

Article 17D.

Educator Preparation Programs.

§ 115C-269.1. Definitions.

As used in this Article, the following definitions shall apply:

- (1) Approved EPP. – An EPP that has been approved by the State Board as meeting the requirements established by rule, as provided in G.S. 115C-269.10.
- (2) Authorized EPP. – An EPP that (i) has met the accountability performance standards described in G.S. 115C-269.35 and (ii) has been approved by the State Board or accredited by CAEP to prepare, train, and recommend students for licensure.
- (3) CAEP. – Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.
- (4) Clinical educator. – An individual employed by a partner school, including a classroom teacher, who assesses, supports, and develops a clinical intern's knowledge, skills, and professional disposition during an internship.
- (5) Clinical intern or intern. – Any student enrolled in a recognized EPP who is jointly assigned by that EPP and a local board of education to teach under the direction and supervision of a clinical educator, as provided in G.S. 115C-269.25.
- (6) Clinical internship or internship. – Type of field experience in which a clinical intern works under the supervision of a clinical educator and may be delegated those duties granted to an educator by G.S. 115C-307 and any other part of the school program for which the clinical educator is responsible.
- (7) Clinical mentor or mentor. – An individual employed by an elementary or secondary school, including a classroom teacher, who assesses, supports, and develops a clinical resident's knowledge, skills, and professional disposition during the residency.
- (8) Clinical residency or residency. – Type of field experience in which a clinical resident who already holds a bachelor's degree is enrolled in a recognized EPP and also employed by a local school administrative unit as an educator and supervised by the recognized EPP in partial fulfillment of the recognized EPP's training requirements.
- (9) Clinical resident. – Any student who meets the following criteria:
 - a. Holds a bachelor's degree.
 - b. Is enrolled in a recognized EPP.
 - c. Is employed by a local school administrative unit as an educator and supervised by the recognized EPP in partial fulfillment of the recognized EPP's training requirements.
- (10) Educator preparation program or EPP. – Any entity that prepares, trains, and recommends students for teacher licensure.
- (11) Field experience. – Placement of students enrolled in a recognized EPP in settings to provide opportunities to observe, practice, and demonstrate knowledge and skills. A field experience may include preclinical classroom experiences.
- (12) Field supervisor. – An individual who is employed by a recognized EPP to observe students, monitor their performance, and provide constructive feedback

to improve their effectiveness as educators during their clinical internship or residency.

- (13) Initially authorized EPP. – An EPP that has been either approved by the State Board or accredited by CAEP to prepare, train, and recommend students for licensure, but lacks data required by the performance standards described in G.S. 115C-269.35.
- (14) Partner school. – An elementary or secondary school located in North Carolina that includes (i) a public school governed by a local board of education, a charter school board of directors, a regional school board of directors, or a UNC laboratory school board of trustees; (ii) a Department of Defense Elementary and Secondary School established pursuant to 10 U.S.C. § 2164; and (iii) a nonpublic school that meets the requirements of Part 1 or 2 of Article 39 of this Chapter.
- (15) Recognized educator preparation program or recognized EPP. – An entity that is initially authorized or authorized by the State Board to recommend students for educator licensure.
- (16) Student. – An individual enrolled in a recognized educator preparation program. (2017-189, s. 2(i).)

§ 115C-269.5. Educator preparation programs.

(a) Role of EPPs. – An EPP shall prepare students for educator licensure and meet the standards and requirements set forth in this Article. To recommend students for licensure, an EPP shall be recognized by the State Board.

(b) State Board Authority. – The State Board shall initially authorize and recognize an EPP as required by this Article. The State Board shall have authority to regulate EPPs in accordance with this Article.

(c) Initial Authorization. – The State Board shall assign the status of initially authorized to an EPP if it has not yet generated sufficient data to meet the performance standards, but the EPP meets one of the following criteria:

- (1) The EPP is approved by the State Board.
- (2) The EPP is nationally accredited by CAEP.

(d) Authorization. – The State Board shall assign the status of authorized to an EPP if the EPP meets the following criteria:

- (1) The EPP is approved by the State Board or nationally accredited by CAEP.
- (2) The EPP satisfies the performance standards to the extent that the EPP has not been assigned revoked status described in G.S. 115C-269.45.

(e) The State Board shall assign the status of recognized EPP to an EPP that has the status of initially authorized or authorized. (2017-189, s. 2(i).)

§ 115C-269.10. Educator preparation program approval process.

