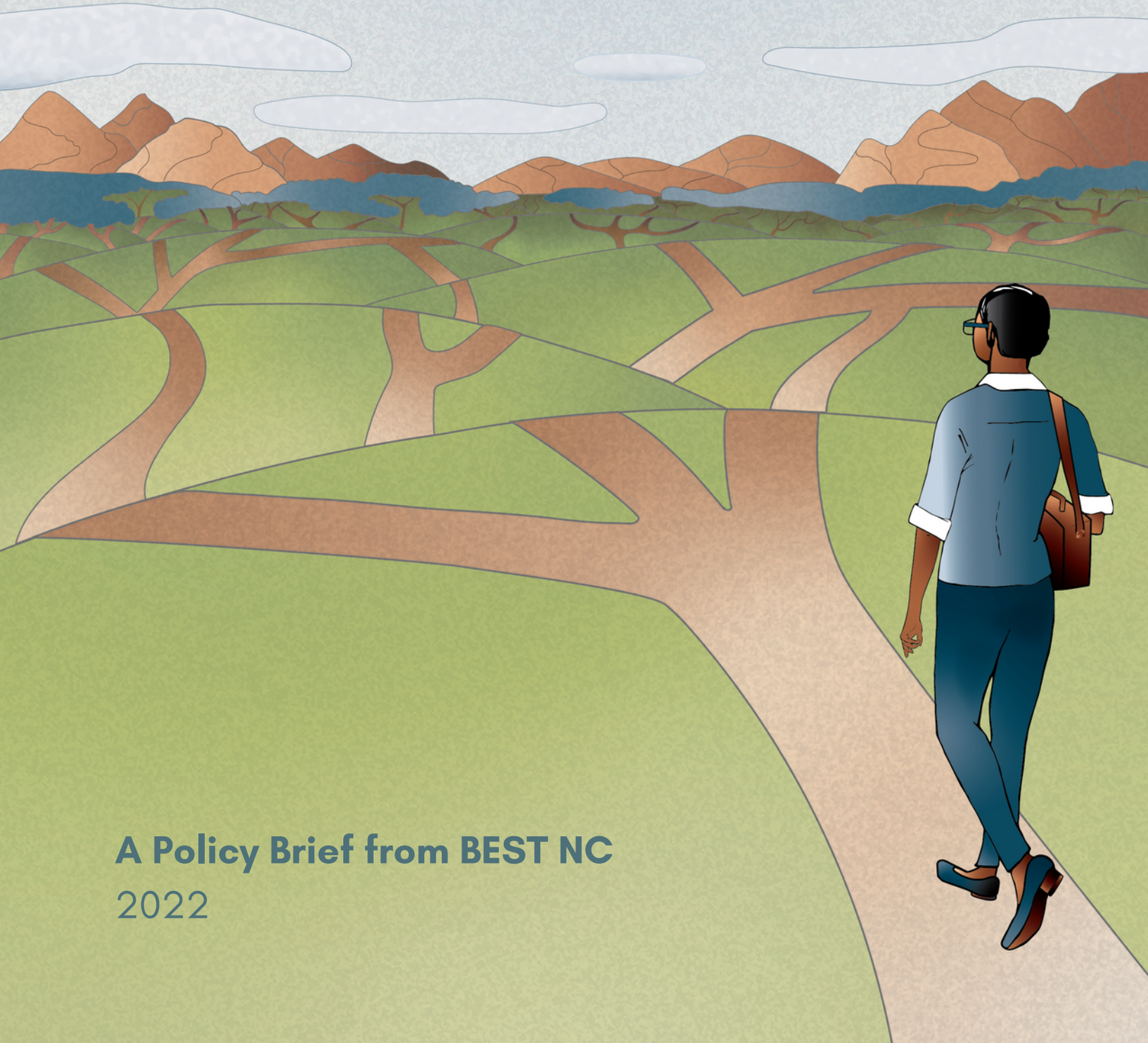
BEST NC Business for Educational Success and Transformation

Advanced Teaching Roles in North Carolina:

Meaningful Career Pathways for Education Professionals



A Policy Brief from BEST NC

2022

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Take "A Closer Look" at Advanced Teaching Roles in North Carolina

Scan the QR code to visit our YouTube page and watch our *A Closer Look* video series to hear from real teachers and principals and see for yourself how Advanced Teaching Roles is implemented in different districts across North Carolina!

Introduction

> ***Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.***
>
> Jack Welch, Former Chairman & CEO, General Electric

One of the most consistent conclusions in education research is that teachers are the most important in-school factor for student success[1]. Students with access to highly effective educators make significantly more academic progress during the course of school year than those without such access. While the research is clear that teacher quality is critical, a multitude of factors contribute to our ability to recruit talented candidates to the teaching profession, prepare them to meet the academic and social-emotional needs of diverse student populations, and create conditions that ensure that our most effective teachers remain in the classroom.

In recent years, North Carolina has struggled to recruit and retain effective teachers, especially to teach our most disadvantaged student populations. From 2011 to 2020, Educator Preparation Program (EPP) completion at public and independent colleges and universities in North Carolina fell 35%, mirroring declines that have been seen across the country.[2]

Having fewer teachers entering the profession through traditional higher education pathways exacerbates students' already inequitable access to highly qualified, experienced, effective teachers. In the 2018-19 school year, the percentage of fully licensed teachers in North Carolina school districts ranged from 46% to 93%, with high-poverty districts disproportionately employing teachers who were not yet fully licensed. School and district leaders also report widespread and persistent vacancies in subject areas like secondary math and science and special education, particularly in high-poverty schools.[3]

Since 2016, Advanced Teaching Roles (ATR) have been transforming North Carolina's teaching profession in ways that will increase the quantity and quality of teachers while improving their experience as professional educators. Moving away from the traditional one teacher, one classroom configuration, ATR models establish modern organizational structures in schools that more closely resemble the professional conditions and experiences in other highly desirable, high-skill professions. Importantly, these new organizational models provide an infrastructure that make other innovations, like the diffusion of best practices in the Science of Reading, possible.

Specifically, ATR models create opportunities for additional compensation and meaningful leadership roles for effective teachers while providing embedded professional support for novice teachers. These roles distribute leadership across the school, lessening the burden on principals while also positively impacting instructional quality and student performance. When implemented with fidelity, ATR models improve student achievement by helping to recruit high-quality teacher candidates while also keeping excellent teachers in the classroom longer – ensuring that all students in North Carolina have access to a competent, well-trained teacher.[4,5]

As business leaders, BEST NC members understand the importance of great talent in their own professional organizations, positioning BEST NC as a natural champion for elevating educators to increase student success. In this brief, we examine the emerging opportunity to reimagine the experience of educators in North Carolina schools in order to address some of the root causes of our teacher pipeline challenges and to improve student achievement. We will provide a data-driven exploration of the impacts of existing ATR models in the state and will suggest next steps to ensure that ATR can be sustained in current districts, as well as strategically expanded to districts across the state.

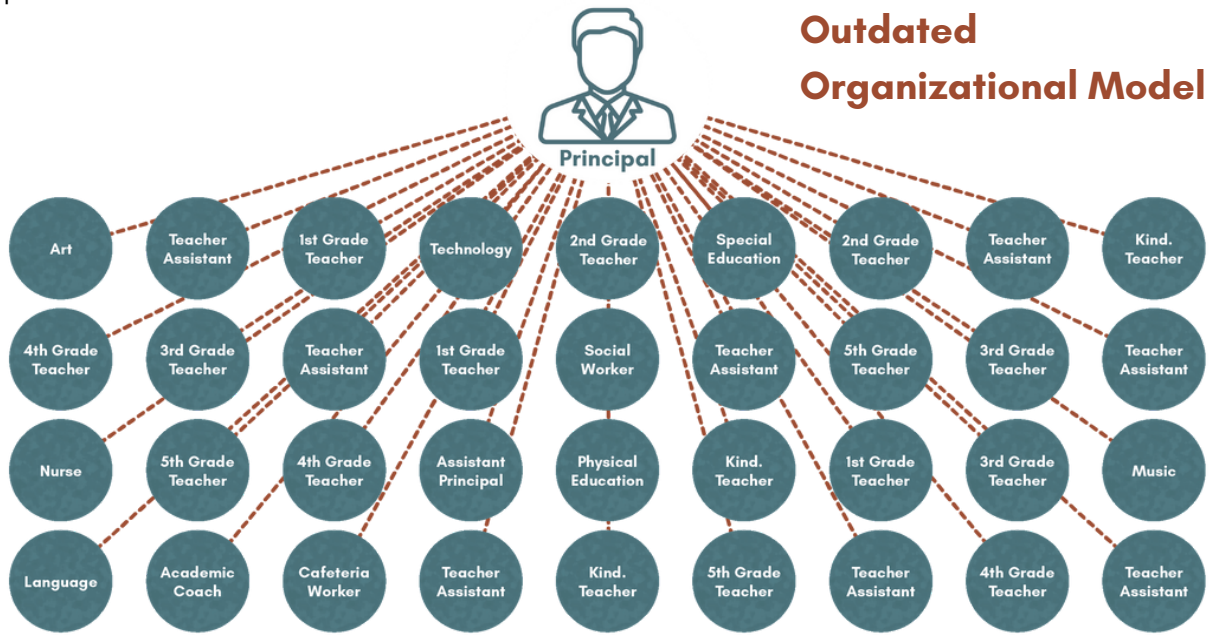
The Challenge: Lack of Career Opportunities and Professional Support

The organizational design of most K-12 public schools in North Carolina and across the country was developed in the industrial era and has changed very little since. Today, although our economic needs and workforce have changed dramatically, we continue to operate a one teacher, one classroom structure that was created more than a century ago and fails to treat educators as skilled professionals.

This has left educators mired in an outdated organizational structure that suppresses teachers' career development, limits student access to effective instruction, and creates untenable working conditions throughout the school building. For instance, K-12 school principals currently have an average of 50 direct reports, a number significantly higher than private sector leadership positions.[6] Supervising and evaluating 50 employees – in addition to responsibilities in the areas of fiscal management, scheduling, student discipline, transportation, nutrition, and parent and community relations – restricts principals' ability to provide the meaningful instructional leadership and professional support that teachers need and deserve.

Since most principals are the primary instructional leaders in their schools, teachers must compete with an average of 49 colleagues for support from school administration, leaving them less likely to receive the coaching and mentorship they need to provide the highest quality instruction for their students and thrive in their profession. Instructional coaching positions often function in a similar way, with one coach serving an entire school or split between multiple schools, resulting in sporadic and uneven support for teachers[7]. In a recent national survey, 51% of teachers reported getting no coaching at all.[8] This structure is especially problematic for beginning teachers, whose need for professional support and training is greater than their veteran peers.

