers get assigned to schools and classes (content area) within schools

- *Placement Pods:* intentionally placing 3 or more teachers within the same school

Recruitment: How teachers became a part of the program; also, whether a state-based program (like NCTC) would have appealed to them

- *Recruitment Selectivity:* use of specific criteria to select teachers or comparing/contrasting teachers on the basis of their quality

Retention: indication of a teacher’s (TFA & Non-TFA) intention to stay at their school, in teaching or education. (Typically beyond the two year commitment)

- *Retention Education:* will remain in education, not necessarily as a teacher
- *Retention Same School:* will remain in teaching at the same school
- *Retention Teaching:* will remain in teaching, but not at the same school
- *Retention Leavers:* do not intend to stay in teaching or education

Teacher Quality: the perceived quality of a teacher in any of a number of categories including but not limited to effectiveness

- *Teacher Quality +/- Tenacity:* description of corps member's ability to persist in the face of adversity/challenges
- *Teacher Quality Classroom Management:* Any technique or strategy utilized to run the classroom effectively and/or behavioral management of students
- *Teacher Quality Delivery of Instructional Content:* comments about delivery of instruction that has to do with the topic itself: e.g. she really knows her geometry (one of three aspects of effectiveness)
- *Teacher Quality Delivery of Instructional Pedagogy:* comments about the delivery on instruction that has to do with how the content is taught; e.g. she really knows how to teach geometry (one of three aspects of effectiveness)
- *Teacher Quality Delivery of Instruction Rigor (Broader):* Includes expectations for students as well as the depth of instruction beyond the minimum standards (strategy + concept) (one of three aspects of effectiveness)
- *Teacher Quality Non-TFA TQ:* (Catch All) for discussions by non-TFAers about their own teaching quality or by TFAers about the quality of their non-TFA colleagues

Program Feedback from Participating Principals: The extent to which participants provide feedback on the NCTC program as a whole.

- *NCTC Program School Culture:* The extent to which participants feel having an NCTC teacher in the school impacts the school culture.

Appendix D. North Carolina Corps Member GPA and School Selectivity

Table D1. Distribution of NCTC Inaugural and Second Cohort GPA

GPA Categories	NCTC Corps Member Cohort Entry Year		
		2012	2013
	<i>n</i>	5	15
4.0-3.7	Percent of Cohort	16.7%	17.9%
	<i>n</i>	6	12
3.69-3.4	Percent of Cohort	20.0%	14.3%
	<i>n</i>	3	20
3.39-3.1	Percent of Cohort	10.0%	23.8%
	<i>n</i>	7	21
3.09-2.8	Percent of Cohort	23.3%	25.0%
	<i>n</i>	9	16
2.79-2.5	Percent of Cohort	30.0%	19.0%
Total	<i>n</i>	30	84

Note: Data in this table reflect original constitution of each cohort, before employment and subsequent early- and mid-year departures and replacements.

Table D2. NCTC Inaugural and Second Cohort by College and University Selectivity

Selectivity	2012			2013	
	<i>n</i>	Percent of Cohort	Percent of Cohort (excluding "NR"*)	<i>n</i>	Percent of Cohort
Premiere	0	0%	0%	2	2.4%
Most Selective	2	6.7%	10.0%	15	17.9%
More Selective	5	16.7%	25.0%	13	15.5%
Selective	10	33.3%	50.0%	31	36.9%
Less Selective	3	10.0%	15.0%	15	17.9%
Least Selective	0	0%	0%	8	9.5%
Not Rated	10	33.3%	---	---	---
Total	30			84	
Total excluding "NR"	20				

*"NR" = Not rated by USN&WR in 2012

Note: Data in this table reflect original constitution of each cohort, before early-year departures and replacements.

Appendix E. TFA Promotional Materials for North Carolina Initiative

TEACHFORAMERICA



A Critical Moment in North Carolina

North Carolina has a long history of fighting for justice. From the birth of the student-led sit-in movement at a lunch counter in Greensboro to the launch of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in Raleigh, North Carolinians have left their legacy standing up for equality when it matters most.

Today, our state stands at another critical moment. Despite the past and present leadership of many courageous individuals, we are not delivering on the promise of educational opportunity for all. Our kids currently perform below the national average in every subject measured – math, reading, science, English and overall.

