

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Reaching One's Potential for Excellence (ROPE) Scholars Program

Type of Executive Summary:

- Action
- Action on First Reading
- Discussion
- Information

Policy Implications:

- Constitution _____
- General Statute # _____
- SBE Policy # _____
- SBE Policy Amendment
- SBE Policy (New)
- APA # _____
- APA Amendment
- APA (New)
- Other Session Law 2007-277, Senate Bill 1030

Presenter(s): Mr. Philip Price (Associate Superintendent, Financial and Business Services) and Ms. Alexis Schauss (Assistant Director, School Business Division)

Description:

The State Board of Education, in cooperation with The University of North Carolina Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges, shall develop a framework for a Reaching One's Potential for Excellence (ROPE) Scholars Program. The Program shall be implemented beginning with the 2009-2010 school year. A draft proposed framework (attached) shall be submitted by October 15, 2007, and a final proposal to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by December 15, 2007.

Resources:

SBE, DPI, and LEA staff time.

Input Process:

The State Board of Education will determine LEAs that are eligible to apply for the competitive grant. Three LEAs from different geographic areas of the State, one of which shall be urban and one of which shall be rural, shall be selected.

Stakeholders:

SBE, University of NC Board of Governors, State Board of Community Colleges, DPI, LEA, and students

Timeline For Action:

This item is being presented for discussion at the November State Board of Education meeting and will be presented for action in December.

Recommendations:

This item is presented for discussion this month (no recommendation).

Audiovisual equipment requested for the presentation:

- Data Projector/Video (Videotape/DVD and/or Computer Data, Internet, Presentations-PowerPoint preferred)
Specify: _____
- Audio Requirements (computer or other, except for PA system which is provided)
Specify: _____
- Document Camera (for transparencies or paper documents – white paper preferred)

Motion By: _____

Seconded By: _____

Vote: Yes _____ No _____ Abstain _____
Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Postponed _____ Revised _____

*Person responsible for SBE agenda materials and SBE policy updates: Teresa Matthews, 807-3600.

**Draft Proposed Framework for the Pilot of
Reaching One's Potential for Excellence (ROPE) Scholars Program
Session Law 2007-277, Senate Bill 1030**

Summary of Bill

The State Board of Education, in cooperation with The University of North Carolina Board of Governors and the State Board of Community Colleges, shall develop a framework for a Reaching One's Potential for Excellence (ROPE) Scholars Program. The purpose of the ROPE Scholars Pilot Program shall be

- (i) to strengthen middle grades education in order to provide students with the opportunity to graduate from high school with the core academic skills needed for postsecondary education and high-skilled employment, and
- (ii) thereby to reduce the high school dropout rate, increase high school and college graduation rates, and decrease the need for remediation in institutions of higher education.

The framework for the ROPE Scholars Program shall require participating schools to have or be afforded access to high speed, broadband Internet resources and to use SAS EVAAS (Education Value Added Assessment System) or a comparable software system to track student academic progress over time.

It is the intent of the ROPE Scholars Program to:

- (1) Reduce class size to one teacher to every 17 students;
- (2) Provide annual salary incentives of up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to teachers certified in any high-need subject matter area or to support personnel;
- (3) Provide a coordinator position at each participating school to assist in community and parental support;
- (4) Encourage students participating in the program, through agreements executed between the local school administrative unit and students and their parents or guardians, to:
 - a. Maintain a ninety-five percent (95%) attendance rate each year;
 - b. Achieve a minimum of a "B" average;
 - c. Take the PSAT and the SAT or the ACT and achieve an adequate score, as determined by the State Board of Education;
 - d. Meet the standards for admission established by the Board of Governors of The University of North Carolina;
 - e. Engage in community service work each month during the school year for the number of hours determined by the State Board of Education; and
 - f. Evidence good character by not engaging in unlawful conduct.
- (5) Provide students who successfully participate in the program with college scholarships.

The State Board of Education shall

- Deliver a draft proposed framework to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee by October 15, 2007 and a final proposal to the same committee by December 15, 2007. The report shall include the cost of implementing the Pilot Program and shall indicate the State laws, rules, and policies that would preclude the implementation of the pilot.
- Develop a competitive process through which local school administrative units may apply to participate in the pilot program.
- Select three units from different geographic areas of the State, one of which shall be urban and one of which shall be rural.
- Develop a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the Program.

The Program shall be implemented beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.

Draft Proposed Framework for the Pilot of ROPE Scholars Program

Proposed framework

Eligible to Apply

The State Board of Education will determine local education agencies (LEA) that are eligible to apply for the competitive grant based if:

- (1) 2005-06 grade 9-12 drop out rate (excluding expulsions) is greater than 5%
- (2) 3 year average daily attendance rate is less than 95%

The number of LEAs eligible based on this criteria using 2006 drop out data and 2007 average daily attendance is 44. These LEAs represent all regions within North Carolina and both rural and urban.

Competitive Process (Selecting 3 LEAs)

Eligible LEAs will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 1. A submitted outline as to how this program is needed at a middle school(s), how the program will be implemented, and how the program will be monitored.
- 2. Geographic locations.
- 3. Rural or urban designation.
- 4. Number of middle schools with a 2007 composite score less than 70%.
- 5. Amount of targeted assistance that the State is providing to the LEA or middle schools.

Costing (see intent of the ROPE Scholars Program above)

The cost of this initiative can not be provided because this is a competitive grant and the size of the schools is not known. When the LEAs and schools are determined, an accurate cost can be provided. Following is an estimate of the cost for an average size middle school with 700 students.

- (1) Class size reduction to 17 students
Reduce allotment ratio to 1:15 in grades 6 to 8 (the ratio must be below the target to assure sufficient positions for compliance).
14 Positions @ \$53,401 = \$747,614
- (2) Define high need subject area as math, science, and special education. Award a \$5,000 bonus for these teachers (estimated 14 teachers in an average size school)
\$5,000 plus benefits \$80,836
- (3) Community and Parent Coordinator (1 per school)
Average Salary plus benefits - \$60,088
- (4) No costing required
- (5) Scholarship to UNC College at \$1,900 per student per year
10 students \$19,000
50 students \$95,000
100 students \$190,000

Total Estimated cost for each middle school selected: \$983,538 (50 Scholarships)