The flat organizational hierarchy in education is also out of sync with talent management strategies in other high-skill professions – such as nursing, accounting, and law enforcement. Professionals in these areas start their careers with a lighter workload and a great deal of support and collaboration from their more experienced colleagues. As they develop mastery, they receive greater autonomy, take on more responsibility, and gain access to promotions and higher pay. In contrast, beginning teachers take on equal responsibility to their more skilled and experienced peers at the outset of their careers with little support and collaboration.



Furthermore, school leaders are not empowered with resources and tools to reward and retain excellent teachers in ways that can also leverage their unique talents. As a result, in some cases, principals assign effective teachers to "easier" classrooms or teaching assignments, such as a smaller class or a class of higher-achieving students, with the intent of rewarding the teacher by lessening their workload but with the effect of depriving students of access to effective educators.[9] This results in less-effective teachers – often beginning teachers – working with larger classes and/or the highest-need students. Difficult working conditions and insufficient support systems have resulted in an attrition rate that is almost twice as high for teachers in their first three years of teaching than for more experienced teachers.[10]

Additionally, because school leaders lack the tools and resources to reward effective teachers through meaningful professional advancement (both in increased compensation and impact), highly effective and ambitious teaching professionals often leave the teaching ranks to take on positions as school or central office administrators. Existing structures for in-school advancement – such as department chair positions and placement on school leadership teams – grant status and a degree of decision-making authority, but largely represent an uncompensated increase in responsibility that simply adds on to a teacher's existing duties.

The result is a 'leaky' teacher pipeline, with overwhelmed beginning teachers and highly skilled, professionally stagnant veteran teachers leaving the profession for different but related reasons. From 2015 to 2020, the percentage of teachers leaving the teaching profession, including those who retire with full benefits, has been fairly constant with attrition around 8% each year.

The lengthy North Carolina court case *Leandro v. State of North Carolina* established that, in order for North Carolina to meet its constitutional obligation to provide a "sound basic education" to all students, schools must provide, among other things, a competent, well-trained teacher in every classroom. Decades into the court decision, little has changed. This is perhaps because well-intended remediation strategies are being layered onto the fundamentally outdated organizational structures that persist in schools.

To meet students' needs, North Carolina must begin to think strategically about the teacher workforce as a high-skilled, evolving profession. Beginning teachers need more chances to collaborate with their more experienced peers and greater access to embedded professional support from colleagues and principals. Expert teachers need opportunities to extend their reach and advance in their careers without leaving the classroom to become principals or central office administrators. ATR models represent a research-based approach to transform and redefine the teaching profession to meet the needs of students, educators, and our 21st-century economy.

North Carolina's Advanced Teaching Roles Program

In 2016, the North Carolina General Assembly created the Teacher Compensation Models and Advanced Teaching Roles Program, a pilot program that allowed school districts to create new organizational structures that expand the impact and retention of effective educators.[11] Based on early successes and strong demand from districts to adopt the model, the pilot program was made permanent in 2020 and is now available to any district in the state via an annual request for proposal administered by DPI.

The basic premise of ATR is to elevate effective teachers to leadership positions in which they receive substantial, ongoing increased pay for taking on additional responsibilities and/or extending their reach, usually by directly teaching more students or – more often – by providing embedded professional development to teams of teachers. As a result, ATR teachers increase the instructional capacity of the entire staff and ensure more students get access to effective instruction.[12] And, since leadership is distributed in a more balanced and purposeful way, principals can focus on other critical school operations like staffing, curriculum, family and community relations, and more.

North Carolina's ATR program provides a mechanism for the state to encourage the expansion of ATR models across the state by allowing the State Board of Education (SBE) to approve district-designed plans and award grants when funds are available. Districts can opt in to this strategy to recruit and retain more great teachers by establishing an ATR model in some or all of their local schools.

Long-term sustainability is a key component of ATR as grant funds are used to support transition costs associated with designing and implementing an ATR model, not to pay for ongoing operating costs such as compensation. Unlike traditional performance bonuses that are funded through a separate line item in the budget, pay supplements for advanced roles are designed to be sustained with regular per-pupil funds, leveraging a one-time state investment for systemic school transformation.

The ATR legislation allows districts to create advanced roles positions for teachers who:

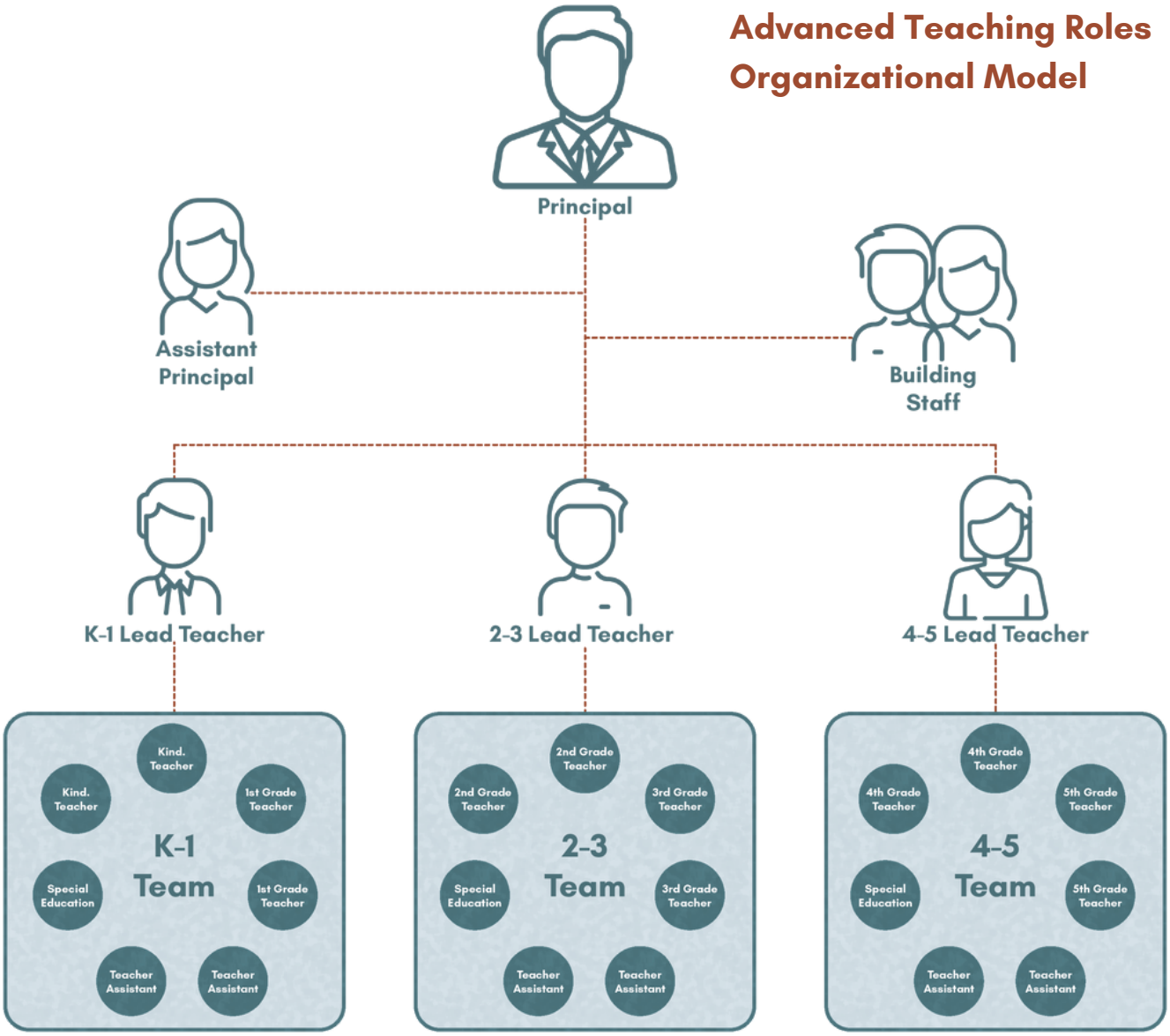
1. Teach an increased number of students and are accountable for their performance as the teacher of record for those students.
2. Become a lead classroom teacher among a group of teachers.
3. Lead a schoolwide effort to implement data-driven instructional models that include blended learning environments, utilizing digital learning and resources, and focusing on methods of improvement for schoolwide performance issues.
4. Provide in-house professional development or function as an instructional content area coach or as a coach in another professional development area following the completion of certification training.

Each approved ATR district can design an ATR model that works best for their community, with school-level design teams making decisions about how ATR models will operate at the building level. And while each is locally designed and customized, all ATR district models are required to:

1. Allow highly effective classroom teachers to reach a greater number of students by assuming accountability for additional students, either by becoming a lead classroom teacher accountable for the student performance of all the students taught by teachers on that teacher's team or by leading a larger effort in the school to implement new instructional models to improve schoolwide performance.
2. Provide salary supplements to classroom teachers in advanced teaching roles.
3. Create innovative compensation models that focus on classroom teacher professional growth that lead to measurable improvements in student outcomes.
4. Establish organizational changes related to compensation in order to sustain evidence-based teaching practices that have the capacity to be replicated throughout the state.

Given meaningful options to reward and retain effective teachers, school leaders assign ATR teachers to roles that increase their reach rather than "reward" them with "easier" classrooms, which has been a common practice where these paid roles do not exist. This organizational model helps address many of the fundamental structural concerns that hinder schools and restrict students' access to high-quality instruction.

Importantly, ATR positions are uniquely different from existing leadership opportunities for teachers, such as department chair and grade level chair. This is because they are intentionally designed to provide more students with access to effective educators, they offer more meaningful increases in compensation for teachers, and they alter the primary responsibilities of the teacher rather than simply layering on additional duties. ATR staffing models are also not the same as simply assigning more students to fewer teachers in a staffing shortage and paying them more. These models are a strategic and intentional redesign of responsibilities so that more students have access to effective teachers and high-quality instruction.



Who are Advanced Roles Teachers?

State statute requires approved ATR districts to use a set of objective criteria to determine eligibility for ATR positions, and requires that teachers have a demonstrated record of effectiveness by meeting at least two of the following criteria:[13]

- Advanced certifications, such as National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification, or a master's degree in the area in which the classroom teacher is licensed and teaching;
- A rating of at least "accomplished" on each of the Teacher Evaluation Standards 1-5 on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation instrument;
- Evidence that the teacher has an average Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) student growth index score from the three previous school years of 1.5 or greater and no individual EVAAS student growth index score below zero; and
- Equivalent demonstrated mastery of teaching skills as required by the new local compensation model.