We know that these statistics reflect major opportunity gaps in our state across race, ethnicity and income-level.

17%

Percentage of North Carolina kids who scored high enough on the ACT to be considered college ready by the Board of Education.

30%

According to the 2011-12 North Carolina state test, children from low-income households were about 30 percent less likely to be proficient in reading and mathematics.

31%

Percentage of 8th graders proficient in reading, including only 14% of black students, 22% of Latino students, and 18% of low income students.

The Fight For Educational Justice

Now, we need our strongest homegrown leaders to step up and commit to working to deliver on the promise of educational equity for all North Carolina students.

Despite the challenges we face, we have an opportunity to make our state a true leader in the fight for educational justice. Already, individual kids, entire classrooms and even whole schools are proving that it's possible for all kids to achieve at the highest level – personally and academically – whatever their economic backgrounds.

Building on our state's legacy of homegrown leadership, in 2014, Teach For America will take up the work of the **North Carolina Teacher Corps** – an initiative launched by the state to increase the number of North Carolinians leading local classrooms.

www.teachforamerica.org/where-we-work

www.teachforamerica.org/why-teach-for-america/how-to-apply

Help NC Deliver on its Promise

While great teachers come from all backgrounds, we believe that people with a personal tie to this historic place – whether through alma mater or hometown – have the potential to make a profound additional impact with our local students.

North Carolinians who join the 2014 corps will be part of the charter Teach For America-run North Carolina Teacher Corps (NCTC). This effort is made possible by a recent increase in public support for our work in the state – the largest in our 20+ year NC history.

Along with the full continuum of research-based programming received by all corps members, members of the NCTC will have the opportunity to engage directly with community leaders from across the state and to share their perspectives and recommendations on how to retain more home-grown talent in high-need NC classrooms and communities to move us forward.

Profiles in Leadership



Alumnus: Steve North

Eastern North Carolina Corps 1993

As a teacher in Edgecombe County, Steve North saw how lack of adequate medical care was keeping his students from reaching their academic potential. After the corps, he earned his medical degree from UNC Chapel Hill, along with a Masters in Public Health from the University of Rochester. Dr. North now practices family and adolescent medicine at the Bakersville Community Medical Clinic and serves as President and Medical Director of the Center for Rural Health Innovation.



Corps Member: Ethan Tillman

Eastern North Carolina Corps 2013

Hometown: Waxhaw, NC

Alma Mater: University of South Carolina

Subject taught: English Language Arts

"There are many bright and talented kids in this community, and I can't wait to show the world exactly what the folks here in Southeastern NC have to offer."

Apply Now

Teach For America is committed to recruiting more North Carolinians to lead this work in NC. Learn more about becoming part of the transformation in your home state and submit your application at www.teachforamerica.org.

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The Opportunity: A vision for North Carolina



To see our state's strongest leaders dig in and commit to delivering on the promise of educational equity for all North Carolina students.



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The Opportunity: North Carolina Teacher Corps

- As a NC Teacher Corps Member within Teach For America, you will**
- Receive full Teach For America membership and support
 - Engage directly with community leaders from across the state to inform and shape educational policy
 - Share perspectives and recommendations on how to retain more homegrown talent in high-need NC classrooms and communities to move the state forward



- Current Partnership Areas
 Eastern North Carolina
 Charlotte
- New Partners
 North Carolina Piedmont Triad

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Next Steps

LEARN MORE

- Get the full details on living and working in Charlotte and/or Eastern North Carolina on our regional webpages:
www.teachforamerica.org/where-we-work
- Sign up for an informal conversation with a member of the North Carolina team to learn more about this opportunity. Email Amanda Salas (amanda.salas@teachforamerica.org) to schedule a call
- Watch this short video about the Eastern North Carolina region:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqQ10DgXcu4&feature=youtu.be>



THINK ON IT

Ask yourself if North Carolina is a place where you can meet the challenge you crave and make the impact you desire as a member of Teach For America.

PREFERENCE NC

Considering designating Charlotte, ENC, or the Piedmont Triad as one of your "Highly Preferred" regions on your Regional Preferring form before your final interview.

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Contact Information:

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