

A Guide for Selecting North Carolina Teaching Fellows

The North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program is designed to identify academically talented students who are legal residents of NC, who have leadership potential, and who are interested in teaching. It will help students become teachers by awarding scholarship loans of \$6,500 each year for four years of undergraduate study, repayable by teaching for four years in North Carolina public schools.

The 24 classes of Teaching Fellows have been intelligent, energetic and inquisitive students. The scholastic profile of the entering class of 2010 Teaching Fellows is an average SAT score over 1186 and a high school grade point average of 4.3 on a weighted scale.

Steps and Dates for Application & Screening

STEP ONE School superintendents designate a chairperson for the School District Screening Committee and name the members of the committee. **The committee, reflecting the diversity of the community, must include, but not be limited to, PTA/PTO members, school board members, local business people, school personnel and Teaching Fellows graduates. Note: The parent/guardian or family member of a current applicant may not serve on any Screening Committee during this year.**

STEP TWO Students complete their application forms and return the forms and sealed references to their high school counselor's office by **October 15, 2010. The deadline cannot change.**

STEP THREE School counselors (Fellows Liaisons) receive and prepare the applicant files for each student completing an application (only students who are legal residents of North Carolina for tuition purposes and will have met the twelve-month in-state residency requirement are eligible). The Scholastic Profile on the composite form should be filled out and signed by the student. The application should then be placed along with the three sealed references, a composite form, a high school transcript, and proof of SAT/ACT Plus Writing scores (including the essay score) in a manila folder with the applicant's name printed or typed on the tab. **Note: Liaisons should not participate in other aspects of the process.**

STEP FOUR The school assessment committee ranks applicant potential. The principal must sign off on ranking. **This committee does not interview the applicant.**

STEP FIVE Counselors forward all applicant files to the chairperson of the School District Screening Committee.

STEP SIX The screening committee chairperson schedules interview sessions for all viable applicants to be completed by **November 5, 2010.**

Screening committee members will be asked to look for qualities – such as academic achievement, leadership potential, strength of character, strong demonstrated interest in the profession and a desire for learning – that are associated with successful teachers.

More than 1,000 people across the state of North Carolina will soon begin interviewing and assessing applicants for the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Awards. They deserve a special “thank you” for their dedication to improving our schools. As an aid to the persons who will be involved in this process, the following guide has been prepared.

STEP SEVEN The School District Screening Committee interviews and assesses all applicants who have achieved academic excellence, as demonstrated by achieving at least 33 points on their Scholastic Profile, which includes a 2.5 GPA (weighted) and a 900 SAT score (or ACT Plus Writing composite converted).

Applicants must have at least 33 points for the Scholastic Profile Score, which includes a 2.5 weighted GPA (25 points) and a 900 SAT or ACT Plus Writing composite converted (8 points). Applicants who do not score at least 33 points on the Scholastic Profile Score are not eligible to proceed through the interview process. However, an applicant who has at least a 2.5 GPA and is waiting for scores to be received or is registered for an SAT/ACT Plus Writing test that will yield scores by the SAT/ACT Plus Writing deadline may continue in the process. Applicants without an essay score will not proceed beyond the local screening process.

Students who are not able to interview must schedule an interview for a later date. All applicant files (interviewed and not interviewed) must be received by the Teaching Fellows Commission no later than the close of the business day on November 15, 2010. Local committees do not “pick” winners.

STEP EIGHT The Teaching Fellows Commission reviews all of the local school system composite forms and forwards the application files of those selected as regional finalists to the chairpersons of the Regional Screening Committees.

STEP NINE Regional Screening Committees, appointed by the Teaching Fellows Commission, interview and assess finalists **between February 12 and February 26, 2011. Note: The parent/guardian or family member of a current applicant may not serve on any Screening Committee during this year.**

STEP TEN The Teaching Fellows Commission reviews all of the regional composites and notifies the Teaching Fellows Award recipients and alternates by mail postmarked **March 18, 2011.**

School District Screening Procedures

The criteria to be considered in the local assessment process include academics, communication skills and extracurricular activities. Following is a brief description of each criterion and recommendations for the evaluation of each.