Districts develop their own procedures for recruiting and selecting ATR teachers, often going above and beyond what is required by state law in order to prioritize educator quality. The teachers who are selected represent some of the most highly qualified teachers in our schools. Based on a survey of participating districts, the most common ATR positions in North Carolina are:

Lead Teacher (also referred to as Master Teachers, Multi-Classroom Leaders, or Multi-Teacher Leaders): Lead Teachers (LTs) lead small, collaborative teams of, typically, two to eight teachers and paraprofessionals within a grade or subject area, with a goal to improve instruction and student performance. LTs are responsible for the academic performance of the students taught by their team of teachers. These teachers deliver embedded professional support for developing teachers and help align the needs of students with the skills of their teachers. They do so by providing pedagogical and curricular leadership, and often help teachers on their team plan lessons and analyze student data to inform their instructional practice. Due to their close working relationship with the classrooms in their team, LTs are intimately aware of individual student needs, which sets them apart from traditional coaching roles that work across the entire school. In some schools, LTs may teach part-time in addition to acting as team leaders. LT stipends range from $6,000 to $20,000 in districts employing teachers in this role.

Extended Reach Teacher (also referred to as Extended Impact Teachers or Team Reach Teachers): Extended Reach Teachers (ERTs) instruct a greater number of students, typically 25-75% more students than the average teacher. These teachers reach more students by teaching a greater number of classes or by leveraging a blended learning model (e.g., pivoting between in-person and digital learning, often with a highly skilled paraprofessional for student support). ERT stipends range from $2,000 to $10,000 in districts employing teachers in this role.

In addition to these two most common roles, ATR-authorized districts, in particular Pitt County Schools, have developed other ATR roles to meet their organizational needs, including educators who:

- Act as mentors to beginning or pre-service teachers,
- Facilitate data teams targeting specific academic needs within the school,
- Perform instructional rounds to provide feedback to colleagues, and
- Research and propose solutions to problems of practice within the school.

It is important to note that ATR positions, and the compensation increases that go along with them, are ongoing and long-term. A teacher can stay in these new professional roles as long as they continue to perform well in the position. That said, these are career lattices, not ladders. If a teacher chooses to move to a different role, they can apply to move to a new position.

Portrait of an Advanced Roles Teacher

Skills and Experience Prioritized in Advanced Roles Teacher Selection

Leadership experience in areas like curriculum development, instructional practice, or data-driven planning and assessment.

Demonstrated effectiveness according to EVAAS data, NC Educator Evaluation System results, and/or National Board certification.

Experience teaching students with disabilities or English language learners.

Excellence in culturally responsive teaching practices.

Certifications in specific math, reading, or writing strategies that demonstrate content-area expertise.

Behavior Event Interview results revealing foundational skills and practices associated with successful adult leadership.

Source: Human Resources Coordinators from ATR Districts

History of Advanced Teaching Roles in North Carolina

In 2013, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) launched the first known ATR model in the state of North Carolina embedded within its ambitious Project Leadership & Investment for Transformation (Project L.I.F.T.), which focused on improving the performance of the district's highest poverty schools.[14] This six-year pilot program – funded by the business community – created ATR models as one of several components intended to improve student achievement in a limited number of schools. However, CMS quickly recognized the benefits of ATR and, in 2014, decided to expand the model to schools outside of the Project L.I.F.T. schools.

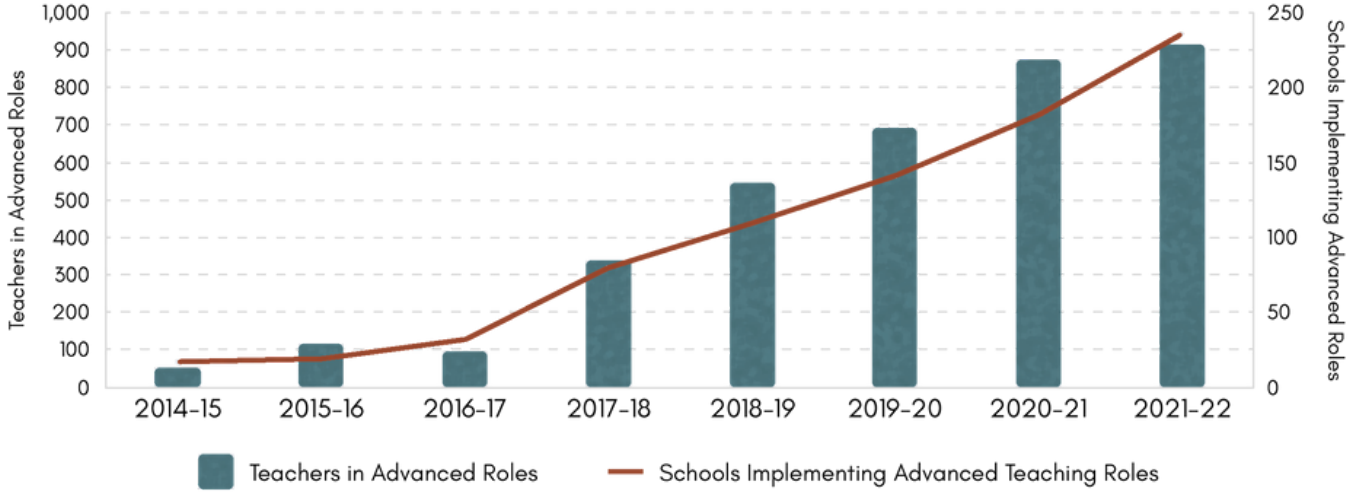
Recognizing the strengths of advanced roles in Project L.I.F.T., BEST NC began working with policymakers and other education stakeholders in 2015 to help scale this strategy statewide. As a result of this effort, the Teacher Compensation Models and Advanced Teaching Roles Pilot Program was established via the state budget bill in 2016.[15]

The initial ATR Pilot Program legislation provided grant funding for three years to cover startup costs for up to 10 districts and required grantee districts to be a mix of small (average daily membership [ADM] < 4,000), medium (ADM between 4,000 and 20,000) and large (ADM > 20,000) districts. The program issued its first grants to six districts in December 2016.

From 2016 to 2022, the ATR Program has evolved with the continued support of the North Carolina General Assembly and other state education policymakers. What was initially a pilot program has been made permanent, the initial cap on the number of school districts and the district size requirements have been eliminated, funding and staffing flexibilities have been given to grantees, and the state has clarified that the models should be self-sustaining within existing budgets, with the purpose of grant funds being to assist with implementation costs, not to pay for ongoing salary supplements for ATR teachers. Districts, both those that have completed their grant cycle and those that are implementing ATR without a state grant, are now able to apply every five years for ATR authorization by the SBE.

Over the years, the legislature has increased funding for this program to $3.5 million in recurring funds dedicated to providing grants for ATR models, with districts allowed to apply for up to two 3-year grant terms. Today there are 15 districts across North Carolina implementing ATR models and 4 districts are in the planning phase with awards granted in 2022.

Advanced Teaching Roles Schools & Teachers, 2014-15 to 2021-22



Source: Human Resources Coordinators from ATR Districts

2013
- Project L.I.F.T. begins in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. Six-year project establishes the first ATR model in the state.

2014
- Institute For Emerging Issues Annual Conference: *Teachers and the Great Economic Debate.*[16] Recommendations included creating career ladders for teachers, emulating the training, standards and advancement of nurses in the medical profession.

2016
- North Carolina General Assembly (NCGA) creates the Teacher Compensation Models and Advanced Teaching Roles program as a three-year pilot, with a 10-district cap and specific district size requirements.
- NCGA appropriates $1 million in recurring funding and $100,000 in non-recurring funding for the ATR Pilot Program.
- 12 districts respond to the Request for Proposals (RFP); 6 are selected.[17] Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Edgecombe County Public Schools, Pitt County Schools, Vance County Schools, and Washington County Schools become the first grantees.

2017
- NCGA appropriates $7.18 million in non-recurring funds to allow pilot districts to sustain and expand their ATR models.[18]
- NCGA provides class size flexibility for grantee districts implementing ATR models.
- Cabarrus County Schools begins to implement an ATR model using local funds but without class size flexibility.

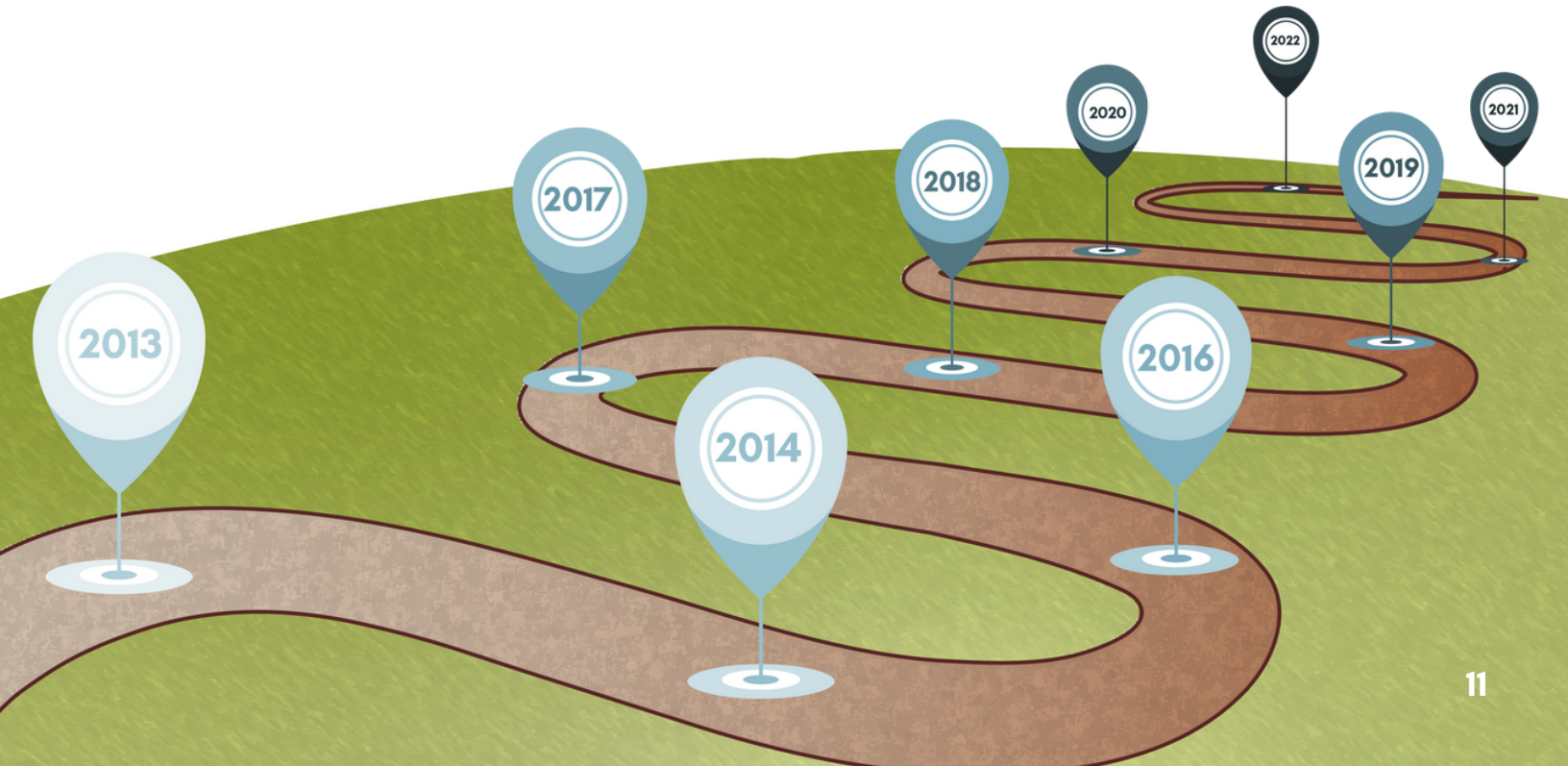
2018
- NCGA appropriates $700,000 ($500,000 recurring and $200,000 non-recurring) for grants to new Advanced Roles districts (up to 10 total). NCGA extends the initial ATR Pilot Program by five years, concluding with the 2024-25 school year.[19]