(a) State Board Authority. – The State Board shall have authority to approve an EPP that meets the requirements established by rule as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Rules for Granting State Approval. – The State Board shall adopt rules for granting approval to EPPs in accordance with this Article. The rules shall ensure the following:

- (1) A rigorous approval process that requires that the criteria in this Article are met.

- (2) An application process, peer review, and technical assistance provided by the State Board.
 - (3) An approval period of five years and process for renewal of approval.
- (c) Minimum Approval Standards. – At a minimum, the rules established as provided in subsection (b) of this section shall include the following standards:
- (1) Students shall develop a deep understanding of the critical concepts and principles of their discipline and, by completion, be able to use discipline-specific practices flexibly to advance the learning of all students toward attainment of college- and career-ready standards.
 - (2) Effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practice shall be central to preparation so that students develop the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to demonstrate positive impact on all elementary and secondary students' learning and development.
 - (3) Quality of students shall be a continuing and purposeful part of the EPP's responsibility from recruitment, at admission, through the progression of courses and field experiences, and to decisions that completers are prepared to teach effectively and are recommended for licensure. The EPP shall demonstrate that development of student quality is the goal of educator preparation in all phases of the program through evidence of impact under subdivision (4) of this subsection.
 - (4) The EPP shall demonstrate the impact of its completers on elementary and secondary student learning and development, classroom instruction, and schools, and the satisfaction of its completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation.
 - (5) The EPP shall maintain a quality assurance system comprised of valid data from multiple measures, including evidence of students' and completers' positive impact on elementary and secondary student learning and development. The EPP shall support continuous improvement that is sustained and evidence-based and that evaluates the effectiveness of its completers. The EPP shall use the results of inquiry and data collection to establish priorities, enhance program elements and capacity, and test innovations to improve completers' impact on elementary and secondary student learning and development.
- (d) Application. – An EPP seeking to be approved by the State Board shall complete the application process established by the State Board.
- (e) Peer Review. – An EPP seeking to be approved by the State Board shall undergo a peer review process established by the State Board that includes highly qualified and trained members to adequately review programs within the State.
- (f) Technical Assistance. – For EPPs seeking approval, the State Board shall provide technical assistance in efforts to do the following:
- (1) Improve education quality and EPP performance.
 - (2) Inform EPPs about the program approval process as part of EPP performance based on outcome data.
 - (3) Assist with State and federal reporting processes.
 - (4) Help build and maintain partnerships between elementary and secondary schools and EPPs. (2017-189, s. 2(i).)

§ 115C-269.15. Minimum admissions requirements for educator preparation programs.

(a) Testing. – A recognized EPP shall not admit a student until that student has met one of the following criteria:

- (1) Attained a passing score or prescribed minimum score set by the State Board for a preprofessional skills test.
- (2) Achieved the appropriate required scores, as determined by the State Board, on the verbal and mathematics portions of the SAT or ACT. The minimum combined verbal and mathematics score set by the State Board for the SAT shall be 1,100 or greater. The minimum composite score set by the State Board for the ACT shall be 24 or greater.
- (3) Holds a bachelor's degree.

(b) Individual Grade Point Average. – A recognized EPP shall not admit a student into an EPP unless that student has earned a grade point average of at least a 2.7.

(c) Grade Point Average Exceptions. – Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, the individual grade point average requirement does not apply to a clinical resident student if the hiring local school administrative unit determines that one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) The student has at least 10 years of relevant experience.
- (2) For a program leading to licensure in career and technical education, the student has at least five years of relevant experience.

(d) Cohort Grade Point Average. – A recognized EPP shall ensure that the minimum cohort grade point average for each entering cohort to an EPP is at least a 3.0. (2017-189, s. 2(i).)

§ 115C-269.20. Content and pedagogy requirements.

(a) Content and Pedagogy Requirements. – To ensure that EPPs remain current and reflect a rigorous course of study that is aligned to State and national standards, the State Board shall require at least the following minimum requirements with demonstrated competencies in its rules:

- (1) All EPPs shall include instruction in the following:
 - a. The identification and education of children with disabilities.
 - b. Positive management of student behavior and effective communication techniques for defusing and de-escalating disruptive or dangerous behavior.
 - c. Demonstration of competencies in using digital and other instructional technologies to provide high-quality, integrated digital teaching and learning to all students.
 - d. The skills and responsibilities required of educators.
 - e. The expectations for student performance based on State standards.
 - f. The supply of and demand for educators in this State, as identified in the vacancy report required by G.S. 115C-299.5(e).
 - g. The State's framework for appraisal of educators.
- (2) EPPs providing training for elementary education teachers shall include the following:
 - a. Adequate coursework in the teaching of mathematics.
 - a1. Coursework in the Science or Reading, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3. This coursework shall not include preparation to use a three-cueing system, as defined in G.S. 115C-83.3(9a), or a curriculum with visual

memory as the primary basis for teaching word recognition to students in grades kindergarten through three.