1. SCHOLASTIC PROFILE This portion of the ranking process is very rigorous. The composite ranking of student academic performance is based on data provided by the School Counselor's Office. It includes GPA and SAT/ACT Plus Writing composite scores. Once determined, this composite score does not change. (New SAT/ACT Plus Writing scores will be accepted if **received by the Commission by November 22, 2010.**) The student must review the scholastic profile sheet after it has been completed by the counselor. Both the counselor and the applicant must sign the form agreeing that the information given is accurate. An applicant can score a possible 65 points on the scholastic profile composite. **All applicants' academic performance must be assessed using the composite form.** The designated Fellows Liaison (a counselor) in each high school will prepare the composite form for the School District Screening Committee.

Note: This is the only aspect of the composite form to be shared with the applicant.

2. SCHOOL ASSESSMENT OF APPLICANT'S POTENTIAL AND COMMITMENT TO TEACHING

The principal, along with a school committee designated by him/her, shall assess the applicant's contributions to the total school program. The assessment should reflect those characteristics, qualities and commitment to teaching which could contribute to the success of this applicant as a future teacher. This is an opportunity for school personnel who are most familiar with the applicant to have a voice in the selection process. Care should be taken not to let personal bias affect the assessment. **The principal must sign the assessment results.** The school committee should assess the potential impact for the applicant, the school, the school system and the Teaching Fellows Program of any circumstances related to actions by the applicant that may adversely affect his or her effectiveness as a teacher. This score will not be changed by Commission staff unless written evidence is provided by the principal and superintendent. **The school assessment committee is not the interview committee.**

3. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/

EMPLOYMENT The score for this criterion will come from the committee's evaluation of the School/Community Activities sheet on the application form. There are three levels of involvement ranging from perfunctory involvement at the school and/or community level(s) to demonstrated leadership in both school and community. While the scholarship is not need-based, employment after school and during the summer will be considered as an indicator of personal commitment and initiative on the part of the applicant. **The committee should be sensitive to the amount of time and commitment required for any given activity, and to opportunities offered (or not offered) by the school program.**

4. INTERVIEWS Interviews for all applicants who score 33 or above on the Scholastic Profile (or have at least 25 points as described in Step 7 on page 1) **must** be conducted by the School District Screening Committee. If a large number of applications are received, School District Screening Committees should be

divided into subcommittees of at least three members each for these assessments. The purpose of the interview is to assess the following: an applicant's thinking ability, clarity of expression, grammar, self-confidence, enthusiasm and originality. Each of these attributes will be evaluated with a 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) rating leading to a composite score. A form for rating will be available. There will also be a list of required questions. Committee members are encouraged to use their judgment and to ask follow-up questions in order to determine the attributes. There are no right or wrong answers. The chairperson should be sensitive to "conflicts of interest" regarding personal relationships between committee members and applicants.

5. SCHOOL DISTRICT SCREENING COMMITTEE ASSESSMENT OF APPLICANT'S POTENTIAL AND COMMITMENT TO TEACHING

These points are to be used by the School District Screening Committee to indicate the applicant's abilities, leadership potential and commitment to teaching as a career as determined after review of the complete applicant file and interview. **Every** applicant interviewed should receive an assessment score (1 being lowest, 5 being highest). The applicant's score is an individual ranking against the criteria of the program. Applicants are **not** compared to each other.

6. WRITING SAMPLE* Writing scores will be obtained from the SAT/ACT Plus Writing essay score. The maximum score available for this portion is 12 points. **Students who are using the ACT in place of the SAT must be sure to take the ACT Plus Writing. Applicants without an essay score will not proceed beyond the local screening process. Students taking the SAT automatically take the essay portion.**

7. REFERENCES* Three reference forms obtained on-line or from counselors should be returned by the applicant to the counselor in sealed envelopes with the signatures of the persons completing the references written across the sealed flap of the envelope. The applicant has the **sole** responsibility for returning the three references. **Only references on the official form will be considered. Additional letters of reference will be removed from the file.**