2019
- 13 districts respond to the RFP; 4 selected: Bertie County Schools, Halifax County Schools, Hertford County Schools, and Lexington City Schools.[20]
- Guilford County Schools begins to implement ATR models using local funds but without class size flexibility.
- BEST NC begins regularly convening interested and implementing districts for ATR sharing sessions.
- NCGA eliminates 10-district cap and district size requirements, allowing additional districts to apply for grants utilizing existing recurring funding.[21]

2020
- 13 districts respond to the RFP; 4 are selected: Guilford County Schools, Wilson County Schools, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, and Thomasville City Schools.[22]
- The Friday Institute releases final evaluation of ATR Pilot Program and finds positive results for students and teachers.
- NCGA makes the ATR Pilot Program permanent, creates an annual RFP process, requires districts to design financially sustainable models from the outset, and allows approved ATR districts to re-apply every five years to maintain their schools' ATR status.[23]
- Chapel Hill/Carrboro City Schools and Washington County Schools' ATR models do not meet the evolving criteria on financial sustainability and elect not to continue.

2021
- Thomasville City Schools suspends ATR design because of the COVID-19 pandemic and their grant funding is reallocated to McDowell County Schools and Cumberland County Schools.[24]
- The Professional Educator Preparation and Standards Commission begins examining ways to connect ATR to the state's licensure and professional development system through the *NC Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals.*[25]
- NCGA appropriates $2.04 million in recurring funding, allows districts to apply for a second 3-year grant term during which they will receive class size flexibility, and establishes criteria for the renewal of approved ATR plans every five years.[26]

2022
- 5 districts respond to the RFP; 4 are selected: Lincoln County Schools, Mount Airy City Schools, Nash County Public Schools, and Thomasville City Schools.
- SBE allocates funding for a third-party evaluation for the state's ATR program and for renewal grants for the 8 districts whose first ATR grant has ended.[27]



Distributed Leadership During a Global Crisis

The ability of ATR teachers to distribute leadership and increase the capacity of teachers across the entire school came into sharper focus at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. When K-12 public schools were required to shut their doors in March of 2020, educators across the state and nation scrambled to deliver lessons to students virtually. Adapting standards and curricula while rapidly retraining an entire school's educators on new educational tools was a daunting challenge for school leaders.

During times of crisis, the strengths and weaknesses of organizations are magnified. Schools implementing ATR models were uniquely situated to adapt to the new realities of school during the pandemic, owing in large part to the distributed leadership made possible by its ATR teachers.

Throughout the pandemic, ATR school principals leaned heavily on ATR teachers, who were instrumental in adapting instructional resources to a virtual learning environment, providing professional development to teachers focused on using synchronous and asynchronous virtual learning platforms, and coordinating services for families struggling to engage with virtual learning.

> ***Our Multi-Classroom Leaders (MCLs) were the missing link that allowed us to continue providing students with targeted instruction that was informed by assessment data during the COVID-19 school closure. With classroom teachers focused on designing lessons and getting synchronous virtual instruction up and running, our MCLs made sure we continued to offer our students multi-tiered systems of support.***
>
> Danah Telfaire, Principal
> Merry Oaks International Academy, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

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> ***During our school's transition to virtual learning during the COVID-19 school closure, our MCLs helped to maintain our ability to provide targeted instruction to students. They ensured that our professional learning communities didn't miss a beat, led essential small-group interventions to students, and provided timely professional development to our teachers on delivering instruction in a virtual format. Their relentless focus on instruction allowed us to continue to meet our students' diverse learning needs.***
>
> Kelly Anne Mudd, Principal
> Martin Millennium Academy, Edgecombe County Schools

> ***The COVID-19 pandemic has created many challenges for students and staff but...[Advanced Teaching Roles] has made it possible for every classroom teacher to receive individual and group support. This model has strengthened the collaboration among staff and has given us the opportunity to reach a wider range of students and cater to their needs in the midst of such trying times.***
>
> Yolande Dixon, Lead Teacher
> Pinkston Street Elementary School, Vance County Schools

Evidence of Success

When evaluating the state's ATR program, it is important to remember that each district and school designs a model to meet their local needs, making comparisons across districts challenging. However, early results in North Carolina suggest that, when implemented with fidelity, ATR increases the retention of experienced and effective teachers in the classroom, while also having a positive impact on student academic growth through improved teaching practices.

The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University was selected in 2017 by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to conduct an evaluation of the ATR Pilot Program. In 2020, the Institute released a report, Teacher Compensation Models and Advanced Teaching Roles Pilot Programs, summarizing results from the first three years of implementation in six pilot districts. The report concluded that:

- ATR schools improved student performance more than a matched cohort of non-ATR schools over the first two years of implementation.
- ATR models make the teaching profession more attractive and support the retention of teachers seeking additional pay and leadership opportunities.
- Teachers selected for advanced roles are highly qualified and have a track record of positive student growth scores.[28]

Improved Student Performance

Evidence suggests that the selection of highly qualified, effective teachers for advanced roles positions has led to positive trends in student performance in participating schools; however, additional data are needed to examine the extent to which improved student performance persists over time in schools with advanced teaching roles.

In the Friday Institute report, ATR Pilot Program schools were matched with similar schools based on a range of variables, including teacher performance and attrition, student testing outcomes, and measures of district demographics.[29] School Performance Grades (which are based upon a weighted average of 80% school-level achievement and 20% school-level growth), School Performance Composite Scores (which isolate student achievement), and School Accountability Growth Scores (which isolate student growth) were measured in the first two years of the ATR Pilot Program implementation. Findings from the report include:

- **When compared with matched schools, ATR schools outperformed on the School Performance Grades.** 68% of ATR schools had higher School Performance Grades after one year of implementation, with 61% receiving higher School Performance Grades in year two. 46% of matched schools had higher School Performance Grades in the first year and 48% had higher School Performance Grades in the second year.
- **Student achievement in an ATR school was higher than in matched schools, but the differences were not statistically significant.** ATR Pilot Program schools held slight advantages over matched schools in both the first and second year of implementation.
- **When compared with matched schools, ATR schools had significantly higher student growth.** 76% of ATR schools showed increased growth scores in the first year of implementation, and 56% showed increased student growth in the second year. 46% and 44% of matched schools saw increased student growth scores in year one and year two.

Taken together, ATR Pilot Program schools outperformed matched schools, both in overall performance and in student growth. However, ATR Pilot Program schools gave back some of their initial gains in the second year of implementation, both in overall performance and student growth, suggesting a need for data that assess the long-term impacts of ATR implementation and additional research to determine which types of models have the greatest impact. Also, while the study found greater impact on student growth of models utilizing the Lead Teacher (LT) and Extended Reach Teacher (ERT roles, the study did not distinguish between different model types, so that might be a research improvement going forward.

Additionally, a 2018 study from the National Center for the Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (CALDER) of 300 teachers and 15,000 students over three years in New York and North Carolina, found that students of team teachers in an Opportunity Culture model experienced academic gains between the 75th and 85th percentile in math and between the 66th and 72nd percentile in reading.[30] Opportunity Culture is one framework for implementing ATR and is utilized by 10 of the 15 districts implementing ATR in North Carolina today.

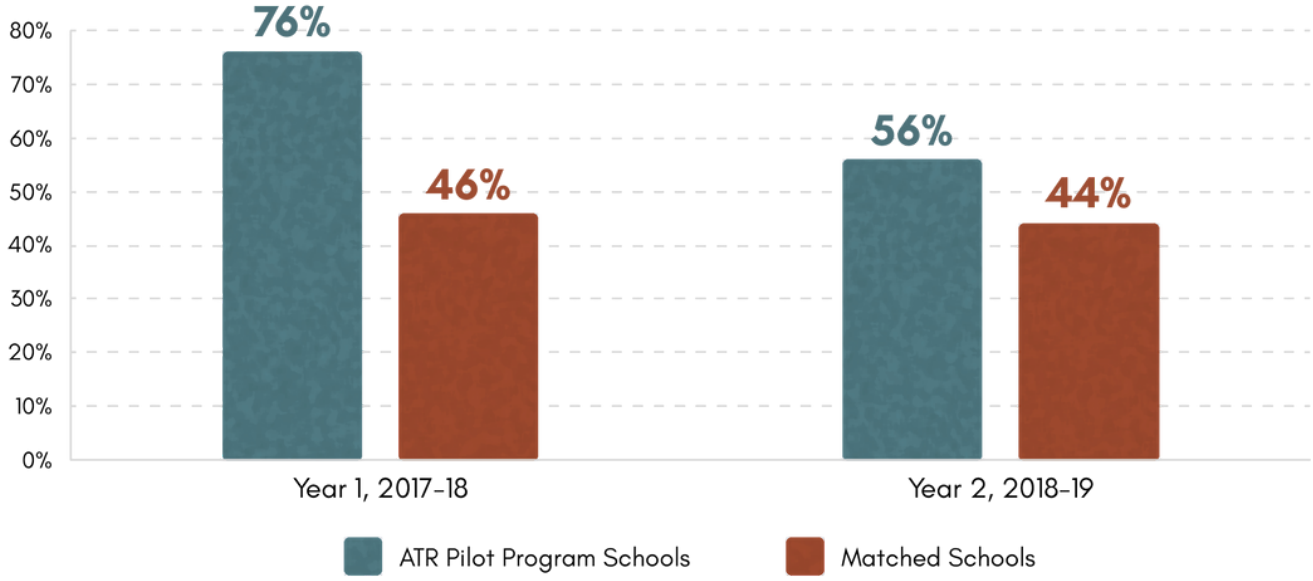
Accelerating the Implementation of the *Science of Reading* with Advanced Teaching Roles

Advanced Teaching Roles models establish the infrastructure that makes other initiatives possible. Strong organizational structures accelerate the diffusion and adoption of innovative practice across a school building.