- b. Assessment prior to licensure to determine if a student possesses the requisite knowledge in scientifically based reading, writing, and mathematics instruction that is aligned with the State Board's expectations.
 - c. Instruction in application of formative and summative assessments within the school and classroom setting through technology-based assessment systems available in State schools that measure and predict expected student improvement.
 - d. Instruction in integration of arts education across the curriculum.
- (3) EPPs providing training for elementary and special education general curriculum teachers shall ensure that students receive instruction in early literacy intervention strategies and practices that are aligned with the Science of Reading and State and national reading standards and shall include the following:
- a. Instruction in the teaching of reading, including a substantive understanding of reading as a process involving oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Instruction shall include appropriate application of literacy interventions to ensure reading proficiency for all students.
 - b. Instruction in evidence-based assessment and diagnosis of specific areas of difficulty with reading development and of reading deficiencies.
 - c. Instruction in appropriate application of literacy interventions to ensure reading proficiency for all students.
- (4) EPPs providing training for middle and high school teachers shall include the following:
- a. Adequate coursework in the relevant content area. For clinical residency programs, students may instead demonstrate mastery of the relevant content area through the passage of the relevant content area examination approved by the State Board.
 - b. Adequate coursework in the teaching of the relevant content area.
 - c. For EPPs providing training for science teachers, adequate preparation in issues related to science laboratory safety.
- (b) Reserved. (2017-189, s. 2(i); 2021-8, s. 4(a), (b); 2023-134, s. 7.64(g).)

§ 115C-269.25. Clinical partnerships and practice in educator preparation programs.

(a) Collaborative Partnerships With Elementary and Secondary Schools. – EPPs shall establish and maintain collaborative, formalized partnerships with elementary and secondary partner schools that are focused on student achievement, continuous school improvement, and the professional development of elementary and secondary educators, as well as those preparing educators.

(b) Memorandum of Understanding With Local School Administrative Units. – EPPs shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the local school administrative unit or the partner school where students are placed or employed. In the memorandum, the EPP and the local school administrative unit or partner school, as applicable, shall:

- (1) Define the collaborative relationship between the EPP and the local school administrative unit or partner school and how this partnership will be focused on continuous school improvement and student achievement.
 - (2) Adopt a plan for collaborative clinical educator or mentor selection, orientation, and student placement.
 - (3) Determine how information will be shared and verified between the EPP and the local school administrative unit or partner school.
- (c) Field Experience Requirements. – To the extent practicable, EPPs shall require, in all programs leading to initial professional licensure, the following:
- (1) Field experiences in every semester that include organized and sequenced engagement of students in settings that provide them with opportunities to observe, practice, and demonstrate knowledge and skills. The experiences shall be systematically designed and sequenced to increase the complexity and levels of engagement with which students apply, reflect upon, and expand their knowledge and skills, and to increase in each semester prior to the student's internship the number of hours spent in field experiences.
 - (2) A minimum of two hours of field experience in the first semester of the program and a cumulative total of at least 12 hours of field experiences prior to the student's internship.
 - (3) At least one field experience in a low-performing school.
- (d) Clinical Practice Requirements. – EPPs shall require clinical practice in the form of one of the following:
- (1) Internship that lasts for a minimum of 16 weeks. Internships may be over the course of two semesters and shall, to the extent practicable, provide field experiences at both the beginning and ending of the school year. It shall be the responsibility of a clinical educator, in cooperation with the principal and the representative of the EPP, to assign to the intern responsibilities and duties that will provide adequate preparation for teaching.
 - (2) Residency that meets the following criteria:
 - a. The residency lasts for a minimum of one year.
 - b. The EPP provides ongoing support to a student for the full term of the residency.
 - c. The EPP assigns a clinical mentor to the resident.
 - d. The resident completes field experiences and training required by the State Board prior to the residency.
- (e) Clinical Educator Requirements. – The EPP shall ensure clinical educators who supervise students in internships meet the following requirements:
- (1) Be professionally licensed in the field of licensure sought by the student.
 - (2) Have a minimum of three years of experience in a teaching role.
 - (3) Have been rated, through the educator's most recent formal evaluations, at least at the "proficient" level as part of the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System, or the equivalent on an evaluation system utilized by another state or partner school, as applicable, in the field of licensure sought by the student. The principal shall determine which clinical educator best meets the needs of each intern and shall assign the most appropriate clinical educator to that intern, with priority consideration for those clinical educators rated as "distinguished" and

"accomplished." If a principal determines that a teacher rated as "proficient" is the most appropriate clinical educator for an intern, the principal shall maintain records of the reasons for that determination.