**Writing sample & references will be considered only at the regional screening level.*

TIPS FOR INTERVIEWERS

- Assign questions to specific committee members in advance.
- Assign a specific committee member to watch body language.
- The list of required questions **MUST** be asked of each candidate.
- Every committee member needs to listen carefully to all responses.
- Special attention should be focused on grammar/clarity of answers.
- A committee member should be designated to monitor time.
- The chairperson should introduce the applicant to the committee and the committee members to the applicant.
- The committee should reach a consensus score for each candidate and record the score on the applicant assessment form before moving to the next interview.
- At the end of the interview, applicants should be asked if they have any questions or comments for the committee.
- Applicants also should be told what the next step in the process will be and when they can expect to know the results.

Regional Screening Procedure

The eight Regional Screening Committees will be composed of educators, elected officials, business persons, PTA/PTO representatives and Teaching Fellows graduates. The screening will take place on Teaching Fellows campuses.

Note: The parent/guardian or family member of a current applicant may not serve on any Screening Committee during this year.

The Regional Screening Committees will meet on a Saturday between **February 12 and February 26, 2011**. Each committee shall be trained in the morning, and interviews will take place in the afternoon.

The Regional Screening Committee will be divided into subcommittees. Following is a brief description of the criteria used for the evaluation of each regional finalist.

1. SCHOLASTIC PROFILE Once determined at the school district level, remains the same (**unless a higher SAT/ACT Plus Writing score is received by the Commission by November 22, 2010, or the local score was not correct**).

2. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/EMPLOYMENT Same as school district screening procedures.

3. INTERVIEWS Same as school district screening procedures.

4. WRITING SAMPLE The score will be determined by the SAT/ACT Plus Writing essay. Students who are using the ACT in place of the SAT must be sure to take the ACT Plus Writing. Applicants without an essay score will not proceed beyond the local screening process. Students taking the SAT automatically take the essay portion.

5. REFERENCES The reference form will ask for an overall recommendation of the applicant, and the scores from each person writing a reference will be added to obtain the total score. Applicants receive one point for obtaining three references.

6. REGIONAL SCREENING COMMITTEE ASSESSMENT These points are to be used by the Regional Screening Committee to indicate the applicant's abilities, leadership potential and commitment to teaching as a career as determined after review of the complete applicant file and interview. **Every** applicant interviewed should receive an assessment score (1 being lowest, 10 being highest). The applicant's score is an individual ranking against the criteria of the program. Applicants are **not** compared to each other.

If you need more application forms contact the Commission staff immediately or go online to www.teachingfellows.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: May any North Carolina senior apply?

A: Only current NC high school seniors or qualifying juniors who are legal residents of the state for purposes of tuition may apply.

Q: How many awards will there be?

A: The General Assembly has provided funding for 500 Teaching Fellows awards each year.

Q: Are applicants guaranteed their first choice institution?

A: As much as possible, students will be able to attend their first choice institution. However, no more than 50 (or Commission- or campus-imposed cap) Teaching Fellows will be assigned to an individual campus. As a result, some students may be assigned to their second or third choice institution. Students signing Early Agreement Contracts will be limited to first choice campus.

Q: Does receiving a Teaching Fellows award mean automatic acceptance to the institution of choice?

A: No. Teaching Fellows award winners must apply and be accepted by the institutions as any other student would. Applicants should apply early to their first three choices.

Q: What are the 'payback' provisions in the program?

A: For each year a Teaching Fellow graduate teaches in a North Carolina public school following graduation from college/university, one-fourth of the award is forgiven. Therefore, the award is considered "repaid" after four years of teaching. Each Teaching Fellow has seven years following graduation to satisfy the four year teaching requirement.

If a Teaching Fellow does not meet this requirement, he/she is obligated to repay the appropriate portion of the award with interest. **Lateral entry does not qualify for teaching service credit.**

Also, if a Teaching Fellow does not maintain his/her grades during college/university, drops out before graduation, or graduates without eligibility for a license to teach, he/she is obligated to repay the total award plus 10% interest made to that point, beginning 180 days after notification. This payback is required by law, whether or not the student is still attending college/university.