For example, as North Carolina embarks on an ambitious effort to train teachers in the Science of Reading, in accordance with the Excellent Public Schools Act of 2021, ATR schools report that having Lead Teachers coach their teams on Science of Reading strategies and track their use in the classroom resulted in faster and more effective implementation.[31]

> ***At E.O. Young Elementary, we are currently learning and implementing the Science of Reading. As a multi-classroom leader, I had opportunities to build my knowledge over the summer. Now, I am participating in training alongside my team of teachers. Through coaching and classroom visits I am ensuring they are implementing best practices in their classrooms and we have already seen a direct impact in the growth of our readers.***
>
> Marian Faulkner, Multi-Classroom Leader
> Vance County Schools

Percentage of Schools with Increased School Accountability Growth Scores, Years 1 and 2 of ATR Pilot Program



Source: Friday Institute for Educational Innovation

Improved Retention and Perceptions of Teaching

Teacher retention is an important leading indicator of implementation success. According to the 2020 Friday Institute report, ATR models have made positive impacts on teacher retention, with attrition rates of ATR teachers in pilot schools at 1-3%, compared with 7.5-9% statewide.[32] In surveys and focus groups conducted by the Friday Institute, ATR teachers reported the following benefits of ATR models in their schools:

- Increased salary in exchange for increased responsibility,
- The opportunity to lead and support peers,
- The ability to advance professionally without having to leave the classroom, and
- Feeling more valued for their contributions to students and the school.

ATR models are perceived positively not just by ATR teachers themselves, but by school leaders, colleagues, and preservice teachers as well.

Highly Effective Teachers Selected for Advanced Roles

ATR positions have been highly sought after in implementing districts, and have attracted an applicant pool of qualified, experienced, and effective teachers. The 2020 Friday Institute report found that EVAAS scores of teachers selected for ATR roles were consistently higher than applicants who were not selected for advanced roles positions, and higher than teachers who did not apply. Additionally, the number of applicants for advanced roles teaching positions was consistently higher than the number of available positions, indicating the demand for these opportunities.

In surveys of districts implementing ATR roles, conducted by BEST NC in late 2021, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Guilford County Schools (the districts with the largest ATR applicant pools) reported applicant acceptance rates of 65% and 43%, respectively. EVAAS scores of ATR teachers and applicant numbers and acceptance rates in participating districts reveal a competitive application process with highly effective teachers being selected to serve in advanced roles.

Stakeholder Feedback

School and District Leaders

83% of school and district leaders believed that Advanced Teaching Roles helped them retain high-quality teachers.

Lead Teachers

82% of lead teachers reported that the existence of Advanced Teaching Roles in their schools influenced their decision to stay in the classroom.

Teachers Working Alongside Lead Teachers

75% of teachers working with Advanced Teaching Roles teachers said that their collaboration positively influenced their decision to continue teaching.

Licensure Candidates in EPPs

74% of licensure candidates in educator preparation programs said that a district utilizing an Advanced Teaching Roles model would be* somewhat more *to* much more *appealing than a district that was not.

Source: Friday Institute for Educational Innovation

Educator Perspectives

I think this program is really working and I do believe that it has made a difference in our school. I know the data shows that it does, but I'm talking about even with the morale of the teachers. Even with the teachers' skill and their ability to feel good about themselves.

Lead Teacher

I have been with my [Lead Teacher] for three years, and she started coaching me when I was a brand-new teacher. So, her coaching really shaped my behavior management, and some of the basic instructional strategies that I use every day.

Beginning Teacher

The mentor I worked with [in another district] was a lovely [person], but there was no instructional support. I didn't feel like I had a coach, somebody that could help me work through things and give me advice on my content and my teaching. My [Lead Teacher] is like a bucket of resources.

Teacher Colleague

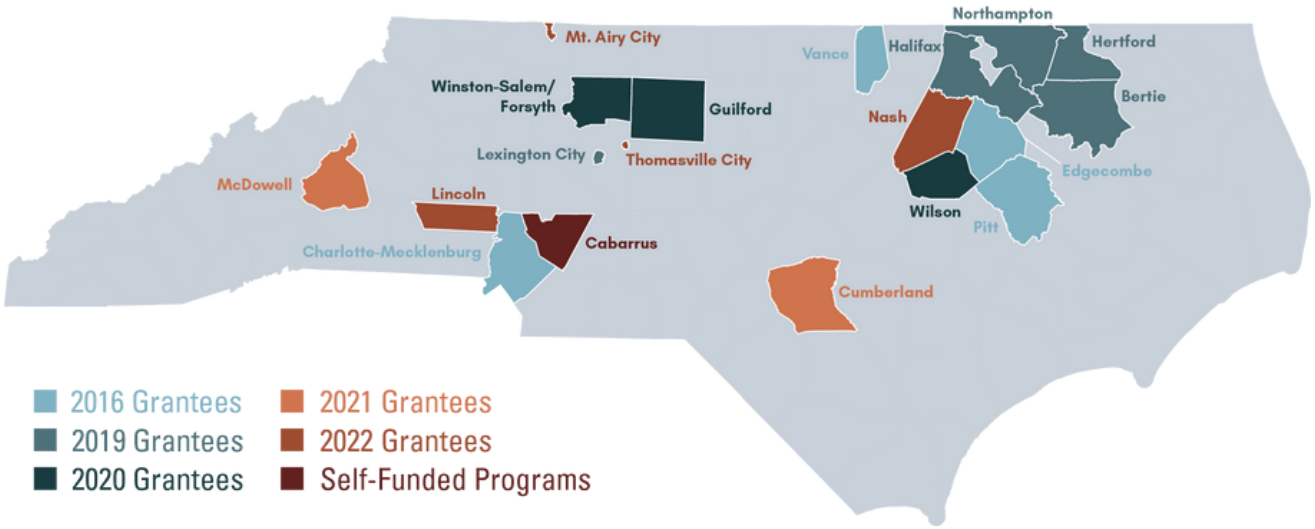
Source: Friday Institute for Educational Innovation

The Reach of Advanced Teaching Roles

Districts

Currently, 15 school districts are implementing and 4 school districts are designing ATR models, for a total of 19 districts statewide. This represents 17% of all school districts across North Carolina.

Districts with Advanced Teaching Roles Programs, 2021-22



Schools

During the 2021-22 school year, 236 schools across North Carolina have ATR models (9.3% of traditional K-12 public schools in the state).[33] Of these, 194 (82% of ATR schools) are eligible to receive Title I funds, as determined by the level of poverty of the school's student population.[34] Statewide, 56% of schools are Title I-eligible, indicating that ATR models are more heavily concentrated in higher-poverty schools. This is likely because the ATR strategy can help recruit great teachers to high-needs schools and also because Title I funds can be used flexibly to help support the additional compensation for ATR positions in a sustainable way.

Teachers

During the 2021-2022 school year, 914 teachers were working in advanced roles positions. Of the 93,897 public school teachers working in North Carolina, 8,724 (9.3%) work in schools that offer access to career advancement via advanced teaching roles.[35]

Students

Estimates from ATR districts show that approximately 59,000 students are being reached by ATR teachers during the 2021-22 school year, extending their reach to about three times more students than if they were in a traditionally structured school (based on statewide average class size data).[36] This represents 4.4% of all traditional K-12 public school students in the state.[37]

Best Practices for Advanced Teaching Roles Models

Since the inception of the ATR program six years ago, North Carolina has learned important lessons about building sustainable models that promote buy-in from districts, school leaders, teachers, and staff – with a persistent, positive impact on student learning. As district leaders contemplate, develop, expand, and sustain ATR in their schools, they should focus on building sustainable models that are continuously evaluated and adapted to leverage the skills of educators and to meet the needs of students. Here are a few best practices in districts that can help to drive continuous improvement:

Focus on Student Success

Sustainable and successful ATR models are explicitly designed to increase student achievement and growth. Teacher effectiveness and retention are directly related to student performance, so while ATR models benefit the teacher experience by providing opportunities for advancement and embedded, high-quality professional support, there are critical benefits for students that should remain at the center of ATR design and implementation.

Expand to Additional Schools Steadily and Sustainably

While Pitt County Schools started its ATR model district-wide with a sizable national grant, most models are being phased in over time to allow early adopter schools to opt in before schools that are less willing or prepared to transition to this model (see the Rogers Innovation Adoption Curve, page 20). This approach is preferred because it allows districts to expand in phases into schools that have leadership capacity and educators who will embrace this model. Districts typically start with 2-5 schools, then add 5-10 per year. This means that a large district could take more than a decade to fully phase in, as seen in CMS.

Engage Stakeholders in ATR Design

Transitioning from an outdated human resource model to one that offers authentic professional development and career pathways is a major shift for any school district or school. Transparently seeking and incorporating stakeholder input into the design of the model increases the likelihood that school staff will work together to maximize the impact on student performance.

Empower Principals to Align Teacher Skills with Student Needs

Successful ATR models mirror human resource best practices in other high-skilled professions, empowering principals to align the skills of their ATR teachers with the professional needs of other developing teachers, as well as the needs of their students. For example, if a school has a larger number of beginning teachers, the model might look different from a school that has a disproportionate number of highly effective teachers. Similarly, a Lead Teacher might adapt their approach to instructional support to ensure that teachers with specific skills are being matched to the needs of students.

Create Fair, Outcomes-Based Selection Processes

In order to ensure fidelity of implementation, ATR models must have support and buy-in from teachers and school leaders. That means utilizing ATR selection criteria that are perceived as consistent, fair, objective, and most importantly student-centered. State statute provides a starting point for developing criteria for ATR positions, and districts may choose to add metrics that are widely accepted by educators and linked to proven effectiveness with students.

Increase Compensation Substantially

Research on best practices for retaining effective teachers shows that compensation increases must be significant and sustainable to keep them in the profession.[38] While bonuses can be effective short-term, career growth opportunities with commensurate compensation increases are more impactful. ATR roles are typically compensated with $2,000 to $10,000 per year for Extended Reach Teachers and $6,000 to $20,000 per year for Lead Teachers, on top of base salaries and local salary supplements.[39]

Invest in Professional Development for ATR Leaders

Successful districts report that it is also important for districts to develop and budget for appropriate professional development for ATR teachers as they begin their new roles. Professional development should be tailored to the specific ATR roles being utilized by the district, and could include training on leadership, coaching, or mentoring of adult colleagues. Professional development might also be utilized to help create a pipeline of teachers who are well-prepared to move into ATR positions when they become available.

Ensure Fiscal Sustainability

A fiscally sustainable ATR model is less likely to be impacted by budget cuts or trends in education reform. To create fiscally sound ATR models, districts should keep sustainability front of mind. This means paying for advanced roles salary supplements through existing, recurring funds and adjusting positions annually based on student and school needs. One in-budget option that has been successfully used is trading vacant positions for dollars in order to fund salary supplements for the school's ATR teachers.

