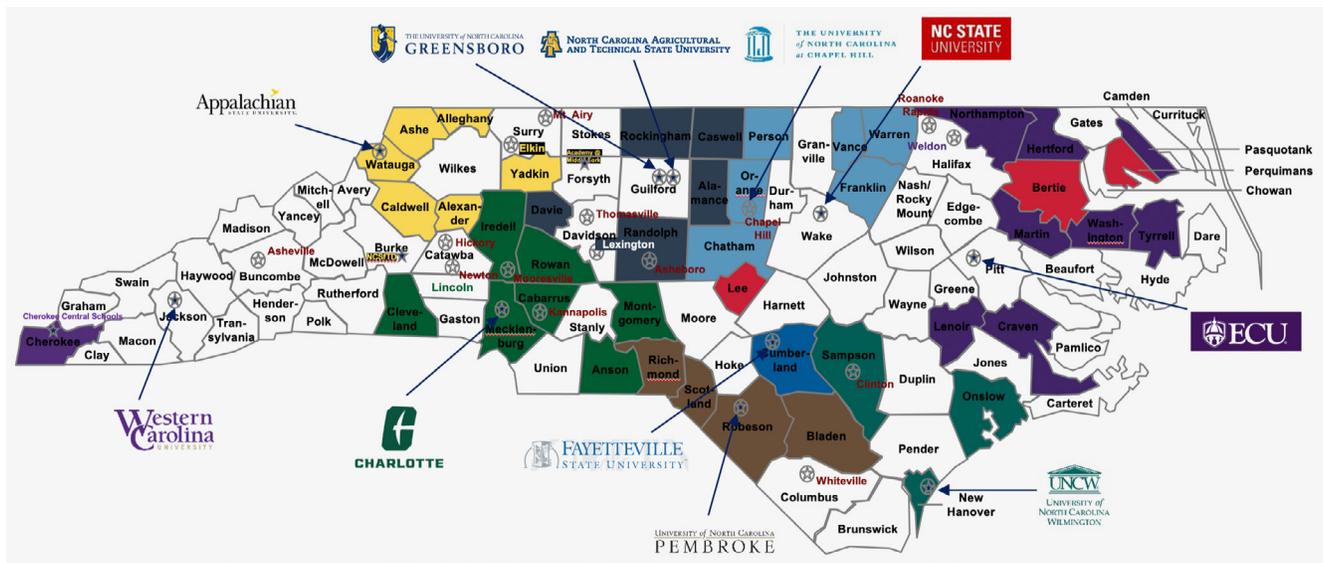
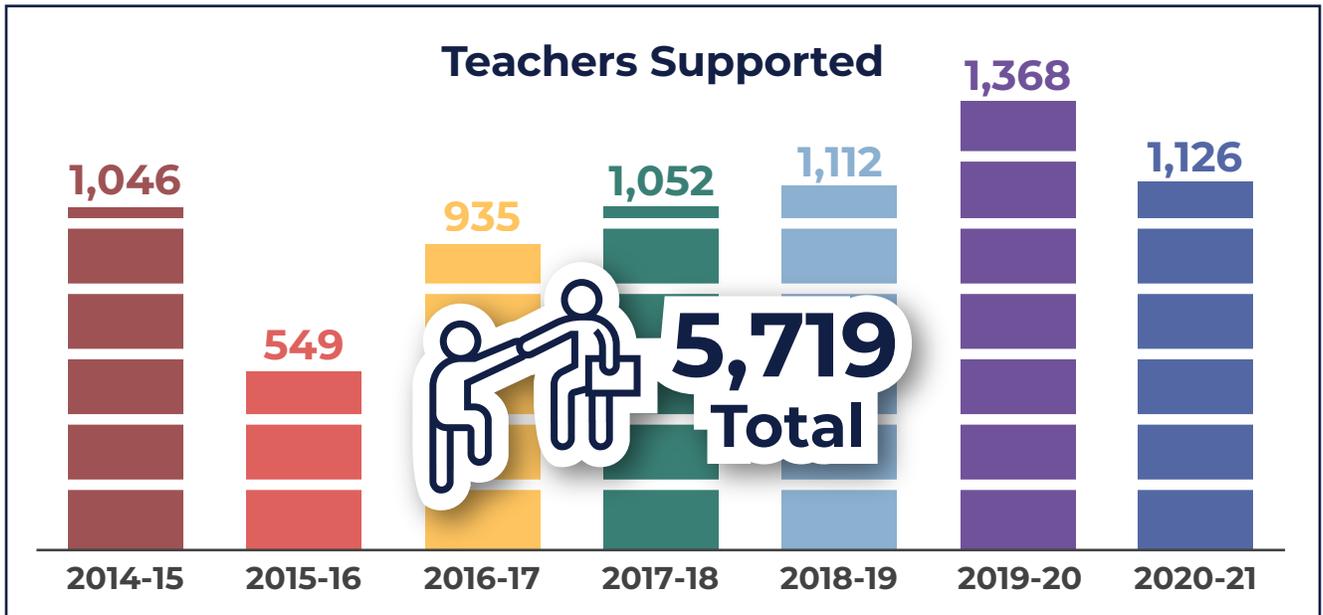


INTRODUCTION

The North Carolina New Teacher Support Program (NC NTSP) has provided thousands of hours of coaching and professional development for over five thousand beginning teachers across the state since 2014. Expert coaches have spent thousands of hours each year observing and mentoring new teachers who receive personalized feedback, resources, and ongoing encouragement. NTSP coaches also provide professional development to NTSP (and often to non-NTSP) teachers in their schools and districts. This report summarizes program evaluation data gathered by researchers at the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at NC State regarding the NTSP’s contributions to teacher retention, quality, and effectiveness across the state.