(f) Legal Protection of Interns. – An intern under the supervision of a clinical educator or principal shall have the protection of the laws accorded to a licensed educator.

(g) Pedagogy Assessment. – EPPs shall require, in addition to a content assessment, a nationally normed and valid pedagogy assessment to determine clinical practice performance. Passing scores and mastery criteria shall be determined by the State Board. (2017-189, ss. 2(i), 6(p).)

§ 115C-269.30. Teacher assistants engaged in internships.

(a) Program for Teacher Assistants. – The State Board shall adopt a program to facilitate the process by which teacher assistants may become teachers. Teacher assistants who participate in this program shall meet the following requirements:

- (1) Be enrolled in a recognized EPP.
- (2) Be employed in a North Carolina public school.

(b) Internship Assignments. – Local school administrative units are encouraged to assign teacher assistants to a different classroom during an internship than the classroom they are assigned to as a teacher assistant. To the extent possible, they may be assigned to another school within the same local school administrative unit.

(c) Salary and Benefits. – Teacher assistants shall continue to receive their salary and benefits while interning in the same local school administrative unit where they are employed as a teacher assistant.

(d) Consultation With Institutions of Higher Education. – The State Board shall consult with the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities in the development of the program. (2017-189, ss. 2(i), 6(n).)

§ 115C-269.31. Teacher Assistant Tuition Reimbursement Grant Program.

(a) Purpose. – The Department of Public Instruction shall establish the Teacher Assistant Tuition Reimbursement Grant Program (Program). The purpose of the Program is to provide tuition assistance to part-time or full-time teacher assistants working in local school administrative units to pursue a college degree that will result in teacher licensure.

(b) Applications; Grant Priority. – Local school administrative units may apply to participate in the Program pursuant to a process to be established by the Department of Public Instruction. The application shall identify current and ongoing needs for licensed teachers and the expected number of eligible teacher assistants that would participate in the Program. In evaluating applications, the Department shall prioritize local school administrative units according to the following order:

- (1) Local school administrative units that received funds under the Teacher Assistant Tuition Reimbursement Pilot Program established in Section 8.29 of S.L. 2016-94, as amended by Section 7.20 of S.L. 2017-57, Section 6(m) of S.L. 2017-189, and Section 7.21 of S.L. 2018-5.
- (2) Local school administrative units located, in whole or in part, in a county with at least one local school administrative unit that received low-wealth supplemental funding in the previous fiscal year.

(3) All other local school administrative units.

(c) Award of Funds. – To the extent funds are made available for the Program, a local school administrative unit receiving funds under the Program shall provide a teacher assistant participating in the program an award of up to four thousand six hundred dollars (\$4,600) per academic year per teacher assistant, up to four academic years to defray the costs of tuition and fees at an educator preparation program at an institution of higher education while employed in the local school administrative unit as a teacher assistant.

(d) Additional Criteria. – The following additional criteria shall apply under the Program:

- (1) Tuition assistance awards granted under the Program may be provided for part-time or full-time coursework.
- (2) A local board of education may grant a teacher assistant academic leave to pursue coursework that may only be taken during working hours.
- (3) A teacher assistant shall fulfill the student teaching requirements of an educator preparation program by working as a teacher assistant at his or her employing local school administrative unit.
- (4) A teacher assistant shall continue to receive salary and benefits while student teaching in the local school administrative unit as provided for teacher assistants in G.S. 115C-269.30(c).