Establish Flexible Roles

Designing ATR roles is a careful balance and is not one-size-fits-all, even school to school. Tiered roles across the model are appropriate to ensure that principals can assign roles that are aligned to the capabilities of their ATR teachers and the developmental needs of the rest of their team, which will evolve over time. School leaders should design ATR roles that increase the impact that teachers in advanced roles have on students and augment the capacity of their colleagues. This often requires school leaders to be creative and flexible in master scheduling as well.

Commit to Continuous Evaluation and Improvement

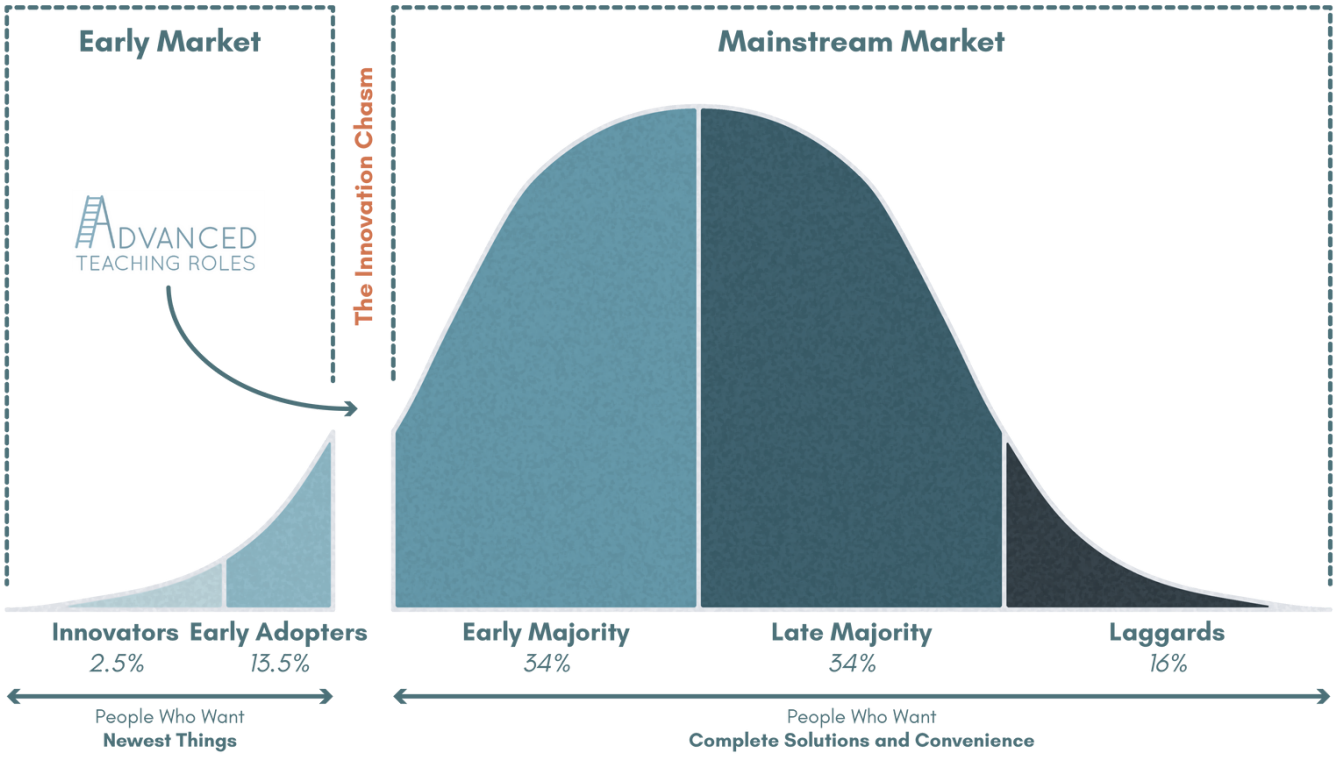
State law requires districts operating ATR models to adhere to rules that govern the model's structure, teacher qualifications, and teacher roles, but substantial room exists for districts to innovate and design structures that meet the unique needs of students and staff within the community. While statewide studies are important, intra-district comparisons are sometimes more valuable than inter-district comparisons because schools in the same district have many of the same curricular, fiscal, and human resource structures. Therefore, districts should regularly assess ATR models in their schools to clarify what is working, make necessary adjustments, and create opportunities for principals and school leadership teams to learn from one another.

Looking Ahead: Projected Statewide Implementation

By design, ATR is being adopted district-by-district instead of taking a single, one-size-fits-all statewide approach. Because ATR represents a significant organizational and cultural shift for schools and educators, it must be phased in over time, with districts opting in to participate when local leadership is prepared to support this type of systemic transformation, and with districts phasing in the implementation of their models to a few schools per year.

Utilizing the existing grant program structure, ATR can be gradually expanded to new, opt-in districts each year until models have been implemented across the entire state and districts can reapply for a second grant term to support the expansion of their programs to additional schools.

Whether you are talking about consumers, schools, or whole industries, innovation is typically adopted in phases, with innovators and early adopters opting in sooner than others. The Rogers Innovation Adoption Curve provides a visual of the typical adoption pattern for new innovations. While there is a natural curve for innovation adoption, insufficient implementation funding suppresses this curve and increases the time to full implementation.



At existing levels of funding, about 10 new districts can be selected to design and implement ATR models each year, reaching scale in about 25 years (recognizing that expansion to each district will take 10 years, then phasing in the models at 5-10 schools per year, per district will add another 15 years). However, intentional increases in appropriated funding and an acceleration in implementation at the district level could nearly double new district participation and reduce statewide implementation by as much as 10 years.

**Note: Other innovations such as licensure reform as proposed in the NC Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals can accelerate the expansion and implementation of ATR models statewide.*

Recommendations: Moving Advanced Teaching Roles Forward Statewide

In order to achieve statewide implementation, BEST NC believes North Carolina should prioritize the following objectives to effectively expand and sustain ATR statewide:

- Sustain existing, effective models;
- Expand statewide to all public school units, with fidelity;
- Expand to more schools in existing districts, e.g., non-Title I schools; and
- Expand implementation in additional, non-core subject areas.

Rigorous design and careful implementation of ATR models by school leaders and teachers have succeeded, in part, due to the support of state policymakers, who have recognized the potential of ATR to increase the capacity of educators and improve student performance. For ATR models to reach their potential, it will be essential for policymakers to continue that support in several ways:

Maintain the District Opt-in Approach

While it is tempting to mandate a uniform statewide ATR model, we find that adoption of ATR works best when schools and communities opt in to creating a new organizational model. This creates greater buy-in from principals, teachers, and staff for what is a massive cultural shift. It also results in more customized models that meet the unique needs of students and educators in each school. That said, as teacher licensure pathways and professional development evolve to reflect the presence of ATR, it will make sense to establish statewide expectations for how ATR models will align with those new structures.

Additionally, the state should consider incentives for districts to begin developing ATR models. For example, grants might be made available only to the first 80 districts. Or, teacher pay increases could become an incentive to participate in ATR by prioritizing funds for districts that offer teacher leadership roles.

Establish Process for ATR Approval

In order to continue expanding and sustaining ATR roles in more districts, the SBE has been empowered by state statute to approve district ATR models on a 5-year cycle. This will be helpful for districts that choose to self-fund their transition to ATR and for those that have moved beyond the initial implementation phase and are in sustaining mode. The ATR approval could then become a mechanism to ensure that class-size and targeted budget flexibility is being utilized appropriately by ATR schools and that it is translating to an improved professional experience for teachers and increased academic outcomes for students.

State statute provides a set of student and teacher outcomes that must be considered as criteria for the renewal of ATR models. The SBE and DPI should consult with a variety of stakeholders, including school and district leaders implementing ATR and other organizations with expertise in ATR, to design and implement a rigorous, evidenced-based process for ATR renewal.

Invest in Shared Continuous Improvement

At the request of district leaders and educators, BEST NC has collaborated with NC DPI staff to facilitate quarterly ATR sharing sessions. Attendees range from districts that are exploring the concept to districts that are designing or implementing their model. School and district leaders attending these events share best practices, problem-solve challenges, and discuss model design. These sessions create a generative opportunity to continuously improve district models.

BEST NC's quarterly convenings of implementing districts have revealed the importance and benefits of establishing a community of practice for ATR schools and districts. This type of intentional information sharing should be institutionalized as the models extend statewide. Currently, NC DPI does not have staff to support the creation of an ongoing community of practice around ATR.

The State should consider creating an ATR Commission with full-time staff at NC DPI dedicated to stewarding the ATR initiative and supporting the expansion and sustainability of ATR across the state. The primary function of the ATR Commission and staff would be to manage and administer the grant program, ensuring only the highest-quality models are awarded grant funding and ATR approval. The Commission and staff would also facilitate collaborative regional efforts among ATR districts, provide technical assistance to districts based on best practices, collect and analyze data on the initiative, and recommend strategies for aligning and leveraging ATR alongside other emerging education issues like implementing the Science of Reading and the Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals plan.

Commit to Measurement and Evaluation

Districts have a certain amount of flexibility in the design of their models, within important statutory guardrails. This local flexibility allows districts to tailor models to student and educator needs while also presenting an opportunity for continuous improvement within and across districts.

Additional research and evaluation of the state's ATR program is needed to ensure continued positive impact on student achievement and growth and to identify best practices in model design, the types of roles utilized, professional development, the use of class-size flexibility, and other aspects of implementation, including variations in implementation between Title I, non-Title I, and restart schools. State statute has charged the SBE with evaluating the program moving forward and we encourage them to move forward with a rigorous, independent evaluation as soon as possible.

Both as a tool for ATR evaluation and as a measure of teacher effectiveness, state statute requires LTs to participate in the state's EVAAS student growth system utilizing a model developed by NC DPI to measure the impact of the LT on the students taught by his/her team of teachers. This growth system must be completed and implemented as soon as possible to ensure valid and reliable measurement of ATR teachers' impact on the students taught by their team of teachers and to help us better understand the conditions under which LTs can be most impactful (e.g., full release vs. partial release from regular classroom duties, what is the optimal number of teachers on an LT's team).

Provide Limited Class Size Flexibility

A core feature of ATR is that the additional advanced roles pay is funded within the existing school budget, thereby making it sustainable over time. In ATR schools, principals utilize limited class size flexibility to extend the reach of excellent teachers and to "right-size" class sizes to align student needs with the strengths and abilities of each teacher.

In most cases, schools create slightly larger class sizes for effective Extended Reach Teachers, under the supervision of a highly effective Lead Teacher. While class sizes are higher, the model actually increases the overall number of students who have access to a highly effective teacher and provides embedded professional development to help novice and developing teachers get better, faster – increasing the overall capacity and quality of the teaching corps (see Appendix A).

Currently, ATR districts receive class size flexibility only during the term of their state ATR grant, even if the district's ATR model is approved by the SBE. This flexibility must be expanded beyond the grant period in order to sustain these positions throughout the life of the ATR model, with the approval process ensuring accountability and fidelity of implementation.