A FINAL CHECKLIST

Before applicant files are returned to the Teaching Fellows Commission, make sure all forms are properly signed and the following are included in each manila folder:

- Application Form (B)
- Three (3) Sealed References
- Proof of SAT/ACT Plus Writing composite scores and the essay scores
- High School Transcript (weighted GPA must be on transcript)
- School District Screening Composite Form
- Verification of Home School Registration, if applicable

Return the files in alphabetical order by school to:

North Carolina Teaching Fellows Commission, 3739 National Drive, Suite 100, Raleigh, NC 27612

All applications (interviewed and not interviewed) are the property of the NC Teaching Fellows Commission and must be returned to the Commission by **November 15, 2010**. All contents are confidential. Photocopying and/or sharing completed materials is expressly prohibited. If you have any questions, you may write the Teaching Fellows Commission staff, call them at (919) 781-6833, or email them at tfellows@ncforum.org

SAMPLE COMPOSITE FORM

	Total Possible	Applicant Assessment	Composite
1. SCHOLASTIC PROFILE			
GPA (Weighted Scale)	45	_____	
2.5-2.89 = 25 points	3.7-4.09 = 40 points		
2.9-3.29 = 30 points	4.1+ = 45 points		
3.3-3.69 = 35 points			
SAT Scores (or ACT Plus Writing Composite Converted)	20	_____	
900-999 = 8 points	1250-1400 = 18 points		
1000-1099 = 12 points	1401-1600 = 20 points		
1100-1249 = 16 points			
Scholastic Profile Total	65	_____	

The scholastic profile, once completed by the applicant's high school counselor, remains the same unless a higher SAT/ACT Plus Writing composite score is received by the Commission by November 22, 2010, or the profile score is computed inaccurately.

2. SCHOOL ASSESSMENT OF APPLICANT'S POTENTIAL AND COMMITMENT TO TEACHING			
(To be completed by school assessment committee and considered at school district level only.) Assess the applicant's abilities, leadership potential and commitment to teaching as a career after the review of the applicant file. (1 - lowest; 10 - highest)			
School Assessment of Applicant's Potential Total	10	_____	

3. SCHOOL/COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES/EMPLOYMENT			
CHOOSE THE ONE ANSWER using only whole numbers that best describes the applicant's level of school/community/employment activities. Determine the score within the range provided for that level of activity.			
• Perfunctory involvement at school and/or community level(s)	1-10		
• Long-term involvement at school and/or community level(s), offices, honors, awards	11-15		
• School and community involvement including hobbies, special interests and jobs	16-20		
• Continuous employment as evidence of financial need	1-20		
School/Community/Employment Total	20	_____	

4. INTERVIEW			
Rate each of the following with a (1 - lowest; 5 - highest) rating using only whole numbers. Each criterion must be scored.			
• Thinking approach	5	_____	
• Clarity of expression	5	_____	
• Grammar	5	_____	
• Self-confidence	5	_____	
• Originality	5	_____	
• Enthusiasm	5	_____	
Interview Total	30	_____	

5. LOCAL SCREENING COMMITTEE ASSESSMENT OF APPLICANT'S POTENTIAL AND TEACHING COMMITMENT			
Assess the applicant's abilities, leadership potential and commitment to teaching as a career after the review of the applicant file and the interview (1 - lowest; 5 - highest).			
Local Screening Assessment Total	5	_____	

SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPOSITE	130	_____
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THE FOLLOWING WILL BE EVALUATED AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL ONLY.

6. WRITING SAMPLE Score will be obtained from SAT/ACT Plus Writing essay portion.			
Writing Sample Total	12	_____	

7. REFERENCES Add points from reference forms to determine total, plus one point if students obtained three references.			
References Total	10	_____	

8. REGIONAL SCREENING COMMITTEE ASSESSMENT			
Assess applicant's abilities, leadership potential and commitment to teaching as a career (1 - lowest; 10 - highest).			
Regional Screening Committee Assessment Total	10	_____	

REGIONAL SCREENING COMPOSITE	147	_____
<i>(Total scholastic profile composite, school/community composite, interview, writing sample, references and committee assessment composites)</i>		