(e) Selection of Teacher Assistants. – The Department shall establish criteria for initial and continuing eligibility to participate in the Program. The Department shall adopt standards to ensure that only qualified, potential recipients receive an award of funds for tuition and fees under the Program. The standards shall include satisfactory academic progress toward achieving teacher licensure. Local school administrative units receiving grants pursuant to the Program shall select teacher assistants to receive funds under the Program and prioritize teacher assistants who received an award in the prior academic year and who are making satisfactory academic progress towards achieving teacher licensure. The Department of Public Instruction shall set criteria for the application and selection of teacher assistants to receive tuition assistance awards that includes at least the following:

- (1) The teacher assistant shall be employed by the local board of education in the local school administrative unit.
- (2) The teacher assistant shall be enrolled or provide a statement of intent to enroll in an accredited institution of higher education in North Carolina with an educator preparation program approved by the State Board of Education to pursue teacher licensure.
- (3) The teacher assistant qualifies as a resident for tuition purposes under the criteria set forth in G.S. 116-143.1 and in accordance with the coordinated and centralized residency determination process administered by the Authority [State Education Assistance Authority].

(f) Endorsement of Tuition Assistance Awards for Recipients. – Each local board of education participating in the Program shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the institution of higher education in which an award recipient under the Program is enrolled that includes procedures for at least the following:

- (1) Remittance of the award from the local board of education to the institution of higher education.
- (2) Endorsement of the funds awarded to the recipient to the institution of higher education for deposit into the account of the institution.

- (3) Return of a pro rata share of funds to the local board of education in the event a recipient (i) withdraws from the institution of higher education prior to the end of a term or (ii) the recipient's employment with the local board of education is terminated. The return of funds shall be consistent with procedures used by the institution under federal Title IV programs.

(g) Local Report. – No later than September 1 of each school year following at least six months of participation in the Program for that year, local boards of education participating in the Program shall report at least the following information to the Department of Public Instruction:

- (1) The number and amount of funds in tuition assistance awards provided to teacher assistants.
- (2) The number of teacher assistant recipients who achieved teacher licensure, including the period of time from the issue of an initial tuition assistance award to the time of achieving licensure.
- (3) The number of recipients who remained employed in the local school administrative unit after achieving teacher licensure.

(h) State Report. – No later than December 1, 2024, and annually thereafter for each year funds are awarded pursuant to the Program, the Department of Public Instruction shall aggregate the information provided pursuant to subsection (g) of this section and report that information to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee. (2023-134, s. 7.44(a).)

§ 115C-269.32. Teacher Apprentice Grant Program.

(a) Definitions. – The following definitions shall apply in this section:

- (1) Eligible high school graduate. – A graduate of a high school in a local school administrative unit who was enrolled in a Career and College Promise Transfer Pathway Program leading to an associate degree in teacher preparation and earned one or more credits toward that degree.
- (2) Eligible teacher apprentice. – An eligible high school graduate who meets the following criteria:
 - a. Is employed as a teacher apprentice in an elementary school in the same local school administrative unit where he or she graduated high school.
 - b. Is enrolled part time or full time in a recognized educator preparation program pursuing coursework toward a college degree that will result in teacher licensure.
 - c. Qualifies as a resident for tuition purposes under the criteria set forth in G.S. 116-143.1 and in accordance with the coordinated and centralized residency determination process administered by the Authority [State Education Assistance Authority].
- (3) Program. – The Teacher Apprentice Grant Program.
- (4) Teacher apprentice. – A teacher assistant who works with a teacher of record to develop an expertise in teaching by observing best education practices and gaining classroom experience with the goal of becoming a licensed teacher.

(b) Program Established. – The Department of Public Instruction shall establish the Teacher Apprentice Grant Program. The purpose of the Program is to provide grants to local school administrative units to award funds for (i) the cost of tuition at an educator preparation program for eligible teacher apprentices and (ii) salary supplements for teacher apprentices who become teachers in the unit.

(c) Applications. – Local school administrative units may submit applications to participate in the Program each year pursuant to a process to be established by the Department of Public Instruction. The application shall identify current and ongoing needs for licensed teachers and the expected number of eligible teacher apprentices that would participate in the Program.

(d) Award of Funds. – To the extent funds are made available for the Program, funds shall be awarded as follows:

- (1) Funds for tuition. – Eligible teacher apprentices shall receive awards of up to four thousand six hundred dollars (\$4,600) per academic semester, per eligible teacher apprentice, up to four academic years to defray the costs of tuition and fees for part-time or full-time coursework taken while employed in the local school administrative unit as an eligible teacher apprentice.
- (2) Funds for salary supplements. – Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any eligible teacher apprentice who becomes a licensed teacher and accepts employment in the same local school administrative unit shall receive a salary supplement each month during his or her first four years of employment as a teacher, without a break in service, equivalent to the difference between the State-funded salary of the graduate and the State-funded salary of a similarly situated teacher with four years of experience on the "A" Teachers Salary Schedule, as long as the teacher remains teaching in the same local school administrative unit.