Allow Targeted Budget Flexibility

Similar to class size flexibility, targeted budget flexibility enables ATR schools to compensate highly effective teachers for extending their reach to more students and/or teams of teachers without large budget increases at the state level. Districts can use this flexibility to trade vacant or unneeded instructional positions for funding to support advanced roles salary supplements (see Appendix B). Importantly, human resource and budgeting decisions are made at the school level to ensure specific student needs are met by the ATR model, rather than being decided at the district or state level.

By "targeted," we mean that budget flexibility can be limited to very specific uses within an authorized ATR model, e.g., dollars received for traded positions can only be used for salary supplements for ATR teachers and are limited to specific ATR guardrails such as for effective teachers who are significantly expanding their reach. Targeted budget flexibility retains position funding within its intended use by ensuring funds are utilized solely for ATR salary supplements.

Targeted budget flexibility is of even greater importance in non-Title I schools that lack funding flexibility across most categories of the school budget. Currently, 41 out of 229 schools implementing ATR models are not eligible for Title I funding, and school leaders in these schools are especially hamstrung when it comes to locating funding sources for ATR teacher stipends. The state should allow approved ATR schools to trade instructional positions in at the average teacher salary for the sole purpose of funding ATR compensation in that school.

Accelerate ATR Expansion Statewide

Increasing, recurring state funding is needed for grants that cover transition costs for districts to begin or expand ATR models in their schools. Covering the one-time startup costs associated with establishing new organizational structures is particularly important for smaller districts with fewer personnel and more limited resources.

Given the early evidence of student learning gains associated with ATR implementation, recurring funding for startup grants is a prudent investment to ensure steady uptake of these innovative staffing practices across the state of North Carolina. This is one-time transition funding and should only be needed for the next 10-15 years, depending on how quickly the models are adopted (see Appendix C). A funding increase of $5-6 million dollars for about 10 years would dramatically accelerate ATR implementation. Alternatively, the State might consider creating a Trust Fund for ATR appropriations and making a substantial, nonrecurring investment at the outset. This Trust Fund could be managed by the ATR Commission and would allow the Commission to accelerate the implementation of ATR based on district interest and readiness.

In addition, utilizing lessons learned about best practices to date and by surveying districts about their ATR costs, the SBE and DPI should consider developing a more consistent structure for grant funding. For example, a fixed amount per district for model design, followed by a fixed dollar amount per school for implementation over several years. This will help ensure districts are receiving sufficient and consistent levels of funding to design and transition into ATR. Underfunding district grants is just as inefficient as overfunding.

Expand ATR into More Schools and Classrooms

DPI should also examine opportunities for the expansion of ATR models to other schools and teachers – for example, identifying ways for charter schools to design models within their schools or among a coalition or network of charter schools. Also, while most of the initial models offer ATR roles in core subject areas like math and reading, ATR positions can and should be made available for other positions such as arts, World Languages, and Career and Technical Education courses.

Link ATR Program to Licensure & Statewide Professional Development Strategies

Transforming school organizational models to create intentional career pathways for teachers can be directly linked to emerging licensure redesign and professional development strategies. For example, existing, embedded LTs can become the primary conduit for in-school instructional support for apprentice, beginning and developing teachers, as proposed by the NC Pathways to Excellence for Teaching Professionals.[40]

Also, since schools have never before had official teacher leader positions, our state has also never offered leadership training for these positions. North Carolina leaders should consider statewide strategies to prepare principals and teachers to lead effectively in these new organizational models. Existing structures for professional development delivery – for example, NC DPI's regional directors, the Regional Education Services Alliance (RESA) or the NC Center for the Advancement of Teachers (NCCAT) – could be utilized to distribute this preparation across the state.

Consider Funding for ATR Pay

The current ATR program funds ATR teacher salary supplements within existing school budgets, and the program is made financially sustainable through targeted funding and staffing flexibility. Schools most commonly use Title I funds (when available) or trade vacant positions for dollars to support compensation increases. However, these funding sources are limited, constraining the number of ATR positions that can be supported within budget and the amount of time Lead Teachers can devote to their coaching responsibilities (i.e., full vs. partial release from classroom duties to coach teachers or work with small groups of students, see pg. 9).

In order to expand ATR more evenly across different types of schools and to provide effective teachers with greater access to these leadership positions statewide, North Carolina might consider providing additional state funding for ATR compensation as a supplement to what schools and districts are using for this purpose. This would reinforce the value the state places on these important teaching roles as a critical strategy for improving student achievement. Further, it could help the State better leverage necessary investments in teacher pay – given the importance of staying competitive with surroundings states – by strategically targeting funding toward ATR structures that develop and retain top teachers, prioritizing and valuing the contributions they make to students and colleagues.

Conclusion

> ***We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.***
>
> Albert Einstein

ATR models are modernizing and elevating the experience of North Carolina teachers by transforming the organizational structures in North Carolina schools – with a focus on improving student achievement. These new school structures ensure that principals and teachers are empowered to meet the unique needs of their students by leveraging and increasing the capacity of their teachers. These models are also designed to be agile when faced with emerging challenges and new educational innovations.

Well-designed ATR models increase the retention of effective teachers through career advancement opportunities and provide ongoing, embedded professional development that allows developing teachers to get better, faster. A competitive selection process ensures that highly qualified cohorts of teachers with a demonstrated track record of positive student outcomes are being placed in leadership roles. When leadership is more distributed across school buildings, principals are better able to provide the professional support that teachers need, and schools are better able to meet student needs. Most importantly, ATR models are linked with increases in student academic growth across North Carolina.

Currently in 9% of all schools, Advanced Teaching Roles are becoming more common across the state but have a long way to go to achieve statewide implementation. In order to maintain and build upon the progress made since the inception of the state's ATR Pilot Program in 2016, district- and state-level infrastructure must be aligned to lessons learned from implementation by early adopting districts. School districts should build models sustainably by eliciting stakeholder input, engaging in proactive fiscal planning, and designing roles that allow highly qualified ATR teachers to take on an increased level of responsibility commensurate with their skillset and experience. Districts should also continuously evaluate the models in each of their implementing schools to clarify successful practices.

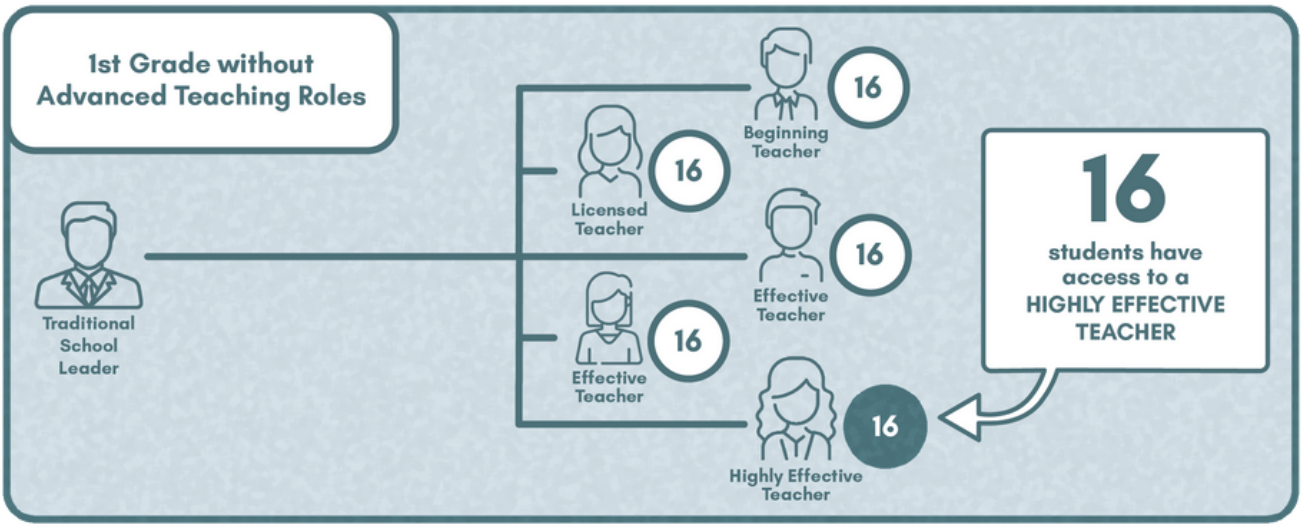
Changing a 100-year-old school organizational structure will not happen in just a few years. Despite that these models are good for teachers, teaching, and learning – change can still be difficult and needs to be done both strategically and respectfully. Statewide implementation will require steady, sustained leadership at the school, district, and state level for ATR to thrive in North Carolina.

Learn more about North Carolina's Advanced Teaching Roles online!

Scan the QR code to visit our website and access exclusive content and videos about the Advanced Teaching Roles initiative: https://www.BESTNC.org/AdvancedRoles

Appendix A: Class Size Flexibility in Advanced Teaching Roles Schools

In Advanced Teaching Roles schools, principals utilize limited class size flexibility to extend the reach of excellent teachers and to "right-size" class sizes to align student needs with the strengths and abilities of each teacher. In most cases, schools create slightly larger class sizes for some teachers, while supporting all teachers with a highly effective Lead Teacher who provides additional support for teachers and instruction for students. This increases the number of students who have access to a highly effective teacher and provides embedded professional development to help novice and developing teachers get better, faster - increasing the overall capacity and quality of the teaching corps.



