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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chatham County Schools Receives 2024 NC Teaching Fellows Pilot Recruitment Grant

Grant aims to promote NCTF and the teaching profession

CHATHAM COUNTY (January 12, 2024) – Chatham County Schools is one of 20 North Carolina public school districts selected to receive a pilot teacher recruitment grant in 2024, helping promote teacher recruitment and the teaching profession, as well as the NC Teaching Fellows program itself. Districts were selected after expressing interest in expanding or building a grow-your-own teacher program, as well as having specific teacher recruitment and retention challenges already identified. Chatham County’s grow-your-own program is called **Teach Chatham**, and this pilot grant will provide \$50,000 to use with that initiative. The money will be given to local districts in February, and the grant is renewable for three subsequent years with approved plans and continued available funding. The grants will support various recruitment activities that districts will outline in their approved plan with the NCTF Program.

“This is amazing news,” Superintendent Dr. Anthony D. Jackson said. “I am really excited to see the state's reinvestment in building North Carolina’s teacher pipeline, as well as their commitment to help Chatham County Schools grow our own into the teaching profession.”

As a part of the NCTF pilot program, students will receive state support and extra professional development in conjunction with the NC Teaching Fellows program, and will also benefit from local teacher recruitment efforts. The grant will extend Teach Chatham’s overall reach, and will allow more Chatham County students to take part in the program.

“The NC Teaching Fellows program is proud to award this pilot grant to Chatham County Schools in order to expand our efforts to recruit, train, and prepare teachers

from all areas of North Carolina. By investing in local districts, we can target our recruitment efforts in areas of the state which have unique challenges in expanding the local teacher pipeline or which have established grow-your-own teacher programs,” NC Teaching Fellows Director Dr. Bennett Jones said. “This collaborative effort is designed to bring districts together to share best practices and drive more students to enter the NC Teaching Fellows program and educator preparation programs in our state. Upon their licensure completion, these students will commit to teaching back in their home areas. Through this pilot program, NCTF is providing resources to support its commitment to become the preeminent teacher recruitment tool in North Carolina and we are grateful for the partnership with Chatham County Schools to help lead our teacher recruitment efforts.”

In related news:

Lauren Caviness, a senior at Chatham Central High School, was announced as a new NC Teaching Fellow on December 17, 2023.

About TEACH Chatham:

Teach Chatham is a partnership with Chatham County Schools, Central Carolina Community College, and UNC School of Education. The partners are committed to preparing high quality educators from Chatham County for Chatham County Schools. By leveraging our shared commitment, resources, and support to provide a smooth, articulated pathway for future teachers, we hope to address the teacher shortage in Chatham County Schools. The program allows students who are interested in pursuing a career in teaching to begin their transferable College Credit Courses in order to get a jump start on their college education while still in high school. Students will apply to be part of the Teach Chatham Cohort and will be provided opportunities such as internships and job shadowing to expose them to the responsibilities and requirements of these careers.

About NC Teaching Fellows:

The Teaching Fellows program is a competitive, merit-based forgivable loan program providing tuition assistance of up to \$10,000 per year for qualified students committed to teaching elementary education, special education, science, technology, engineering, or math in a North Carolina public school. The purpose of the program is to recruit, prepare and support future teachers who attend institutions of higher education in North Carolina.

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