(e) Additional Criteria. – The following additional criteria shall apply to funds awarded under the Program:

- (1) A local board of education may grant an eligible teacher apprentice academic leave to pursue coursework that may only be taken during working hours.
- (2) An eligible teacher apprentice shall fulfill the student teaching requirements of an educator preparation program by working as a teacher apprentice at his or her employing local school administrative unit.
- (3) An eligible teacher apprentice shall continue to receive salary and benefits while student teaching in the local school administrative unit as provided for teacher assistants in G.S. 115C-269.30(c).
- (4) Local boards of education receiving grants under the Program shall make efforts to promote the Program to high school students enrolled in a Career and College Promise Transfer Pathway Program.

(f) Selection of Teacher Apprentices. – The Department shall establish criteria for initial and continuing eligibility to participate in the Program. The Department shall adopt standards to ensure that only qualified, potential recipients receive an award of funds for tuition and fees under the Program. The standards shall include satisfactory academic progress toward achieving teacher licensure. Local school administrative units receiving grants pursuant to the Program shall prioritize for the award of funds for eligible teacher apprentices who received an award in the prior academic year.

(g) Endorsement of Tuition Assistance Awards for Recipients. – Each local board of education participating in the Program shall enter into a memorandum of understanding with the institution of higher education in which an award recipient under the Program is enrolled that includes procedures for at least the following:

- (1) Remittance of the award from the local board of education to the institution of higher education.

- (2) Endorsement of the funds awarded to the recipient to the institution of higher education for deposit into the account of the institution.
 - (3) Return of a pro rata share of funds to the local board of education in the event (i) a recipient withdraws from the institution of higher education prior to the end of a term or (ii) the recipient's employment with the local board of education is terminated. The return of funds shall be consistent with procedures used by the institution under federal Title IV programs.
- (h) Report to the General Assembly. – The Department shall report no later than May 15, 2024, and annually thereafter while funds are awarded under the Program, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee regarding the Program, including at least the following information:
- (1) Funds awarded under the Program, including the following:
 - a. Demographic information regarding eligible teacher apprentices.
 - b. Number of award recipients by local school administrative unit and educator preparation program.
 - (2) Placement rates, including the number of award recipients who have been employed as licensed teachers in the same local school administrative unit in which they worked as a teacher apprentice and the time frame from the issuance of the initial award of funds to the time of achieving licensure.
 - (3) Recommendations to improve the Program and increase the number of teachers in North Carolina. (2023-134, s. 7.44A.)

§ 115C-269.35. Accountability for educator preparation programs.

(a) Performance Measures. – The State Board shall adopt rules necessary to establish standards of performance to govern the continuing accountability of all EPPs. At a minimum, the performance standards shall be based on the following information that is disaggregated with respect to race, sex, and ethnicity:

- (1) Performance based on the standards and criteria for annual evaluations of licensed employees.
- (2) Proficiency and growth of students taught by educators holding an initial professional license, to the extent practicable. When available, EVAAS data shall be used to measure student growth.
- (3) Results from an educator satisfaction survey, developed by the State Board with stakeholder input, performed at the end of the educator's first year of teaching after receiving an initial professional license.
- (4) Repealed by Session Laws 2019-149, s. 1, effective July 22, 2019, and applicable to (i) educator preparation programs (EPPs) authorized by the State Board of Education on or after the date this act becomes law and (ii) reports submitted to the State Board and reviews by the State Board of an EPP beginning with those based on data from the 2019-2020 academic year.

(b) Annual Performance Reports. – The State Board shall require all recognized EPPs to submit annual performance reports. The performance reports shall provide the State Board with a focused review of the EPPs and the current authorization process in order to ensure that the programs produce graduates that are well prepared to teach. At a minimum, the annual report shall contain the following indicators:

- (1) Performance data from subsection (a) of this section.