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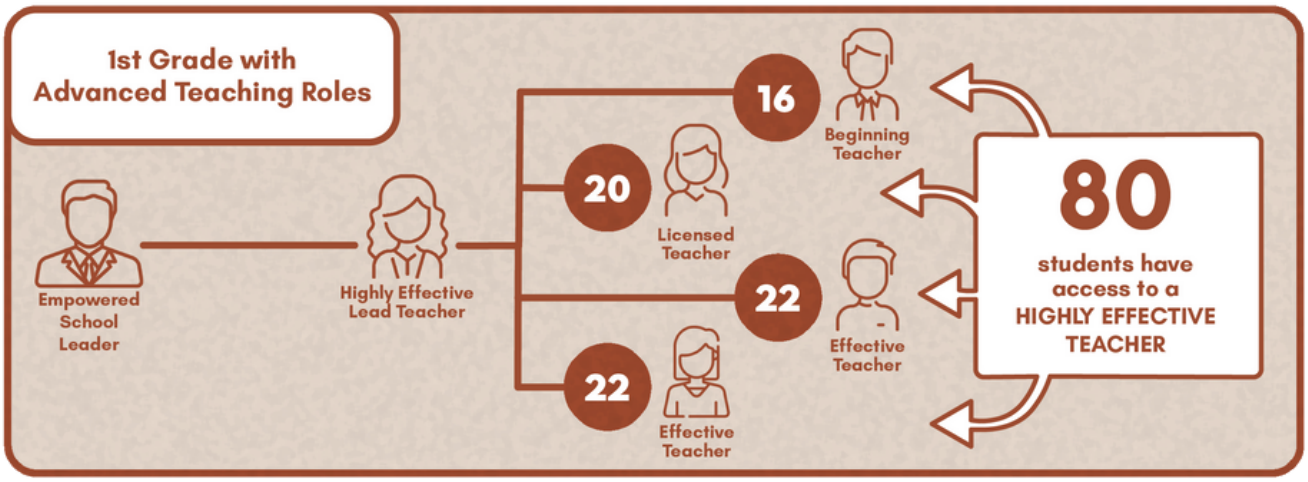
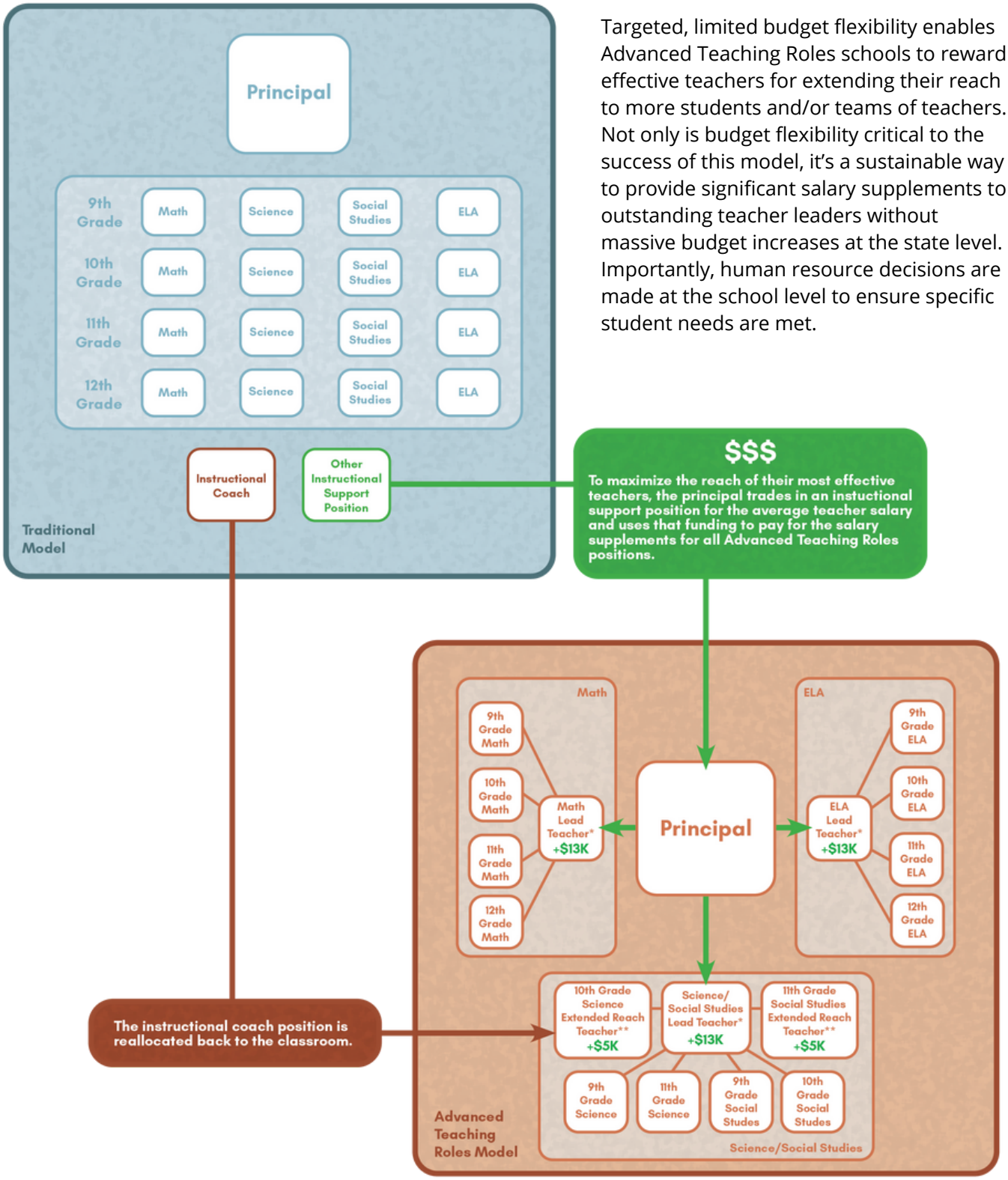


Appendix B: Budget Flexibility in Advanced Teaching Roles Schools

Targeted, limited budget flexibility enables Advanced Teaching Roles schools to reward effective teachers for extending their reach to more students and/or teams of teachers. Not only is budget flexibility critical to the success of this model, it's a sustainable way to provide significant salary supplements to outstanding teacher leaders without massive budget increases at the state level. Importantly, human resource decisions are made at the school level to ensure specific student needs are met.



*Lead Teachers are highly effective teachers who lead small teams of teachers in a specific content area or grade level.

**Extended Reach Teachers are highly effective teachers who teach additional students and or courses.

Appendix C: Expansion of Advanced Teaching Roles Across and Within School Districts

Exhibit 1. Adoption Timeline for Current Participating Districts

Early adopter school districts have expanded ATR implementation at various rates, with some adding a few schools per year and others going district-wide in the first few years of implementation. Exhibit 1 shows the rate at which participating ATR districts have expanded their models to schools across the district and shows the percentage of schools in each district that are implementing ATR during the 2021-22 academic year.

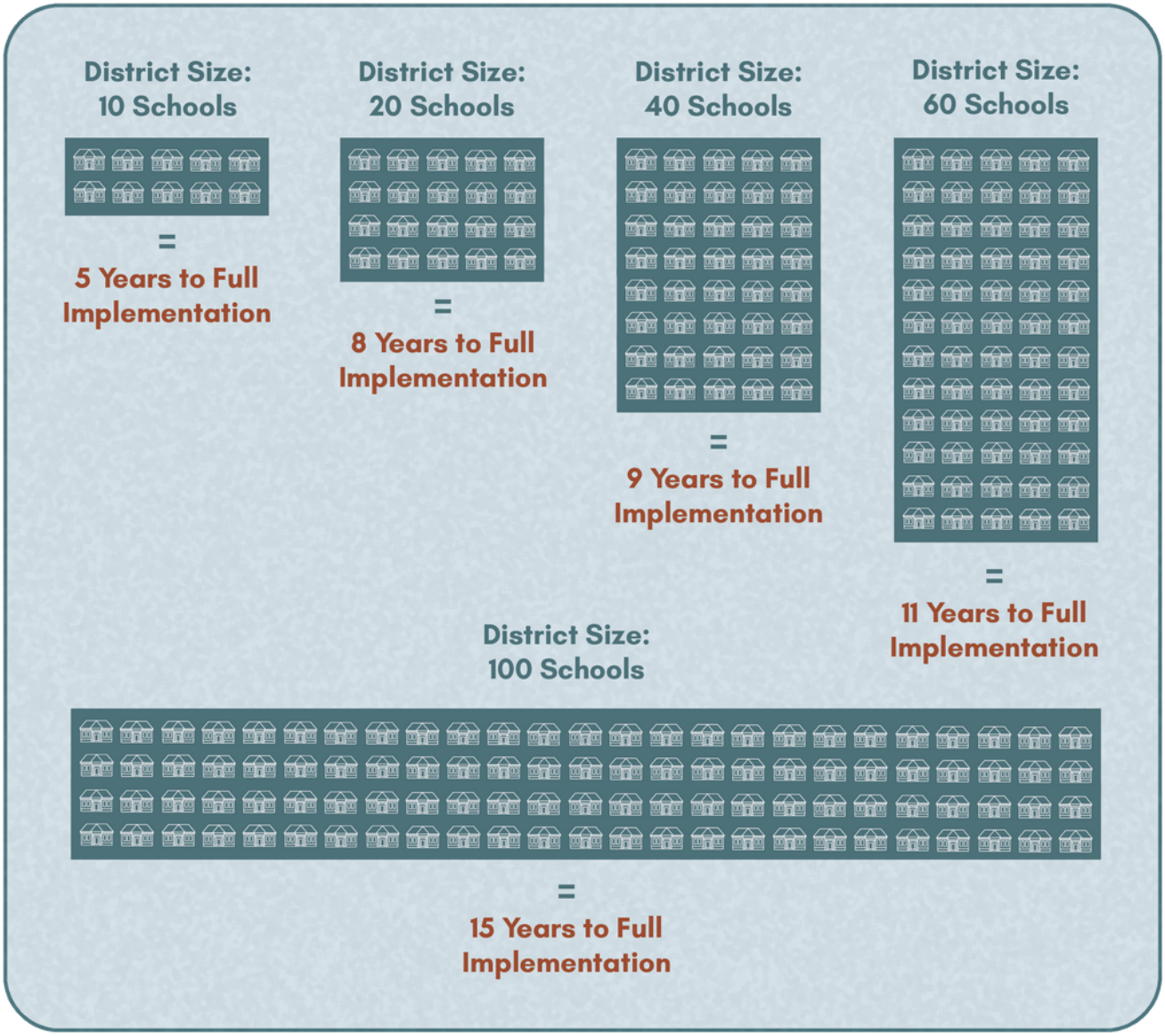
	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Edgecombe County Public Schools	Pitt County Schools	Vance County Schools	Guilford County Schools	Bertie County Schools	Halifax County Schools	Lexington City Schools	Hertford County Schools	McDowell County Schools	Winston-Salem/ Forsyth County Schools	Cumberland County Schools	Northampton County Schools	Wilson County Schools
2014-15	17													
2015-16	2													
2016-17	13													
2017-18	7	3	35	3										
2018-19	12	5	0	3	9									
2019-20	7	4	0	0	5	6	5	5						
2020-21	12	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	6	13	8			
2021-22	9	0	0	0	8	0	5	1	0	0	3	11	5	10
Total Number of Schools	79	12	35	6	24	6	10	6	6	13	11	11	5	10
Percent of Schools	45%	86%	95%	40%	20%	86%	91%	100%	86%	93%	15%	13%	83%	40%

**Note: Some districts may not achieve 100% participation if they choose not to implement ATR in certain types of schools, such as alternative schools or very small schools.*

Source: Human Resources Coordinators in ATR Districts

Exhibit 2. Estimated Adoption Timetable by District Size

Moving away from an outdated "one teacher, one classroom" school structure to ATR is a major cultural, organizational, and professional shift. Done right, it will take time and exceptional school leadership to scale statewide. Based on best practices learned from early adopters, BEST NC recommends districts start by implementing in five schools that have both willing school leadership and a strong need to increase students' access to effective educators. From there, districts should be able to add 5-10 schools per year until all schools have adopted ATR models (up to 20 schools per year for large districts, once the model is solidly accepted). Using this strategy, and assuming a 3-year transition period for each school, this exhibit illustrates the length of time it may take for districts of varying sizes to fully implement ATR models.



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