PROGRAM BENEFITS

The benefits of new teacher participation in the program are evident in quantitative and qualitative measures. A rigorous longitudinal analysis of teacher retention, principal ratings, and student academic growth found a statistically significant and immediate impacts of the program on the retention of teachers.

The qualitative findings over the last 5 years also highlight important aspects of the program:



Critical Emotional Support

Teachers receive critical emotional support from their coaches, who are not involved in teacher evaluation. Interviewees share that this assistance was a factor in their decision to remain in teaching.



Increased Confidence and Student Engagement

Participating teachers report increased confidence in instructional delivery and more effective student engagement as two powerful advantages of participation.



Targeted Resources and Planning Personalized Support

Two of the highest rated coaching activities (by participating teachers) are sharing targeted resources and providing personalized planning support on a regular basis.



Credit: Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages, CC BY-NC-4.0.



Professional Development

Professional development provided to participating schools and districts can be customized to local initiatives and teacher needs and is found to be very valuable by administrators.



Hybrid Delivery Options

NTSP practices that may increase the impact of the program across the state include increased hybrid delivery options (augmenting face to face meetings with virtual coaching) and closer program collaboration with regional teacher preparation programs, their faculty, and local efforts.

“ My NTSP coach has helped me be reflective regarding the teaching strategies that have worked in my classroom and the teaching strategies that have been less effective. My coach also helped me brainstorm strategies for presenting information, formatively assessing student mastery, and even developing relationships with my students. Whether I needed help from ground zero, or I just needed a sound board, my coach truly helped me cultivate new skills within the classroom. ”

—Teacher

PROGRAM IMPACT

Teacher Retention

The average probability of a school retaining a teacher was nearly three percentage points higher in years the teacher participated in NTSP when compared to years they did not. School-level retention in the UNC Charlotte and UNC Greensboro regions was seven and over nine points higher respectively. Future evaluation plans include an examination of factors which may have led to the striking results in these regions in order to inform and enhance best practices state-wide.

“ *My coach was there to support me when I felt like no one else was. She was one of the things that got me through that rough patch, and probably was a big portion of the reason I didn't quit.* ”

-Teacher



Credit: Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages, CC BY-NC-4.0.

Teacher Quality

Most teachers feel NTSP improves the quality of their teaching:

89%



INSTRUCTION

91%



CONFIDENCE

87%



PLANNING

81%



KNOWLEDGE

91%



SKILLS

87%



VIRTUAL TEACHING

Participating teachers find the coaching offered by the NTSP valuable for their practice in the classroom. In addition, administrators feel that NTSP participation increased teacher quality in their school or district.



feel NTSP is effective in improving teacher confidence

“ *It (NTSP coaching) improves my lesson planning, learning instruction, classroom management and preparation of assessments. Students are motivated to learn every day. The strategies, techniques, assessments and methods.* ”

-Teacher

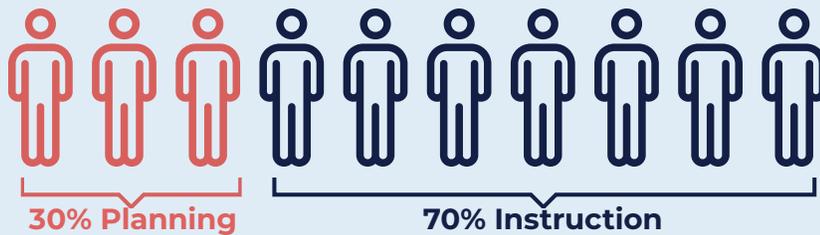
Teacher Effectiveness

In interviews and surveys, many teachers indicated that their NTSP coach was instrumental in helping them connect to their students. This connection facilitated building relationships with and among students and understanding student needs and assessment. These critical components of an effective classroom instruction thus facilitated conditions for increased student success in participating teachers' classes.

“ Being able to use what I have learned in the classroom with my students has helped with their active engagement and has helped me with building positive relationships with my students. ”

–Teacher

NTSP coaches feel the areas of greatest teacher growth occur in instruction and planning.



Credit: Photo by Allison Shelley for EDUimages, CC BY-NC-4.0.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Customized

NTSP coaches provide professional development (PD) tailored to the needs of their teachers and districts. Coaches can work with administration to match goals and activities to current school initiatives. These PD sessions might be at the school or district level, and non-NTSP teachers are often included in these sessions, expanding the program's impact on local schools and districts.

