



Golden LEAF Schools Selection Process & Recommended Schools

North Carolina State Board of Education Meeting
June 4-5, 2025

Project Team

Dr. Maria Pitre-Martin, Deputy Superintendent

Rachel Wright Junio, Director, Golden LEAF Schools Initiative

Jay Johnson, Project Manager, Golden LEAF Schools Initiative





Golden LEAF Schools Overview



Golden LEAF Schools Initiative

OVERARCHING GOAL:

Educational innovation across a **network of schools** in North Carolina, aligning with Golden LEAF's core priorities while spearheading a **paradigm shift in educational excellence**.

Introduce a **pioneering turnaround school approach** centered on the High Reliability Schools (HRS) model, a national transformative framework **designed to revolutionize educational environments**. With this framework at its core, additional emphasis is placed on providing wrap around resources to educators at all levels within the school and **focus on mathematics and career development opportunities for students**.



Vision

- NC will have a **new, evidence-based model** for turning around low performing schools
- Schools and districts in distressed counties will be a:
 - Model for **innovation and success**
 - **Catalyst for change** in their communities
- Students will be prepared academically and technically, with skills and knowledge **aligned to the future needs of North Carolina employers.**
- Students are experiencing career opportunities through course offerings and career development planning so they can enter high school more prepared to pursue the **postsecondary plan of their choice.**



Golden LEAF Schools Initiative

KEY COMPONENTS:



Core Framework Resources



Career Development Resources



Job Embedded Coaching



Participation
Incentives



Mathematics
Resources



Cohort Model





Cohort Model

KEY COMPONENT	COHORT 1 <i>TS Cohort</i>	COHORT 2 <i>PCBE Cohort</i>
Component 1: Marzano's High Reliability Schools Resources		
Resource Bank	✓	✓
Annual Professional Development	✓	✓
Embedded Coaching on HRS Framework	✓ *2 Days Per Month	✓ *6 Days Per Year
Access to Network Events and Resources	✓	✓
Access to Common Math Proficiency Scales	✓	
Component 2: Leveled Coaching		
Leadership Coach	✓	
Math Coach/Facilitator	✓	
Formative Assessment Coach	✓	
Component 3: Math Resources		
Common Math Formative Assessment	✓	
Common Math Curriculum	✓	
Khanmigo Platform	✓	
Component 4: Career Development		
Career Development Resources	✓	
Portrait of a Graduate Resources	✓	✓
Component 5: Participation Incentives		
Travel Funds for Exploration of Best Practices	✓	✓
Substitute Costs for Training	✓	✓
Teacher Stipends for Training	✓	✓
Principal Progressive Retention Stipends	✓	
Principal Performance Bonus	✓	

Approved by SBE
on 01/09/25

Application & Selection Timeline

Golden LEAF Schools Application Submission Open	January 13th, 2025
Golden LEAF Schools Application Submission Close	March 21st, 2025
Tier 1 Review	March 24- April 11, 2025
Tier 2 Review [Interviews]	April 17- May 2, 2025
Tier 3 Review	May 6, 2025
SBE Approval of Selected Grants	June 5, 2025



Selection Criteria

Requirements

- District in a rural county
- District is in a persistently Tier 1 or Tier 2 county
- District Superintendent commits to support the initiative
- District identifies a “District Implementation Coordinator” who will allocate 5% of their FTE to support implementation
- **TS Cohort:** District identifies a low-performing middle school that serves grades 6-8
- **PCBE Cohort:** District identifies a middle school that serves grades 6-8 and demonstrates readiness to begin at a Level 3 on the High Reliability Schools (HRS) Progression.

Approved by GLF and SBE on
01/09/25



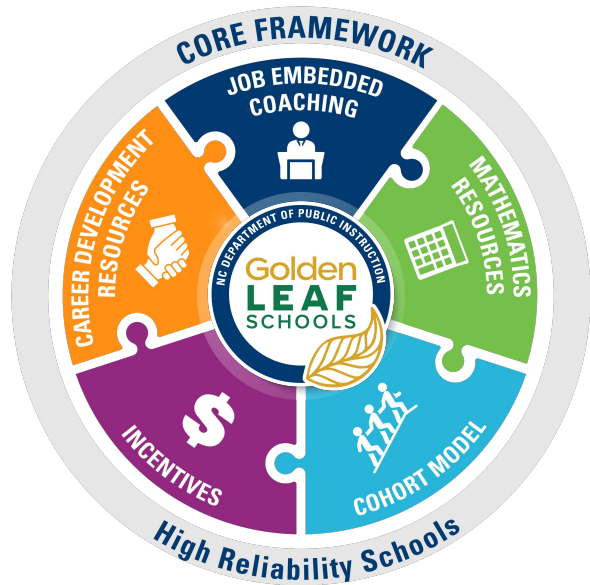
Priority Points

Priority points were awarded during Tier 1 evaluation for the following areas:

- **Economic Status:** Persistent Tier 1- 4 points (PCBE and TS Cohorts)
- **Principal Experience:** Principal has 3 years of experience- 3 points
- **Principal Progress:** Principal has met or exceeded growth 80% of their time as principal
- **Certified Math Teachers:** 80% or more of Math teacher positions are filled by certified math teachers.
- **Vacancy Rate:** Vacancy rate in Math is less than 20%

Approved by GLF on 01/09/25





Review Process



Tiered Review Process Overview

- **Initial Eligibility Screening**
 - *Built into application form*
- **Tier I Evaluation: Written Applications**
 - *PM redacted applications and committees reviewed redacted applications with Director conducting validation checks*
- **Tier II Evaluation: Interview Committee**
 - *Interview committee interviewed participants to better gauge readiness for implementation*
- **Tier III Evaluation: Executive Leadership Review and Approval**
 - *Recommended list and scores presented to GLF and DPI Executive Leadership staff.*



Documentation Maintained

- Original Application Materials
- Redacted Application Materials
- Individual Scoring Forms for Written Applications
- Consensus Scoring Forms for Written Applications
- Individual Scoring Forms for School and District Interviews
- School and District Interview Calculation Forms
- Rank Ordered Score Sheet for Both Cohorts



Assurances

To ensure that all applying schools have been evaluated fairly and on merit, the review process took the following steps:

- Redacted applications for Tier I evaluation to ensure that evaluation was fair.
- Rubric provided to districts and schools for both the interview and written applications.
- Sample written application provided to districts and schools for both the TS and PCBE cohorts.
- Rubric was used to evaluate both the written application and interview process.
- Tier II interviews included a rotating 3rd interview committee member and scores were submitted individually.
- Tier II score sheets were reviewed to ensure that there were no large deviations among committee members.
- Individual scores for interviews were averaged and added to the consensus score for the written application.
- Deputy Superintendent was involved in the interview process.
- Golden LEAF Schools Team modeled materials and process after the Digital Learning Initiative (DLI) grant selection process.
- Golden LEAF Foundation key staff reviewed selection process with DPI staff shortly after schools were selected.
- Golden LEAF Schools Team presented proposed list to Superintendent and executive leadership.





Proposed List of Selected Schools



Transformative Schools (TS) Cohort

School Name	School District & County	Region
Bertie Middle School	Bertie County Public Schools - Bertie County	Northeast
Carver Middle School	Scotland County Schools - Scotland County	Sandhills
Contentnea-Savannah K-8 School	Lenoir County Public Schools - Lenoir County	Southeast
East Alexander Middle School	Alexander County Schools - Alexander County	Northwest
East Rutherford Middle School	Rutherford County Schools - Rutherford County	Western
Harnett Central Middle School	Harnett County Schools - Harnett County	North Central
Northern Middle School	Person County Schools - Person County	North Central
Union Middle School	Sampson County Schools - Sampson County	Sandhills
Warren County Middle School	Warren County Schools - Warren County	North Central
West Lee Middle School	Lee County Schools - Lee County	North Central



Personalized, Competency-Based Education (PCBE) Cohort

School Name	School District & County	Region
Dunn Middle School	Harnett County Schools - Harnett County	North Central
Hayesville Middle School	Clay County Schools - Clay County	West
SanLee Middle School	Lee County Schools - Lee County	North Central
Swain County Middle School	Swain County Schools - Swain County	West
Waynesville Middle School	Haywood County Schools - Haywood County	West



Recommendations & Next Steps

- Approve the recommended schools based on the selection process outlined with CNTR-001 and Golden LEAF Foundation approval.
- Begin onboarding and professional development for selected schools at the kickoff event in July.