- (2) Data related to the EPP's compliance with requirements for field supervision of students during their internship and residency experiences.
- (3) The following information, disaggregated by race, sex, and ethnicity:
 - a. The number of students who apply to candidacy of the EPP.
 - b. The number of students admitted as candidates of the EPP.
 - c. The number of students completing the program.
 - d. The number of graduates of the EPP licensed in North Carolina.
 - e. The number of graduates of the EPP employed in North Carolina.
 - f. The number and percentage of students who convert from a residency license to either an initial professional license or a continuing professional license.
 - g. Any other information required by federal law.
 - h. Repealed by Session Laws 2019-149, s. 1, effective July 22, 2019, and applicable to (i) educator preparation programs (EPPs) authorized by the State Board of Education on or after the date this act becomes law and (ii) reports submitted to the State Board and reviews by the State Board of an EPP beginning with those based on data from the 2019-2020 academic year.
- (4) Quality of students entering the EPP, including the average grade point average and average score on preprofessional skills tests or college entrance exams that assess reading, writing, mathematics, and other competencies.
- (5) Graduation rates.
- (6) Time-to-graduation rates.
- (7) Pass rates of graduates on professional, pedagogy, and content area examinations for the purpose of licensure.
- (8) Percentage of graduates receiving initial professional licenses.
- (9) The activities offered by the program that are designed to prepare educators, including general education teachers and special education teachers, to effectively teach the following:
 - a. Students with disabilities.
 - b. Students of limited English proficiency.
- (10) The activities offered by the program that are designed to prepare educators to do the following:
 - a. Integrate technology effectively into curricula and instruction, including activities consistent with the principles of universal design for learning.
 - b. Use technology effectively to collect, manage, and analyze data to improve teaching and learning for the purpose of increasing student academic achievement.
- (11) The retention of beginning educators in the profession for at least two years after licensure in North Carolina.
- (12) The results of surveys given to school principals that involve evaluation of the program's effectiveness in preparing participants to succeed in the classroom, based on experience with employed program participants.
- (13) Any other information necessary to enable the State Board to assess the effectiveness of the program on the basis of educator retention and success criteria adopted by the State Board.

(c) Submission of Annual Performance Reports. – Performance reports shall be provided annually to the following:

- (1) The State Board.
- (2) The board of trustees or board of directors of the entity submitting the report.

(d) Information Requests by EPPs. – The State Board of Education shall annually provide, upon request, the data required to be included in an EPP's annual performance report related to subdivisions (1) and (2) of subsection (a) of this section and subdivision (11) of subsection (b) of this section. The State Board of Education shall provide this information to an EPP as aggregate data and disaggregated by race, sex, and ethnicity. Notwithstanding Article 21A of this Chapter, local school administrative units shall provide to the State Board of Education for the purposes of these information requests any North Carolina Educator Evaluation System effectiveness status assigned to teachers based on queries from the State Board. The State Board of Education shall not report aggregated or disaggregated data to the EPP that reveals confidential information in a teacher's personnel file, as defined by Article 21A of this Chapter, such as making the effectiveness status personally identifiable to an individual teacher. (2017-189, s. 2(i); 2019-149, s. 1.)

§ 115C-269.40. Risk factors for educator preparation programs; risk-assessment model.

(a) Risk Factor Rules. – The State Board shall adopt rules establishing risk factors for assessment of the overall risk level of each EPP. The set of risk factors shall include the following:

- (1) A history of the EPP's compliance with State law and rules, with consideration given to the following:
 - a. The seriousness of any violation of a law or rule.
 - b. Whether the violation resulted in an action being taken against the EPP.
 - c. Whether the violation was promptly remedied by the EPP.
 - d. The number of alleged violations.
 - e. Any other matter considered to be appropriate in evaluating the EPP's compliance history.
- (2) Whether the program meets the accountability performance standards under G.S. 115C-269.35.

(b) CAEP Accreditation. – The rules for risk factors developed by the State Board may include whether an EPP is accredited by CAEP.

(c) Use of Risk Factors. – The State Board shall use the rules for risk factors when conducting monitoring, inspections, and compliance audits of EPPs, including evaluations associated with renewals of approval under G.S. 115C-269.10. (2017-189, s. 2(i).)

§ 115C-269.45. Sanctions.

(a) Accountability Statuses. – The State Board shall at least annually review the accountability status of each EPP. The State Board shall adopt rules necessary for the sanction of EPPs that do not meet accountability standards or comply with State law or rules. The rules shall provide for the assignment of warned, probation, or revoked statuses according to the following criteria:

- (1) Warned. – An EPP shall be assigned warned status if the program meets any of the following criteria:
 - a. Fails to meet the performance standards set by the State Board for the overall performance of all its students on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) in any one year.

