

# Out-of-state scholarships could lose state subsidy

BY ELIZABETH DEORNELLAS  
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

Opponents of a state subsidy that grants in-state tuition rates to out-of-state students on full scholarships won a legislative battle this summer, advancing a bill to cut athletic scholarships from the equation.

"It didn't have any sort of public policy justification for me to subsidize out-of-state athletes when we have so many greater needs in the state," said Rep. Pricey Harrison, D-Guilford, a co-sponsor.

About 70 percent of the subsidized scholarships systemwide have been granted to out-of-state athletes.

UNC-Chapel Hill is one of the only UNC-system campuses that has used the provision primarily for academic scholarships — UNC-CH officials said the provision has been key in recruiting of out-of-state merit scholars.

The bill to eliminate the athletic subsidy passed the N.C. House of Representatives on July 27, less than a week before members adjourned for the August recess. It faces an uphill battle in the N.C. Senate.

Debbie Richardson, senior associate athletic director at Appalachian State University, said the subsidy enables the athletic programs of smaller N.C. schools to compete against universities from other states.

Olympic sports in particular have benefited, she said, because they can now grant full scholarships comparable to what univer-

sities in other states offer. Fully-funded marquee sports also are benefiting, Richardson added, because they are able to increase their percentage of out-of-state athletes.

"They're still going to recruit the in-state as well, but the pressure is not on as much," she said.

Richardson said a repeal of the provision that didn't grandfather athletes could be devastating. If the university suddenly was required to pay out-of-state rates for athletes who had been using the subsidy, she said, some sports could lose their ability to afford new scholarships. "It could kill a recruiting class."

Appalachian State currently has 43 out-of-state athletes on subsidized scholarships, Richardson said, adding that about \$430,000 in additional funding would be needed to keep those athletes for another year if the subsidy were repealed.

Senate Majority Leader Tony Rand, a Cumberland Democrat who supported the subsidy when it was slipped into the 2005 budget, said that many legislators are waiting to see the subsidy's long-term effect.

"I think the support to leave it there still exists."

Rep. George Cleveland, R-Onslow, originally introduced a bill to repeal the subsidy entirely in May 2006. After that bill failed to gain traction, he joined forces with Harrison in February 2007, but their proposal languished in

## Out-of-state tuition exemption

The provision allows out-of-state students on full scholarships to be counted as N.C. residents for tuition purposes.

### Number of UNC-system students affected:

- > Total: 737
- > 502 (68.1 percent): Athletic
- > 235 (31.9 percent): Academic

### Number of UNC-CH students affected:

- > Total: 192 students
- > 76 (39.6 percent): Athletic
- > 116 (60.4 percent): Academic

### Cost to the UNC system:

- > \$8.6 million

committee for five months. "It was clear from the debate in committee that people were supportive of the academic scholarship piece of it," Harrison said.

In order to garner more support, the bill was narrowed to eliminate the subsidy for athletic scholarships, which the bill's sponsors said were harder to justify.

Kyle Serba, an assistant athletic director at N.C. Central University, said the bill to repeal subsidized athletic scholarships ignores one key point.

"The thing that they're missing the boat on there is the first part of student-athlete is student," he said. "They're students first, and that's our whole focus at the university system."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

# Tax falls short of school need

BY CATARINA SARAIVA  
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

County officials say they struggled this year to strike a delicate balance between tax increases and the demands of growing school districts.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners approved the operating budget late in June, reaching a compromise between the needs of taxpayers and the school district.

With an original tax increase of 3.7 cents per \$100 of property value, leaders at the Orange County and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City school districts feared their needs could not be met.

In the final budget, the board increased the property tax to 4.7 cents, giving the proceeds from the 1 cent increase to the schools. The districts also received \$800,000 from money originally allotted for county operations, said Donna Coffey, Orange County budget director.

"In total, the schools got about \$2 million more than the manager had recommended," Coffey said.

She explained that the commissioners limited the tax rate increase to cover only this year's incurred debt

service at their January retreat.

"Every year I try and balance the requests of parents with the understanding that there are people on fixed income ... that have difficulty paying more taxes," said Barry Jacobs, vice chairman of the board of commissioners.

"Those are the two holes and the budget rotates somewhere in between."

Even with the increase, schools still were pressed for funds.

"We cut over \$1 million," said Jamezetta Bedford, chairwoman of the CHCCS Board of Education.

Orange County Schools received \$1.26 million, about \$440,000 short of what they needed, said Ted Triebel, vice chairman of the Orange County Board of Education.

Orange County schools' leaders cut five to six custodial positions, about three of which already were filled, he said. Twelve already-filled permanent substitute positions also were cut, along with 15 percent of central office funds.

"And that allowed us to have enough money to cover the ... deficit of what the county commissioners gave us and what we needed to

have," Triebel said.

The city schools board of education, which has an additional district tax to fund its budget, eliminated a few positions that weren't filled yet.

"We did not have to cut any personnel," Bedford said.

Both districts did have to prioritize programs.

Orange County Schools hired two additional ESL teachers, but wasn't able to expand the high schools' elective programs or hire any new technology teachers, Triebel said.

City schools' leaders were able to increase security at schools, but had to make some cuts to the high school academies.

The 4.7-cent tax increase puts the total tax rate at 95 cents for Orange County. Including Orange, only seven counties in the state have tax rates of 90 cents or more, as of the 2006-07 fiscal year.

"There's really not much left to cut," Bedford said. "We have to buy books and toilet paper."

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

# Experts split on teaching degrees

BY ALEX HENDERSON  
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

As N.C. legislators struggle to fill statewide teaching shortages, educators debate the best way to prepare a teacher for the classroom.

The N.C. General Assembly this summer set aside funding to expand and establish scholarships aimed at encouraging N.C. residents to pursue teaching degrees at state universities. But many experts question the necessity of such a degree.

Lindalyn Kakadelis, director of the N.C. Education Alliance, said the system of teacher certification and licensing draws the definition narrowly, excluding otherwise suitable individuals who could fill vacancies

in the state's public schools.

"We have a so-called teacher shortage," she said. "I don't believe we have a shortage, I believe we have an HR problem."

Kakadelis said the system prevents someone holding a doctorate in chemistry — but lacking a teaching degree — from teaching a high school chemistry class.

"I think what needs to happen in North Carolina is to open up the field to allow more people into the classroom," she said.

David Thaden, principal of East Chapel Hill High School, said the issue was more complicated.

"When it's all said and done, people who come in with only a content credential and no experience in an instructional realm are shocked at how hard it is to teach," he said.

"The requirement that people have some kind of (education) credential is as much a protection of them as it is a protection of the kids."

The 2007-08 state budget expands funding for the Teaching Fellows program and addresses

new scholarships to attract more people to the profession.

One scholarship created in the budget, the Millennium Teacher Scholarship, requires participants to teach in a N.C. public school for one year for each year of scholarship assistance received.

"I know a lot of schools find the whole Teaching Fellows route to be too competitive," Thaden said, adding that the Millennium scholarship will cast the net wider, allowing additional students to participate.

Kakadelis said the Millennium Teacher Scholarship, along with others the General Assembly has passed this year, are good ideas packaged poorly.

"It's more government symbolism over substance," she said. "Teaching is all about communicating. I don't care how many certifications you have, if you can't communicate your message to your audience it does not matter."

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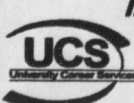
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