

Educational Leadership Principal Fellows Handbook

The North Carolina Principal Fellows Program

The Principal Fellows Program (PFP) provides a competitive, merit-based scholarship loan to individuals of exceptional academic ability who have teaching or relevant experience and who desire to enter school administration in a North Carolina public school. Fellows have the opportunity to attend school on a full-time basis and earn an MSA degree in two years. (<http://www.ncpfp.org/>)

The Principal Fellows Program, which is offered at eleven campuses of the University of North Carolina, provides one year of full-time academic study and a one year full-time internship in a North Carolina public school. Fellows also participate in enrichment experiences designed to enhance their preparation for a career as a principal or assistant principal. The Principal Fellows Program was created in 1993 by the North Carolina General Assembly. Over 1100 Principal Fellows have completed the Program.

Fellows are required to maintain employment as a principal or assistant principal in a public school in North Carolina for four years to repay the scholarship loan. Financial need is not a criterion for selection as a Principal Fellow.

Goal/Purpose

The goal of the Principal Fellows Program is to prepare the most outstanding candidates for full-time school administration in North Carolina.

Administration

PFP is administered by the North Carolina Principal Fellows Commission in collaboration with the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority (SEAA); both agencies are affiliated with the University of North Carolina, General Administration (UNC-GA). Selection criteria, the selection process, selection outreach efforts, renewal and continuation criteria and liaison with the educational community are the responsibilities of the Principal Fellows Commission. The Commission is staffed and chaired by the Director of the Principal Fellows Program. Rules to administer the PFP are the responsibility of the Board of Directors of SEAA.

Campus Coordinators

Each university has a campus coordinator who provides leadership to each cohort of Principal Fellows on the campus. Campus coordinators provide mentoring, and coordinate a variety of experiences for the Fellows including enrichment activities such as seminars and workshops and site visits to school districts, businesses and educational organizations, and supervise the internship which occurs in the second year. The coordinator works closely with Fellows to ensure they have a successful experience in the program.

Benefits

Benefits of the Principal Fellows Program include the financial support provided to the Fellows while earning the MSA, the opportunity for school districts to work with Principal Fellow interns for a year,

and the development of a pool of well-trained, highly qualified administrative candidates available to all North Carolina school systems. Professional development activities with a focus on leadership development are offered by individual universities and at the state level through the PFP office.

Rules and Regulations

All Principal Fellows agree to comply with the rules and regulations of the Program. A complete listing of the rules and regulations of the program can be found at ncseaa.edu.

Program Information for UNCW Prospective Fellows

Participation as a North Carolina Principal Fellow enables the individual to obtain an MSA degree after completing a **one year full-time academic program on campus and a full-time internship at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington**. Fellows receive a scholarship loan which provides \$30,000 the first year and 60% of a first year assistant principal's salary and an internship stipend determined by the General Assembly the second year. The total amount varies according to the state salary schedule and the amount for the internship determined by the General Assembly. This year's second year Fellows will receive an internship stipend of \$15,124 for ten months and \$26,786 from the Principal Fellows Program.

Fellows are expected to complete the MSA degree in two years and agree to meet the standards set by the Principal Fellows Commission. They agree to practice as a full-time administrator for four years within six years following completion of the master's degree. Individuals who do not complete the program or serve in an eligible position for four years must repay the debt in cash at an interest rate of 10%. (Specific requirements for details are included in the SEAA website at ncseaa.edu under rules and regulations.)

North Carolina Principal Fellows Program applicants need to be able to demonstrate in their application strong evidence of leadership roles and responsibilities at the school, school system, statewide and in the community.

Application Process

Prospective Fellows should complete an application by January 15. Applications must be submitted by the January 15 deadline and include a non-refundable application fee of \$45.00. Candidates must complete a separate application for admittance into a **Master of School Administration degree program at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington**. Additional information about the Masters of School Administration degree program can be found at <http://uncw.edu/ed/el/msa/admission.html>

Interviews of all qualified applicants will take place in late February or early March at UNCW through the Educational Leadership department. Selection will take place in April and candidates notified in May. A required Orientation Program for all first year Fellows will take place in August.

Scholarship loan awards and renewal awards for the Principal Fellows Program are made contingent upon annual appropriations by the North Carolina General Assembly.