100% of participating districts/schools report sometimes (64%) or always (36%) offering NTSP professional development to other beginning teachers



“ The NTSP coaching was directly aligned to our district initiatives and current concerns facing teachers during this unique teaching environment (due to COVID). ”

–Administrator

Valuable

Administrators find NTSP professional development offerings very valuable, with the highest rated offerings being virtual workshops and district level workshops. In addition, 79% of teachers surveyed in 2021 felt the professional development sessions offered by NTSP coaches was either extremely or very useful.

79% of Teachers Surveyed in 2021 Felt the Professional Development Sessions were Extremely or Very Useful



These results are taken from the 2021 NTSP Administrator survey, completed by school and district level administrators familiar with the program's administration in their organization.

Flexible

NTSP coaching and professional development opportunities are provided both in-person and online, and both methods are found beneficial by coaches, teachers, and administrators. Teachers appreciated having virtual options, and coaches interviewed said that being able to observe teachers then meet online allowed for more meaningful, helped focus their conversations.

“ The virtual PD has provided another layer of support and resources offered to our beginning teachers. I would like to see our NTSP coaches included in more of the training for our BTs.

–Administrator ”

“ I think I am a better coach because of the flexibility provided to balance opportunities for coaching based on the changing dynamics of the teachers' contexts. I also feel like conversations have deepened as a result of virtual venues for conferences at varied times and reduced travel time during the workday.

–Coach ”

“ The content sessions were the most valuable of the professional developments. Even though my instructional coach does not have a background in special education, she helped tremendously with providing resources and adequate feedback.

–Teacher ”

“ The professional development that my coach has provided has been the most helpful because she has given helpful tips and instructional videos on different apps and websites that are best for virtual learning.

–Teacher ”

PROMISING PRACTICES

Non-Evaluative Support

The importance of having a coach from **outside of the district** has been a consistent finding from regions across the state. Teachers value the **neutral nature of the program** and feel comfortable being open and honest with their NTSP coach because they receive unbiased support. This, in-turn, helps coaches support new teachers' emotional well-being and provide support that is welcomed by many teachers and is perceived as critical or evaluative.

“ Because I’m not being because I’m not being evaluated by [my coach]... it is more comforting to know that there’s nothing I asked about is going to work its way to anybody else. Like I can just be free to ask, this is where I’m struggling. And I know that that component makes me a little more free with what I’m struggling with.

–NTSP Teacher

Bridges with Educator Preparation Programs

NTSP utilizes the edTPA framework to guide coaching and professional development approaches. In addition, coaches are trained to use an iterative and cyclical approach to providing coaching, using evidence, and analysis to keep moving forward in areas of teachers' greatest needs.

In addition, the NC NTSP is anchored within ten UNC System Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs) with educator preparation programs (EPPs). Efforts are underway to enhance connections with these IHEs to bridge existing gaps between effective teacher preparation and practice through induction support and informing EPP practices.

“ I would suggest college level support, starting from junior/senior year in a Teacher Education Program. I know there is Level 1 and 2 student teaching, but sometimes, the experience is not one that is fruitful. This added support would be sure to help future educators, strengthen their skills, and encourage the love for the craft.

–Coach

Currently the most reported area of connection between the partnering institutions and the NTSP is in coach training and support. This is a valuable resource, but further connection could be made through coordinating goals focused on helping teachers meet state standards in edTPA and other mandates.

“ *I think we definitely need to have more conversation [with IHE’s] if we continue with the [edTPA] constructs to determine how do you help teachers progress through those levels [of the framework]?* ”

–Coach

Blended and Hybrid Coaching

While email and other digital communications were used between coaches and teachers before the pandemic, the necessary inclusion of virtual meetings that starting in the spring of 2020 showed that online means of observation and collaboration were a viable way to reduce coach travel time while still providing high-quality coaching to as many new teachers as possible.

“ *Virtual coaching has provided students with guidance for effectively using remote resources. Additionally, the coach is able to ‘look’ in the classroom from the student’s perspective and give them feedback. This has been extremely helpful.* ”

–Administrator

The NC NTSP also uses a digital content management system called Sibme which coaches may use to observe lessons recorded by beginning teachers and offer virtual feedback. Coaches can also share training and information with other coaches using virtual “huddles” on the Sibme platform. Using information being gathered from surveys and interviews with teachers and coaches, the use of Sibme will be included in the 2022 evaluation reports.

CONCLUSION

Since 2014 the NC NTSP has offered personalized, focused, and meaningful support to beginning teachers (and their schools and districts) statewide. Coaching and professional development in recent years have adapted to blend the best of in-person and virtual supports to meet time, distance, and health demands. The state-level metrics, survey, and interview data gathered reveals the benefits of emotional support and non-evaluative feedback in teacher retention and an increase in teacher confidence and student engagement. The NTSP commitment to providing aligned and personalized professional development continues to increase the capacity of the program to impact even more teachers across the state moving forward.

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