- b. Fails to meet the performance standards in any two sex, race, or ethnicity demographic groups on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) in any one year.
 - c. Fails to meet the performance standards for any one sex, race, or ethnicity demographic group on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for two consecutively measured years, regardless of whether the deficiency is in the same standard.
 - d. The State Board determines that the EPP has violated applicable laws or rules that should result in warned status.
- (2) Probation. – An EPP shall be assigned probation status if the program meets any of the following criteria:
- a. Fails to meet the performance standards set by the State Board for the overall performance of all its students on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for two consecutively measured years.
 - b. Fails to meet the performance standards in any three sex, race, or ethnicity demographic groups on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) in any one year.
 - c. Fails to meet the performance standards for any one sex, race, or ethnicity demographic group on any of the indicators set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(a) for three consecutively measured years, regardless of whether the deficiency is in the same standard.
 - d. The State Board determines that the EPP has violated applicable laws or rules that should result in probation status.
- (3) Revoked. – An EPP shall be assigned revoked status and its approval to recommend students for educator licensure revoked if it meets any of the following criteria:
- a. Is assigned probation status for three consecutively measured years.
 - b. Has been on probation status for one year and the State Board determines that revoking the program's approval is reasonably necessary to achieve the purposes of this Article.
- (b) Revocation. – Any revocation of an EPP's accountability status shall meet the following criteria:
- (1) Complies with the requirements of notice as described in subsection (f) of this section.
 - (2) Upon assignment of revoked status of EPP approval, the EPP shall not admit new students, but may complete the training of students already admitted by the program and recommend them for licensure. If necessary, the State Board and other EPPs shall cooperate to assist the previously admitted students of the revoked EPP to complete their training.
 - (3) A revocation shall be effective for a period of at least two years. After two years, the program may seek initial authorization to prepare educators for licensure.
- (c) Range of Sanctions. – In addition to revocation as provided in subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the rules described in subsection (a) of this section shall provide for the State Board to assign other sanctions deemed necessary, including one or more of the following:
- (1) Requiring the EPP to obtain technical assistance approved by the State Board.

- (2) Requiring the EPP to obtain professional services under contract with another entity.
- (3) Appointing a monitor to participate in and report to the State Board on the activities of the EPP.
- (4) Managing the EPP's enrollment.

(c1) Small Group Exception. – Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, the State Board of Education shall adopt a rule to establish a small group exception for circumstances in which there is a risk of identifying individual program participants. The rule shall include the number of students necessary to qualify for the exception and the alternative method of performance assessment and assignment of sanctions. The rule may provide for measuring performance of small student groups cumulatively over multiple years for EPP accountability purposes.

(d) Particular Fields of Licensure. – Any sanction authorized or required to be taken against an EPP under subsection (c) of this section may also be taken with regard to a program for a particular field of licensure authorized to be offered by an EPP.

(e) Costs. – Any costs associated with the sanctions under subsection (c) of this section shall be paid by the EPP.

(f) Notice, Hearing, and Appeal. – The State Board shall give written notice to the EPP by certified mail of an EPP's revocation of authorized status, including a written explanation of the basis for the revocation. An EPP may commence a contested case as provided in Article 3 of Chapter 150B of the General Statutes as to the revocation by the State Board. (2017-189, s. 2(i); 2019-149, ss. 1.5, 2.)

§ 115C-269.50. EPP report cards.

The State Board shall create an annual report card for each EPP that, at a minimum, summarizes the information collected in the annual performance reports, as set forth in G.S. 115C-269.35(b). The report cards shall provide user-friendly access to the public, and shall provide the ability to easily compare annual report card information between EPPs, including performance and other data reported by each EPP, as provided in G.S. 115C-269.35(b). The State Board shall make the report cards available to the public through the State Board's Internet Web site on an annual basis beginning December 15, 2019, and shall submit the report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee annually by that date. (2017-189, s. 2(i); 2018-32, s. 3(a).)

§ 115C-269.55. Reports of alleged violations regarding educator preparation programs.

(a) Authority. – The State Board shall adopt rules necessary to establish a process for a student to report a violation of this Article to the State Board.

(b) EPP Notice to Students. – The State Board by rule shall require an EPP to notify students of the complaint process adopted under subsection (a) of this section. The notice shall include the appropriate contact information, including name, mailing address, telephone number, and Internet Web site address for the purpose of directing complaints to the State Board. The EPP shall provide for that notification as follows:

- (1) On the Internet Web site of the EPP, if the program maintains a Web site.
- (2) On a sign prominently displayed in program facilities.
- (3) In the student handbook.

(c) Notice of Complaint Process. – The State Board shall post the complaint process adopted under subsection (a) of this section on the State Board's Internet Web site.

(d) Limits on State Board Authority. – The State Board has no authority to mediate, arbitrate, or resolve contractual or commercial issues between an EPP and a student. (2017-189, s. 2(i).)